Monografías

GALDÓS AND DARWIN

T. E. Bell

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GALDÓS AND DARWIN

Despite the fact that Darwinian theory was perhaps *the* big idea of the nineteenth-century, most critics in the past have assumed that Benito Pérez Galdós would have remained unaffected by this scientific and philosophical revolution. *Galdós and Darwin* contends otherwise, charting the influence of evolutionary theories on Galdós throughout his literary career. From his adaptation of the early nineteenth-century *costumbritas'* depiction of social species into a more sophisticated portrayal of Madrid society to his treatment of shifting social forces at a time of major socio-economic change, Galdós's outlook is shown to be deeply enmeshed in the Darwinian debate. As well as suggesting justifications for Spain's perceived degeneration and perhaps offering the hope of regeneration, evolutionary theory challenged pre-existing ideas of perception and aesthetics, leading to an apparent clash between Platonic and Darwinian principles, all of which can be discerned in Galdós's writing. Attention is paid not only to the hypotheses of Darwin himself, but also for instance to Ernst Haeckel's evolutionary thought, to Herbert Spencer's social Darwinism, and to the radical histology of Santiago Ramón y Cajal. *Galdós and Darwin* discusses how Spain's greatest novelist since Cervantes imaginatively reworked these epoch-making theories and investigates the impact of science on culture as the Spanish nation approached the twentieth century.

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

References to the majority of Galdós's texts are to the Aguilar *Obras completas* (see bibliography). Rather than giving simply the page reference I have used the following matrix: Aguilar volume, part, chapter, subchapter, page reference. Clearly not all of Galdós's novels contain parts and/or subchapters, but where all elements are present, for instance here in a reference to *Fortunata y Jacinta*, it is presented thus: II, 1.3.iii. p. 474. It should also be mentioned that in the case of nineteenth-century publications, the original orthography has been followed.

INTRODUCTION

In the *London Review of Books* a rather caustic article on a book entitled *Can a Darwinian be a Christian?: The Relationship between Science and Religion* sparked a swift rebuke from the author. The latter complained that the reviewer's attitude really belonged to those people to whom the reviewer himself would be diametrically opposed, namely, Creationists, and that he was playing into their hands by insisting that Darwinism and Christianity were fundamentally incompatible. What is striking is not so much that this academic dispute is about a controversial issue (although in fact it is), but that the book concerned was published in December 2001 and the review the following May.[1] Darwin has been in his grave for well over a century and yet many of the controversies his work provoked remain burning issues for large swathes of people in the Western world. Although the fields of evolutionary psychology and, particularly, genetics have moved many of the arguments forward, the resistance to Darwin's original arguments remains entrenched. With the countless reams of supporting scientific evidence produced since the publication of *The Origin of Species* (1859) and *The Descent of Man* (1871), it might be thought that such objections would have been extinguished some time ago, but the potency of Darwin's hypotheses is such that for many they continue to turn the universe on its head.

These present controversies give some idea of the nature of the seismic shift which evolutionary theory caused to the mid- to late-nineteenth-century mindset. However, although the measure of Darwin's impact should not be underestimated, it was not entirely unexpected. Diego Núñez comments:

> La idea de progreso, verdadero supuesto básico de la moderna cultura europea y motivo de continua satisfacción para el hombre decimonónico, se encontraba por fin confirmado científicamente. [. . .] Es como si todo un ambiente cultural, lleno de ingredientes historicistas y cientistas, necesitara, para su completa autoafirmación, la obra de Darwin.[2]

[1] Michael Ruse, *Can a Darwinian be a Christian?: The Relationship between Science and Religion* (Cambridge: CUP, 2001) and Jerry Coyne, 'Intergalactic Jesus', *London Review of Books*, 9 May 2002, p. 8.

[2] Diego Núñez, *El darwinismo en España* (Madrid: Castalia, 1969), pp. 7–8.

Progress as a concept appeared to be well-served by Darwinian theory, with the French Positivists seeming to have found a new ally in biological science. But, as Thomas F. Glick points out, it was not necessarily Darwin himself who was the preferred champion of Spanish progressives:

> The positivists were sensitive to hard arguments based in the biological sciences; but they seem to have preferred Haeckel to Darwin because the former spoke more directly to the extension of Darwinian models to the social sciences, the prime area of concern to the Spanish positivists. A series of articles by or about Haeckel appeared in the pages of the *Revista Contemporánea* and *Revista Europea* in the later 1870s. The message was more or less the same in all: Haeckel had created a total system that explained the evolutionary development of the cosmos.[3]

The German philosophical tradition of taking universal harmony as a starting point for any dialectical speculation also demanded that evolutionary theory should be subjugated to an overriding cosmic law.[4] Haeckel had obligingly supplied such a system, and given the importance of Krausist theory in later nineteenth-century Spanish thought, it is no surprise that many Spanish liberals should have been attracted to the German version of evolution. Owing to the fact that the Krausists understood all processes to be organic and essentially harmonious in nature, their beliefs dovetailed ever more neatly with evolutionary theory in general and Haeckel's brand of it in particular: 'La idea monística viene, pues, a proporcionar un "fondo común" del que participan tanto el sistema krausista como las teorías de Spencer y Haeckel.' (Núñez 1975, p. 103)

Mention is made here of another figure who was hugely influential in Spain as in much of Europe and the United States in the last third of the nineteenth century: Herbert Spencer. The latter was frequently referred to as the 'evolutionary philosopher' and could also rightly have claimed to be the world's first sociologist. It was he who coined the expression 'the survival of the fittest' to which Darwin would, with some qualification, later adhere. Spencer's evolutionary perspective on socio-economic dynamics gave scientific endorsement to *laissez-faire* economics, and for this alone his work became stunningly successful in Europe and even more so on the other side of the Atlantic.[5] Furthermore, in that last third of the nineteenth century, he

[3] Thomas F. Glick, *The Comparative Reception of Darwinism* (Austin: University of Texas, 1972), pp. 311–12.

[4] Similarly, in the early twentieth century Albert Einstein was extremely reluctant, on a philosophical rather than a scientific basis, to accept that sub-atomic physics was not governed by the same laws as the rest of the universe.

[5] For instance, Ann Low-Beer cites a letter from Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes to an English friend where the former says of Herbert Spencer: 'I doubt if any writer of English except Darwin has done so much to affect our whole way of thinking about the universe.'

was the second most translated writer into Spanish. This is borne out not only in the published translations of his work, but also in the vast numbers of articles in the popular press which directly and indirectly are rooted in his philosophy.[6] Diego Núñez has noted the influence of Spencer's brand of *evolucionismo* on Madrid's intelligentsia:

> Al reseñar los *Estudios sobre filosofía de la creación*, de Emilio Reus, en *Los lunes de El Imparcial*, Francisco de Asís Pacheco alude a la filosofía spenceriana como a la más influyente entre los positivistas españoles. Igualmente, Manuel de la Revilla, en su habitual sección fija *Revista crítica* de la *Revista Contemporánea*, nos da cuenta de la continua presencia del nombre de Spencer en los debates del Ateneo madrileño. (Núñez)[7]

As will be seen later in this study, the contents of Galdós's personal library bear witness to his interest in evolutionary theory,[8] and this finds confirmation in Leopoldo Alas's observation that Galdós was not only an anglophile with regard to literature, but also in matters of social science:

> Si hubiéramos de juzgarle por comparaciones, creo que se podría recordar, como el más semejante al de sus obras, el espíritu que predomina en los artistas ingleses de la novela, y aun de general se podría añadir que Galdós tiende a ser como varios personajes de sus útlimas novelas: un español a la inglesa. Sus viajes más frecuentes al extranjero van a parar a Londres, y sus lecturas favoritas son ahora las novelas inglesas y los libros de ciencia positiva, de aplicación inmediata.[9]

Darwin's influence on nineteenth-century literature and indeed literature's influence on Darwin are subjects which numerous critics have explored. Gillian Beer and George Levine in particular have established the impact of Darwin's work on the English novelists, principally Charles Dickens, George

Herbert Spencer (ed.), (intro.) Ann Low-Beer (London: Collier-Macmillan Limited, 1969), p. 13.

6 'Spencer es, sin duda, uno de los autores más comentados y citados en el último cuarto del siglo XIX español.' Diego Núñez Ruiz, *La mentalidad positiva en España: desarrollo y crisis* (Madrid: Tucar Ediciones, 1975), p. 185.

7 Núñez notes his sources respectively as Francisco de Asís Pacheco, 'Noticias bibliográficas', in *Los Lunes de El Imparcial*, 3 July 1876, and M. de la Revilla, 'Revista crítica', *Revista Contemporánea* (1876), p. 247.

8 Leo J. Hoar has suggested that although *The Origin of Species* and *The Descent of Man* are not in the collection now housed in the Casa-Museo Pérez Galdós, they may have been among the number of items that went astray before the collection was acquired by Pattison. *Benito Pérez Galdós y La Revista del Movimiento Intelectual de Europa (1865–68)* (ed.) Leo J. Hoar Jr. (Madrid: Insula, 1968), p. 68 n. 95.

9 *Krausismo: estética y literatura* (ed. and prologue) Juan López-Morillas (Barcelona: Labor, 1973), p. 231. First published in pamphlet form in 1889.

Eliot and Thomas Hardy. Darwin was well acquainted with Dickens's work, and the novelist's prose style and imagery certainly made a significant impact on the scientist's own creativity,[10] but even before the publication of the *Origin* influence was flowing in the opposite direction.[11] Thomas Hardy had much more than a passing interest in the natural sciences, and George Eliot very consciously manipulated Darwin's hypotheses in her literary creativity.[12]

Social interpretations of Darwinian theory, by imaginative writers as much as by anyone else, were bound to cause anxiety, particularly when it came to be used to underline pre-existing concerns. Levine and Kate Flint have noted how evolutionary theory (amongst other scientific theories) is imbedded within *Bleak House* to underscore the harshness of everyday reality. From the very opening page of that novel[13] Flint identifies the author's assimilation of evolutionary theory:

> Dickens demands that we should consider urban life in terms of very basic conditions of survival. [. . .] Most ominously, in this evolutionary parade which opens *Bleak House* – megalosaurus, dog, horse, man – the explicit threat of extinction is present. As the first of these species perished, so might the rest.[14]

In France too the interplay between the biological sciences and literature was in evidence even before the publication of *The Origin of Species*. Honoré

[10] See George Levine, *Darwin and the Novelists: Patterns of Science in Victorian Fiction* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988).

[11] For example see Jonathan Smith's 'Darwin's Barnacles, Dickens's *Little Dorrit*, and the Social Uses of Victorian Seaside Studies', *Literature, Interpretation, Theory*, 10:4 (2000), 327–47.

[12] Gillian Beer, *Darwin's Plots: Evolutionary Narrative in Darwin, George Eliot and Nineteenth-century Fiction* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983), pp. 149–209 and pp. 236–58.

[13] 'As much mud in the streets, as if the waters had but newly retired from the face of the earth, and it would not be wonderful to meet a Megalosaurus, forty feet long or so, waddling like an elephantine lizard up Holborn Hill. Smoke lowering down from chimney pots, making a soft black drizzle with flakes of soot in it as big as full-grown snowflakes – gone into mourning, one might imagine, for the death of the sun. Dogs, undistinguishable in mire. Horses, scarcely better; splashed to their very blinkers. Foot passengers, jostling one another's umbrellas, in a general infection of ill temper, and losing their foothold at street-corners, where tens of thousands of other foot passengers have been slipping and sliding since the day broke (if this day ever broke), adding new deposits to the crust upon crust of mud, sticking at those points tenaciously to the pavement, and accumulating at compound interest.' Charles Dickens, *Bleak House* (1853; Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971), p. 49.

[14] *Origins, Species and Great Expectations, Charles Darwin's 'The Origin of Species'. New Interdisciplinary Essays* (eds.) David Amigoni & Jeff Wallace (Manchester & New York: Manchester University Press, 1995), p. 155.

de Balzac paid open tribute to the pioneer of transformational theories, Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, and recognised him as a major influence on his own novels.[15] Karl Marx in turn, like Pérez Galdós, was an avid reader of Balzac and also a great admirer of Darwin, he and Engels dedicating editions of *Das Kapital* to the naturalist.[16]

The literary and social potential of the biological sciences were thus being explored in the first half of the nineteenth century, and up to a point Spain was no exception. The work of the *costumbristas*, which will be discussed later in this book (p. 10, pp. 16–19), is evidence of this. However, Darwinism's impact on Spain was somewhat different to that of Spain's European neighbours. In the first place it arrived a little later, so that although the *Origin* caused some ripples in the 1860s, it was not till after the liberalisation of the press following the *Gloriosa* of 1868 that the matter became very public.

Like many who followed a traditional Catholic doctrine, Emilia Pardo Bazán was initially at least deeply opposed to Darwin's hypotheses. She, however, did make some attempt to argue her case scientifically, whereas others were clearly afraid to deal with the science.[17] Particularly by the late 1880s and 1890s some conservatives were beginning to find ways of making Christianity and Darwinian theory compatible, just as Michael Ruse and others are doing in the twenty-first century.[18]

[15] *Le Père Goriot*, published in 1834, is dedicated: 'Au grand et illustre Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire comme un témoignage d'admiration de ses trauvaux et de son génie.'

[16] There are numerous other examples of their admiration for Darwin's work. For instance, in the preface to the 1888 English edition to the Manifesto of the Communist Party, Marx and Engels write, 'This proposition [i.e. the manifesto], [. . .] is destined to do for history what Darwin's theory has done for biology', *Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels: Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy* (ed.), (intro.) Lewis S. Feuer (London: Collins, 1972), p. 46. Also, in a letter written in 1862, Marx states that 'Darwin's book is very important and serves me as a natural-scientific basis for the class struggle in history. [. . .] Despite all deficiencies, not only is the death-blow dealt here for the first time to 'teleology' in the natural sciences but its rational meaning is empirically explained', *Karl Marx: Selected Writings* (ed.) David McLellen (Oxford: OUP, 1977), pp. 525–6.

[17] For example see Núñez 1969, pp. 203–208.

[18] Solange Hibbs comments: 'El error más grave de Darwin, a juicio de la Pardo Bazán, es la confusión entre *especie*, *variedad* y *raza* y su negación de la fijeza de la especie con la consiguiente teoría de la *variabilidad*. No obstante Emilia Pardo Bazán no incurre en el tono polémico de la mayoría de sus contemporáneos y tiene el mérito de manejar argumentos de mayor credibilidad científica. [. . .] Eduardo Lanas, director de *El Criterio Católico*, revista catalana (. . .) [mantiene] una actitud relativamente abierta y cree necesario armonizar los avances científicos y sociales de la Modernidad con el espíritu cristiano. [. . .] la Iglesia sentía una necesidad urgente de demostrar que hasta cierto punto no existía contradicción entre una visión histórica evolutiva del mundo y de las sociedades y los textos bíblicos.' 'La Iglesia católica española ante el reto de la modernidad y de la ciencia (1850–1900)', in *Pensamiento y literatura en España en el Siglo XIX: idealismo, positivismo, espiritualismo*, ed. by Yvan Lissorgues and Gonzalo Sobejano (Toulouse: Presses Universitaires du Mirail, 1998), pp. 285–94 (p. 289).

Sherman H. Eoff has identified how Galdós understood the process of evolution to be applicable not only to the development of the individual and of a given society, but how it also had a bearing on moral and spiritual matters. Eoff is one of the few critics to take a broader than literary view of Galdós, to view him as a man who was very much in tune with the major ideological concerns of his day, foremost of these being evolutionary theory:

> Perhaps the most interesting way to look at Galdós in relation to his age is to think of him as the product of a century that witnessed an expanding comprehension of the theory of evolution. He professes no special interest in the theory as such, but he definitely reflects the results of its impact upon modern thought, and he belongs intellectually to the more recent stages of interpretation, which extend from the late nineteenth century to the present day. He believes that change and growth are just as demonstrable on a psychological level as on a biological level, that a similar process obtains in society, even though it may be much more gradual, and that, individually at least, man is subject to a spiritual law of evolvement which is just as natural as physical growth.[19]

It is notable that Eoff finds these conclusions so obvious that he fails to proffer much tangible evidence for his claims, other than the unstated 'circumstantial' evidence, that is, that any educated man living in the West during this era can hardly have failed to have his understanding of the world influenced to some degree by Darwinian theory. One major contention of this study is that Galdós had far more interest in evolutionary theory than Eoff surmises. The novelist's personal library was full of scientific studies, both social and natural, and among these was a copy of *Filosofía del Progreso.* Within this work there is a letter to a M. Villiaumé from Proudhon, where the latter (simultaneously denying it) compares himself to the French naturalist, Georges Cuvier:

> Sin que pretenda compararme con un sábio de la categoría de Cuvier, puedo confesar á V. sin orgullo que he creido seguir en mis trabajos de exploración, como economista, una marcha análoga á la que el gran naturalista ha seguido para sus *fósiles*. El mundo social se me presentaba en el estado exotico como el mundo subterráneo a los ojos de Cuvier.[20]

Someone, almost certainly Galdós himself, has put 2 lines through the 'ex' of 'exotico' and replaced it with 'ca'. The precise relevance of the application of

[19] Sherman H. Eoff, *The Novels of Pérez Galdós: The Concept of Life as Dynamic Process* (St Louis: Washington State University Press, 1954), pp. 150–1.

[20] From 'Cartas de Proudhon a M. Villiaumé, Carta Primera' Paris, 24 January 1856, in P. J. Proudhon, *Filosofía del Progreso* (trans.) F. Pí y Margall (Madrid: no publisher given, 1869), p. 136. Cited from the copy in Galdós's personal library.

Georges Cuvier's system of speciation to human society will be made clear later in this study (p. 17, p. 28), but suffice it to say at this point that Galdós's interest in such matters was more in-depth than Eoff was prepared to accept.

More significantly, Galdós's journalistic work, especially articles written in the mid-1860s, are used in this present study to underline his understanding of Darwinian theory. With regard to his fictional works, his recognised mature novels from *La desheredada* (1881) to *Misericordia* (1897) are the main focus of attention. Some earlier works are included, but not all of the *novelas contemporáneas* feature significantly in this study; indeed some do not feature at all.[21] Within each chapter and to some degree through the whole book, novels are examined chronologically, and those selected have been chosen because they are thematically the most pertinent to a given chapter. Hence the chapter 'Social Species' culminates in an examination of *Miau* (1888), whereas 'Evolution and Transformation' concludes with the *Torquemada* tetralogy (1889–95). 'Morality, Spirituality and Degeneracy' is the broadest in scope, but focuses more on later works, principally *Nazarín* (1895) and *Misericordia* (1897). 'Darwinian Perception and Evolutionary Aesthetics' is far more disparate in its choice of sources than the preceding chapters, but centres on the novels of the 1880s. Other novels given significant attention and not mentioned so far are *El amigo Manso* (1882), *El doctor Centeno* (1883), *Lo prohibido* (1885), *Fortunata y Jacinta* (1886–7) and *La familia de León Roch* (1878). The latter, although usually located among Galdós's *novelas de tesis*, is treated here as a bridge between the early novels and journalistic writings and *La desheredada*. It is significant because unlike for instance *Doña Perfecta* (1876), where Darwinian theory is present as an issue in the ideological arguments between the two camps, in *La familia de León Roch* evolutionary theory is beginning to be evident in Galdós's actual representation of social interaction, character and motivation, as well retaining its role as an ideological football to be kicked about between liberals and conservatives. On this latter point, the most obvious references to Darwinian thought in *La familia de León Roch* are those made by the conservatives when attacking León Roch's 'materialist' outlook:

> ¿Quieres que yo reniegue de Dios y de su Iglesia, que me haga racionalista como tú; que lea en tus perversos libros llenos de mentiras; que crea en eso de los monos, en eso de la materia, en eso de la Naturaleza-Dios, en eso de la Nada-Dios, en esas tus herejías horribles? (I, 14. p. 85)

María Egipcíaca's outburst reveals a common attitude which lumps Darwinian theory together with all other modern theories and philosophy. There is no reason for María to attempt to distinguish between them; in her

[21] The *Episodios nacionales* are not dealt with here either, but remain a rich potential source for future research.

eyes modernity is a threat to her way of life in whatever form it takes. Her attitude, in some ways not dissimilar to that of Pardo Bazán, is equivocal; although her faith in the Church is 'absolute', she, like her brother, sees it as pathetically weak in the face of the onslaught of modernity. Gustavo states:

> La civilización cristiana es como un hermoso bosque. La religión lo ha formado en siglos; la filosofía aspira a destruirlo en días. Es preciso cortarle las manos a esa brutal leñadora. La civilización cristiana no puede perecer en manos de unos cuantos ideólogos auxiliados por una gavilla de perdidos que, por no tomarse el trabajo de tener conciencia, han suprimido a Dios. (I, 12. pp. 74–5)

In the protestations of the Catholic conservatives there is a sense that modernity will inevitably prove a more potent force than their own. They do, however, make quite reasonable demands with regard to social cohesion and direction, for instance when León is confronted by his father-in-law:

> Pues qué ¿ya no hay creencias, ya no hay fe; hemos de gobernar el mundo y la familia con las utopías de los ateos? [. . .] has conculcado las leyes morales que rigen a la sociedad, todo lo que hay de más venerando en la conciencia humana. (II, 9. pp. 202–203)

What is clear from contemporary documentary evidence is that Galdós's characters are a fair reflection of the opposing sides of the Darwinian debate, particularly regarding the views of conservative opponents who, whether they have entered the debate by attacking Darwinism 'scientifically' or have not deigned to engage with Darwin's hypotheses at all, view it as part of the clash between themselves and liberals. However, by this stage of his literary career, evolutionary theory was not only represented by Galdós, but was beginning to form part of his means of representation. It is the influence of such ideas at this latter level, and the way in which it came to be exerted which will constitute the major focus of this study.

1

SOCIAL SPECIES

Galdós's use of social types who were representative of Spanish society was not new, and nor was the placing of these characters within a Darwinian social scheme. However, one of the aims of this study is to show that while some of those who preceded Galdós in both these areas were a direct influence upon him, and while Galdós may have taken many pointers from these literary predecessors, the Darwinian scheme of social species was a genuine point of departure for Galdós's writing.

Born in 1843, Galdós may have been aware of transformational if not evolutionary theories from a reasonably tender age, but it is from the influx of books and articles which appeared in Spain in the 1860s, 1870s and 1880s that the influence of such ideas can be more accurately gauged. In what remains of Galdós's personal library there are several works concerned with evolutionary theories.[1] Of particular interest among these is *La creación* by Edgar Quinet,[2] which to judge from its present physical state has clearly been well read. Quinet is not only well-versed in current schools of evolutionary thought, but also has an understanding of the history of evolutionary theories, frequently acknowledging, for example, that economists and historians arrived at these ways of thinking before the naturalists.

Closer to home Galdós had a source of inspiration which he appears to have tapped quite freely, namely the *costumbrista* works of Ramón de Mesonero Romanos and Mariano José de Larra. With the former, Galdós was to develop a friendship based on a mutual respect borne out in their correspondence.[3]

In seeking to determine the importance of the concepts of species and type in Galdós's work it is first necessary to discuss briefly what was understood by these terms in the nineteenth century. When Galdós started to pen articles

[1] Those by Herbert Spencer are undated, but appear to be editions from the 1890s and early twentieth century and do not appear to have been read. That is not to say that Galdós was not very much aware of Spencer's work by the 1870s and 1880s as so much of it was available in translation by then. (See Núñez 1969, pp. 449–58.)

[2] Edgar Quinet, *La creación* (trans.) Eugenio de Ochoa, II (Madrid: no publisher given, 1871).

[3] See *Cartas de Pérez Galdós a Mesonero Romanos* (ed.) E. Varela Hervías (Madrid: Publicaciones de la Sección de Cultura e Información del Excmo. Ayuntamiento de Madrid, 1943).

in Madrid, the *Origin* had been published only six years before (1859) in Britain, and would not appear fully in Spanish translation for another twelve years. The Darwinian debate started later and more slowly in Spain than in many other parts of Europe, and it was not until after the *Gloriosa* that the trickle of articles on modern empirical science became a torrent. Therefore, the pre-existing concepts of species and types, and the impact that Darwinism had upon them, are the areas that demand examination. It should also be noted that some of Galdós's literary predecessors, particularly the *costumbristas*, had made use of the systems of species classification of Karl Linnaeus (1707–78) and Georges Cuvier (1766–1832), and that Galdós was well aware of this tradition. In his early journalistic work, his understanding of species and type and his application of these concepts to human society, are much in evidence. For example, in 1867 in *Revista de Madrid*, Galdós starts to sketch out Spanish social types and, referring to the microscopic study of insects, reveals the influence of the natural sciences on his view of society and his techniques of characterisation:

> Observaríais las variadísimas manifestaciones de la locura, de la pasión, del capricho; locos de genio, amantes por travesura, celosos de oficio, monomaníacos de ciencia, de galanteo, de negocios; misántropos por desengaño, por gala y por fastidio; hombres graves, hombres desheredados; hombres frívolos, hombres viperinos, felinos y caninos; individuos, en fin, unidades, caracteres, ejemplares. (Hoar 1968, p. 234)

From the above list of personages, it would not be difficult to identify a sizeable percentage of the characters in Galdós's subsequent novels or, for that matter, in the nineteenth-century novel as a whole. But it is towards the end of this paragraph that Galdós alludes to a means of classification which was not unknown in Spanish *letters*, but which had still to find its place in the Spanish novel. He defines human types as human species, or rather as subspecies of the human race, by means of the animalisation technique which will be developed to its full potential in his novels of the 1880s. At this stage he is consciously imitating a technique of the *costumbristas*, but by using the words 'individuos, en fin, unidades, caracteres, ejemplares' Galdós demonstrates something else, namely the difficulty in defining humanity as a species and the individuals within that species in the wake of the *Origin*.

Jonathan Howard sketches out how much at odds the long-held notion of species was with evolutionary theory:

> The species concept, the notion of type, and the position of each type in both a systematic and an evaluative hierarchy have been explicit in Western thought since Aristotle. Each made its own characteristic contribution to the received view of living things which dominated orthodox religious and biological thought in the pre-Darwinian nineteenth century.[4]

[4] Jonathan Howard, *Darwin* (Oxford: OUP, 1982), pp. 10–11.

Although entrenched ideas of species and type had existed for over two thousand years in the West, it was not until the middle of the eighteenth century that a systematic method of classifying living organisms was developed by Linnaeus. He developed the system of binomial nomenclature whereby every species was given a two-worded title, the first word denoting the life form's genus, the second its species. But Linnaeus was still working very much out of this established Western tradition. Michael Ghiselin comments:

> To an Aristotelian like Linnaeus, who believed that classes are real, there is no dichotomy between the order in nature and the system of classes expressing that order. The reality of classes implies that they are distinct and immutable, and excludes the possibility of evolution.[5]

But Darwinian theory put paid to these ideas: 'with the discovery of evolution, involving the historical origin of one species from another, the existence of a distinct gulf between all species at all times could not be maintained' (Ghiselin 1969, p. 89). Those who saw Darwinian theory as a threat to their belief system attempted to defend the idea of immutability and the traditional concept of species. For instance, Antonio Eleizegui y López (1875) argued that the weight of history favours the anti-Darwinian camp:

> Todas las definiciones que de la especie han dado, lo mismo los naturalistas antiguos que los modernos, nos prueban que, desde Moisés a Aristóteles y de Aristóteles a Linneo, se poseia una idea tan clara y uniforme de ella, como la que tiene la mayor parte de los naturalistas de la época actual.[6]

One of the foremost concepts of *The Origin of Species*, despite its title, was that species had ceased to exist as such, or at least no longer did so in the terms in which they had been thought of previously. Re-classifying mutable species and re-evaluating their hierarchies became the new challenge in the light of evolutionary theory. But this was not a question of having to revise or rebuild old systems. As Ghiselin comments: 'such a system [. . .] refers to something which we do not construct, but rather discover. Nor are the classes simply collections of things which have happened to strike the eye as similar' (p. 80). Ghiselin's second point is important, as the everyday experiences of animal species did not seem to suggest that species were in constant evolution, mainly owing to the fact, of course, that significant evolutionary change tends to take place over very long periods of time and is therefore not registered by everyday observation. Howard explains that the accepted view of

5 Michael Tenant Ghiselin, *The Triumph of the Darwinian Method* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1969), p. 81.

6 Antonio Eleizegui y López, *El materialismo ante la ciencia* (Santiago de Chile: no publisher given, 1875), p. 18. From the copy in Galdós's personal library.

species and of the individuals within a given species was naturally born out of such observation: 'individuals of a species mated successfully only with their own kind' (p. 11). But it was not simply a question of understanding the breeding habits of the farmyard which affirmed the pre-Darwinian notion of species:

> The reality of such common objects of experience also earned a philosophical sanction from Platonic idealism. Individual cats impressed themselves on the mind not as individuals but as representatives of a kind: it was their essential catness, suggested only imperfectly by individual cats, which was the only logically operable subject for rational thought. (Howard, p. 11)

Galdós was well aware of the Idealism of the Ancients and their notion of the archetype. For instance, in the representation of the human form he rejects the notion of perfection as an attainable or desirable quality.

In his article 'Imperfecciones' in *Revista de Madrid*, Galdós examines three portraits of beautiful women: *La Gioconda*, *Lucrecia Fede* and *The Duchess of Oxford*. While admiring their beauty, he notes that 'ninguna de las tres es bella en el sentido clásico de esta palabra. Léjos de ser correctas, algunas de sus facciones se desvian señaladamente del prototipo tradicional' (Hoar, p. 227). Their *defectillos* are what differentiate them from the Greek notion of classical beauty and it is this difference which gives them their soul: 'en la mujer que ha pintado un florentino, vereis siempre una mujer; en la que esculpe Fidias no hallareis más que una estatua' (Hoar, p. 228). The Ancients' abstract notion of beauty is not sustainable, Galdós explains:

> Cuando el arte pasa de la estatuaria a la pintura y de panteista pasa a cristiano, se individualiza y se anima. Ya no produce abstracciones esculturales, prototipos de una raza entera: produce ejemplares del hombre; es vario y múltiple en sus creaciones; se muestra siempre particular y verdadero. (Hoar, p. 228)

Galdós here rejects the Platonism of Ancient Greek art in favour of the Renaissance artists' ability to imbue deities and holy figures with individualised human qualities. It would appear that on this evidence, Galdós has dismissed the idea of the archetype without any need to refer to the influence of evolutionary theory. But his views on classification are not so clear-cut. There remain vestiges of Platonic Idealism in his thought, and these exist side by side with his use of Darwinian principle in his definition of types and classes. In many ways this is perhaps what one would expect from a man who encounters evolutionary theory in his twenties and who has the nineteenth-century Darwinian debate as the backdrop to his literary career. The importance of Haeckel and the Krausists in the Spanish debate on evolutionary theory should also be acknowledged with regard to Galdós and his peers. The idea of perfectibility was common to both these schools of

thought, thanks in no small part to both having their roots within the same philosophical tradition. Haeckel's theories were also appealing on other grounds. Thomas F. Glick notes that particularly the Spanish Positivists 'prefirieron Haeckel a Darwin porque el autor alemán se ocupaba, de forma más directa, de la aplicación de los modelos darwinistas a las ciencias sociales'.[7] It should also be noted that Idealism and evolution were not considered by everyone to be mutually exclusive. Ghiselin comments:

> Some forms of Platonism, however, are not opposed to evolution: for example, the French and German *Naturphilosophie* has embraced evolution since the early nineteenth century, and extended metaphysics to a geological scale. But their metaphysics precluded natural selection, which would do away with any need for the Platonic Idea, or archetype. To the Platonist, evolution must result from the progressive development of organic beings under the influence of the ideal form. (Ghiselin 1969, p. 81)

It is not claimed that Galdós was adhering to a German metaphysical school of thought, but these concepts did have a greater appeal in contemporary Spain than they did, for instance, in Britain. None the less, as has been stated above, Galdós's own concept of perfection, or rather of the representation of physical perfection, does not comply entirely with any particular philosophical mindset. With reference to Víctor Cadalso and Fortunata later in this study (pp. 156–62), I will examine Galdós's suggestion that although the ideal form is not commonly found, it does exist but is usually to be found 'just off stage': there remains, conceptually at least, the possibility that developments occur 'under the influence of the ideal form'. However, reconciling the idea of prototypes with an evolutionary theory that destroys the notion of fixity of species is a far from easy task:

> The use of an idealized model as a standard of definition creates serious difficulties in practice. The actual course of events is rarely so simple as to permit drawing a distinct line between one species and another, especially since the status of a population as a species is a matter of degree.
>
> (Ghiselin 1969, p. 91)

Later in this chapter, I will investigate how Galdós manages to create a Madrid of mutable social species and still maintain the notion of the social prototype. It is also important to note the role played by deviation from the norm, given that evolutionary theory depends on variation from one generation to the next. In reference to the influence of Darwinian theory on the novels of Charles Dickens, George Levine has remarked that 'variety is not aberration but the condition for life'. It is the atypical characters in Dickens's novels who demonstrate humanity's mutability:

[7] Thomas F. Glick, *Darwin en España* (Barcelona: Ediciones Península, 1982), p. 17.

> Dickens's novels are densely populated, full of eccentrics, variations from the norm, and, as in the case of Jo or the retarded Maggie of *Little Dorrit* or Smike of *Nicholas Nickelby*, marginal figures who test the validity of the whole society. Darwin, for his part, needs to locate the unaccountable variation, the deviant figure or organ that will not be accommodated in an ideal and essentialist taxonomy. [. . .] Darwin is not interested in types. I would argue that, although we tend to think of Dickens's characters as "types," they are obviously atypical in their excesses.[8]

Levine goes on to comment that for Dickens variation was a source of hope, that class boundaries in particular were not absolute, and also that under the new scheme, potential was offered through natural variation:

> On the old model, life was determined by separate creation and eternal separation into ideal and timeless orders. On the Darwinian model, life is enhanced by slight disturbances of equilibrium of change. (277)

The replacement of the idea of immutable species created by the Almighty by the notion of an autonomous process was a fundamental consequence of evolutionary theory. Howard demonstrates that pre-Darwinian theories recognised 'two formative principles for living things: the miraculous creative cause operating at the species level and the secondary cause of reproduction operating through individual members of a species' (Howard, p. 11). He goes on to state that Darwin's major achievement in the *Origin* was 'to challenge successfully this dualistic view of the origin of living things, and to replace it by the single definitely known formative principle, reproduction' (ibid.). Therefore the system of classification had now to be based on this principle alone, and the relationships between species had become genealogical. Ghiselin cites the *Origin* (p. 420):

> [. . .] all true classification is genealogical; that community of descent is the hidden bond which naturalists have been unconsciously seeking, [. . .] and not some unknown plan of creation, or the enunciation of general propositions, and the mere putting together and separating objects more or less alike.
>
> Darwin clearly recognizes that evolution generates a "real" system of hierarchical relationships, and in a sense he equates "natural" with "genealogical". (Ghiselin 1969, p. 82)

As genealogy became the crucial factor in Nature's new hierarchy, genealogical systems assumed their place within social Darwinian schemes and Galdós's novels reflect the importance of genealogy in determining a

[8] George Levine, 'Dickens and Darwin, Science, and Narrative Form', *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, 28:3 (1986), 276.

character's place in the social order. For instance, the relationships between members of the Pez family, coupled with their adaptability, are vital for the economic survival of their clan; the social function performed by Fortunata's relatives determines her social function; the gulf between the genealogical line fantasised by Isidora Rufete and her genuine origins supplies the fundamental thrust of the plot in *La desheredada*; Luis Cadalso's classification as a *Miau* is due directly to his family background, though this is not strictly speaking due to his genealogy alone.

In the wake of the *Origin* – the re-application of this principle to human society, Darwin's application of the Malthusian principle to the natural world emphasised the importance of naturally occurring processes in determining the survival of individuals within a social group.[9] The pressures of increasing populations and environmental restraints were shown to be fundamental factors in the prosperity or failure of species in both the animal kingdom and in human society. Industrialisation, crop failures, wars, levels of sanitation, influence not only human survival rates, but also the social function human beings are likely to perform. This social function should not be seen in isolation, but in conjunction with the genealogical imperatives discussed above. The result is a social hierarchy which is both complex and constantly shifting. Nor would the pre-Darwinian systems of simply cataloguing species continue to be valid once the concept of species had been applied to human society. It now became imperative to understand the social dynamics which produce social species and the laws which govern their activities.

The notion of species, as determined by their natural function, has an immediate application to social Darwinism in that the fulfilment of a social function by an individual, and the way in which this fitted into the overall division of labour were of concern to social Darwinists of all political persuasions.[10] Galdós extends this notion to society where function becomes the means of definition. In the early nineteenth century, Mesonero Romanos and other *costumbristas* would have been able to categorise people much more easily: first because the age of capital had not quite arrived in Spain, bringing with it the emergence of the newly moneyed classes whose social rise and intermarrying would change the pre-existing social order, and secondly, because the means of classification was unchallenged. Darwin forced a reap-

9 'For the basic tenet in Darwinism is the Malthusian axiom that resources of nature are limited, and hence also the number of individuals of any species, including man.' Gertrude Himmelfarb, *Darwin and the Darwinian Revolution* (New York, London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1968), p. 397.

10 Glick notes that Pedro Estasen y Cortada (1855–1913), 'el sociólogo evolucionista más importante en la España de finales del siglo XIX', took a particular interest in this aspect of social Darwinism: 'La variación (y la selección natural) de la teoría evolucionista de Darwin tienen sus correlatos sociales en la división del trabajo, analizada por Estasen en un estudio sobre la función de las aristocracias' (Glick 1972, p. 27).

praisal and Galdós starts to take his writing seriously at just the time that on the one hand Darwinian theory is beginning to cause ripples of controversy in Spain, and on the other the speed of social change appears to quicken.

Galdós was not simply creating a fiction which mirrored the social entities of his Madrid; his characters exist in a world which is governed by processes. The definition of social types comes under pressure from the constant state of change that social evolution demands. In representing a world where change is occurring and the understanding of these changes had been given a whole new series of meanings, types and species need to be shown to be changing, but of course what Galdós needs to show will involve the 'before', 'after' and 'somewhere in between' depictions of these types. Even using the word 'types', as I have just done, poses problems because, by their nature, if types and species are constantly being modified they are no longer the types or species that they were. Nomenclature and classification are necessary for human beings to operate; before Darwin, as been stated above, the naming of species was descriptive rather than explanatory. But the mutability of, and therefore lack of fixity of species, meant that the simple classification of a species was no longer enough. How a certain species, both animal and social, had come to be and what it might become next, created a whole new set of possibilities for the writer.

In his novels of the 1880s, Galdós constructs a vision of Madrid society which is populated by characters, many of whom belong to distinct and seemingly identifiable social species. The *novelas contemporáneas* are littered with references to 'esta especie' or 'estos tipos', and I aim to show that these species form part of Galdós's understanding of his society. But it must be stressed that Galdós did not simply pluck this image of society from contemporary scientific and social theories and apply them to his literary output. He was very much working out of a Spanish literary tradition and seems more than keen for his readership to recognise this.

The *costumbrista* tradition of the first half of the nineteenth century provided Galdós with a template for a style of writing which captured the essence of Spanish, and particularly Madrid, life. Ramón de Mesonero Romanos stands out as the most important *costumbrista* influence on the young Galdós. Leo J. Hoar notes that in Galdós's very first article for the *Revista del Movimiento Intelectual de Europa* he declared his 'intención de seguir los pasos del costumbrismo a lo Mesonero Romanos' (Hoar, p. 53). In that same article Galdós identifies the qualities he associates with a writer who successfully portrays Spanish life:

> Las escenas son muchas y diversas, los tipos infinitos y las costumbres de dificilísima descripción. Abandonemos la tarea por colosal. Tanto valdría meternos á bosquejar cuadros de carácter nacional sin disponer del pincel

> de Goya, o tratar escenas matritenses sin haber antes acaparado la pluma del *Curioso Parlante*. (p. 83)

First, Don Benito acknowledges that Francisco de Goya and Mesonero Romanos have set the standard in the depicting scenes of Spanish life. However, the expression 'tipos infinitos' is not the language of the *costumbristas*, but has more than a ring of Darwinian theory to it. So although Galdós is open in his intent to learn from the old Spanish masters, he has not adopted the species theory of the early nineteenth century. Cuvier's notion that there are a set number of species in nature has no place in Galdós's perspective of Madrid's social fauna. There are two issues to consider here: first, does the 'open ended' variety portrayed in Madrid directly stem from Darwinism, or from the common perception that the modern city was a far more complex environment (than rural Spain for example) and thus home to a greater variety of human life? The influence of the *costumbristas* and Mesonero Romanos in particular has been well documented. H. Chonon Berkowitz, for instance, comments:

> Galdós adopted the canvas, technique, and the style of the *costumbristas* of several decades back. In view of his admiration for Mesonero Romanos, it is not bold to suggest the direct, although undemonstrable, influence of the *Curioso Parlante* on him.[11]

The Galdós of the mid- to late-1860s was imitating his mentor's style of portraying, and indeed attacking, social types despite what Berkowitz regards as his youthful intolerance and impatience:

> On occasion his indignation has a ring of passion even to the extent of transgressing the costumbrista's commandment which says "Thou shall not deal in personalities." In the main, however, Galdós restricts his criticism to categories. (10)

Given that Galdós was a journalist, being paid to pen articles on themes relevant and entertaining to his readership, his determination to restrict his descriptions of *madrileños* to groups and types rather than individuals is illuminating, first because it demonstrates that his penchant for categorising his fellow citizens into social species was in evidence well before he was supposed to have read several of Zola's works (circa 1878–80), while also demonstrating the importance of this type of representation of society at this embryonic stage of his literary development.

In 1866, as part of his series on public figures 'Galería de españoles

[11] H. Chonon Berkowitz, 'Galdós' Literary Apprenticeship', *Hispanic Review*, 3:1 (1935), 1–22 (8).

célebres', Galdós wrote a short piece on Mesonero Romanos. He introduces the latter in a piece where the ability to tell a story is the subject under consideration:

> Metámonos por tanto en el terreno de la sátira y tomémosla con algunos de estos tipos especialísimos que en esta sociedad se encuentran todos los dias, y sin mas trabajo que dirigir la vista a los grupos de la Puerta del Sol o a los paseantes de la Castellana.
>
> Pero aunque somos excesivamente *curiosos* y excesivamente *parlantes*, no somos Mesonero Romanos, y bueno es que el ilustre académico, hábil pintor de la sociedad de 1825, permanezca solo en el dominio del género en que tanto brilla. (III, p. 1326)

Galdós leaves us in little doubt of the high esteem in which he held *el Curioso Parlante*: 'es una de las glorias de nuestra literatura y ha ocupado en el templo del arte un puesto que nadie ha osado disputarle nunca' (III, p. 1327).

In 1883, Manuel de la Revilla pointed out that the climate of social change in the mid-nineteenth century was highly advantageous to a writer such as Mesonero Romanos: 'apareció *El Curioso Parlante* en tiempos muy favorables para el género satírico, como lo son todos aquellos en que una sociedad se transforma.'[12] He continues:

> A la sociedad petrificada del antiguo régimen sucedía la sociedad libre y progresiva del siglo XIX; [. . .] en la vida social y en la privada se verificaban radicales transformaciones. El contraste entre lo viejo y lo nuevo había de dar lugar a numerosas manifestaciones de lo cómico.
>
> (Sánchez de Palacios, pp. 201–202)

Mesonero Romanos himself claims that great difficulties arise in capturing a society's essential types now that there is such confusion between social boundaries:

> Esta mezcla de costumbres, estas distintas situaciones, de magnates distinguidos, empleados en favor, capitalistas, pretendientes, caballeros de industria y tantas otras clases, dan a este pueblo un carácter de originalidad no muy fácil de describir. El trato es superficial, como debe serlo en un pueblo grande donde no se conoce con quién se habla, no quién es el vecino. La confusión de las clases es general por esta causa.
>
> (Sánchez de Palacios, pp. 162–3)

New social species begin to thrive and some inevitably fade away. In 'Tipos hallados, tipos perdidos'[13] Mesonero Romanos makes a division within his

[12] Mariano Sánchez de Palacios, *Mesonero Romanos: Estudio y Antología* (Madrid: Compañía Bibliográfica Española, 1963), p. 201.

[13] This series was reprinted in *Los españoles pintados por sí mismos*, 2 vols (Madrid: Boix, 1843–4).

studies of Madrid's essential characters. *El lechuguino* and *el alcalde de barrio* for instance belong to the *perdido* category, although of the alcalde Mesonero Romanos comments, 'todavía humean las cenizas de este tipo recientemente sepultado por la novísima ley de Ayuntamientos; [. . .] todavía aparece a nuestra memoria con su presencia clásica y dictatorial.' (Sánchez de Palacios, p. 172) Those waxing in the Madrid firmament include *el artista*, a term which, Don Ramón laments, is now used to describe any number of occupations, and *el periodista*, a growth profession of the nineteenth century.

In *El Curioso parlante*'s description of the respective emergence and disappearance of types amid Madrid's shifting social scene, he provides the raw materials with which Galdós could later construct a social Darwinian scheme inhabited by Madrid's social species. But for the most part, the *costumbrista* works do not appear to be portraying a city whose social fauna are governed by scientific laws. However, in his piece on *el cesante*, Mesonero Romanos reflects that, in the past at least, an individual's occupation depended on his genealogy:

> [. . .] los destinos parecían segundos apellidos, los apellidos parecían vinculados a los destinos. Ni aun la misma muerte bastaba a las veces a separar los unos de los otros; transmitíanse por herencia directa o transversal, descendente o ascendente, a los hijos, a los nietos, a los hermanos, a los tíos, a los sobrinos; muchas veces a las viudas, y hasta a los parientes en quinto grado. De este modo existían familias, verdaderos planteles (*pepinières* en francés) para las respectivas carreras del Estado; tal para la Iglesia, cuál para la toga, ésta para el palacio, es otra para el foro, aquélla para la diplomacia; una para la militar, otra para la rentística, cuáles para la municipal, y hasta para la porteril y alguacilesca; familias venerandas, providenciales, dinásticas, que parecían poseer exclusivamente el secreto de la inteligencia de cada carrera, y transmitirlo y dispensarlo únicamente a los suyos, cual el inventor de un bálsamo antisifilítico, o de un emplasto febrífugo, endosa y transmite sigilosamente a su presunto heredero el inestimable secreto de su receta. (Sánchez de Palacios, p. 125)

In 'transmitirlo y dispensarlo únicamente a los suyos' Don Ramón plays with the idea that a person's predisposition to a given career appears to be determined genetically, though the more explicit implication is that institutions are simply awash with nepotism, and perhaps also that families impose a career on their offspring for no other reason than that it is the traditional occupation of that family.

Membership of a social species in Galdós's work can be determined genealogically or by profession, and as stated above by Mesonero Romanos, traditionally the distinction between these two areas is not clear. The social and/or political environment is also a factor which needs to be considered; it may be favourable for example to journalists, but may be disastrous for some of those in the employ of the civil service, or recently ejected therefrom.

*

I now wish to turn my attention to Galdós's journalistic writings of the 1860s. In doing so I aim to demonstrate that Galdós was already experimenting, first with the literary possibilities afforded by viewing humanity at the level of a species, and also by classifying specific social groups as separate subspecies. Although he was working out of an established literary tradition, it is evident in his depiction of social types and species that Galdós had already developed a firm grasp of evolutionary theories and was applying these principles to his portraits of Madrid.

In an article for *Revista de la Semana*, 9 February 1868, Galdós bemoans humanity's frivolous nature. The humorous character of the piece does not disguise the fact that Galdós is viewing the reading public as a species and an unsavoury one at that, 'ese gran mónstruo que se llama público', 'Terrible alimaña es el público, es cierto.' Galdós satirises the general public's reaction to news, in that they are indifferent to wars and atrocities and yet outraged by the relatively trivial. As the above quotations show he regards the public as a collective, characterised by uniform values and behaviour. This anthropological perspective provides Galdós with a distance which allows human indifference to suffering to be presented as a universal quality. This leads him to judge the public from a fresh angle; he puts to one side the traditional moral and social presumptions that society makes about itself, or even the aspirations it has, and instead presents it at arm's length. In this same article Galdós takes the 'intelligent ape' outlook further:

> ¡Qué animal tan raro es este vertebrado, mamífero, de sangre caliente, de digestión normal, de sistema dentario completo, bimano, etc., etc.! ¡Qué espíritu tan raro es el de este ser idéntico, sensible, inteligente y activo, rutinario, incongruente, caprichoso, etc., etc. . . .![14]

Galdós then weaves in the other half of the article which concerns itself with the forthcoming *carnaval*:

> Pronto vereis a la humanidad desempeñando el papel mas difícil que hay en la gran escena de la naturaleza orgánico-sensible, el papel de cuadrumano; [. . .] Vean ustedes esos almacenes donde se alquilan trajes de máscaras, y son revueltas prenderías llenas de trapos informes y desgarrados girones. Allí acudirá la humanidad madrileña, que es una de las humanidades mas extravagantes, cuando llegue la hora de vestir la librea del mono.
>
> (Shoemaker, 1972, p. 410)

Galdós's flirtation with Darwinian theory leaves two distinct impressions.

[14] Benito Pérez Galdós, *Los artículos de Galdós en «La Nación» 1865–1866, 1868* (ed.) W. Shoemaker (Madrid: Insula, 1972), p. 410.

First the reader is certainly reminded of the proximity of humanity to other animals. The description of humanity seen from a naturalist's/anthropologist's viewpoint does not knock mankind off its pedestal, but it does indicate that human beings have a great deal in common with other animals. The *carnaval* with its extravagant costumes, masks and dancing appears to be a ritual which ought to look out of place in a European capital city. On the surface the citizens of Madrid are simply playing out roles at a festival, but the regression down the evolutionary tract from *bimano* to *cuadrumano* to *vestir la librea del mono* appears to contradict this. Galdós appears to be hinting at some level of atavism in this kind of social activity. However, there is a further twist in that this manifestation of primitiveness in the *disfraces* worn at the *carnaval* are thrown into relief when, with reference to their 'cara y levita', Galdós quips that the people of Madrid wear masks and costumes all year round. Although he is lampooning social pretensions, there is a direct link made between primitive rites and the norms of behaviour in a nineteenth-century European capital. There remains the possible implication that the social veneer may not be as pretentious as it seems, if indeed it emanates from a human instinct to disguise oneself and play out a role.

The activities of the festival have become occurrences as natural as the changing of the weather or the seasons:

> [. . .] los bailes de Capellanes eran un fenómeno meteorológico que anunciaba la proximidad de esa constelación que anualmente nos visita por Febrero o Marzo; pero esta exhibición de narices es síntoma mas seguro.
>
> (Shoemaker, 1972, p. 412)

Gillian Beer quotes the assertion, made in a similar spirit in Thomas Hardy's *The Return of the Native*, that some instances of 'unnoticed happiness' are 'so "matter of course" that no one comments on it.' The quotation itself reads:

> The remainder of the play ended: the Saracen's head was cut off, and Saint George stood as victor. Nobody commented, any more than they would have commented on the fact of mushrooms coming up in autumn or snowdrops in spring. They took the piece as phlegmatically as did the actors themselves. It was a phase of cheerfulness which was, as a matter of course, to be passed through every Christmas; and there was no more to be said. (Beer 1983, p. 243)

As with Galdós's descriptions of the *carnavales*, human activity is in tune with the seasons and, cheerful as they may be, the rites are performed in step with nature, under an imperative demanded by nature. Again, as cultural activities are 'reduced' to being signifiers of natural processes, humankind's position at the pinnacle of a hierarchy of living creatures and inorganic elements of the natural world comes under ever greater scrutiny.

The *carnaval* provides a rich source of characters and imagery for the young Galdós. In March 1865, he asserts:

> Es preciso resignarse [. . .] a presenciar las grotescas contorsiones, las arlequinadas que hace la Humanidad, atacada en estos tres días de una especie de mal de San Vito. Es necesario contemplar el rudo cambio que se verifica en todos los órdenes sociales, ver la belleza disfrazada de fealdad y la dignidad del ser más perfecto de la creación ignominiosamente oculta tras una cabeza de cerdo o de cotorra, ver el tipo circasiano que Dios modeló pintorreando con los más horrorosos colores. [. . .] Se establece una competencia, cuya meta es el mayor ridículo posible, y se saca partido de todos los donaires de la raza cuadrúmana. (III, p. 1280)

The Madrid public revel in disguising themselves as animals, (the *cotorra* costume could have been a point of departure for Galdós's social–species classification of Mesonero Romanos and of Estupiñá in *Fortunata y Jacinta*) and behaving as apes: the words 'la raza cuadrúmana' are quite possibly a Darwinian reference to the human species, susceptibility to atavistic regression.

The references to San Vito and God are notably out of place in what appears to be a pagan festival. The 'raza cuadrúmana' reference appears to relate to a theory which for many people had consigned Genesis to parabolic status; yet Galdós includes God's creative hand in the proceedings. Whether this is an ironic inclusion or whether Galdós is happy to juxtapose Christianity with what were popularly viewed as anti-theistic beliefs, is unclear at this stage. It can only be stated that Galdós refuses to commit himself to either side of the debate, although he does not appear to hold the belief that, because humanity now differs from other animals only by a matter of degree, God has become redundant.

The primitiveness apparent in aspects of Spanish life depicted above has another association in Galdós's work, namely a sense of nationhood, untainted by foreign influences. Galdós comments, 'Si Velázquez y Goya no hubieran existido, los hermosos tipos que caracterizan nuestra nacionalidad no serían conocidos en estos tiempos en que rige la calamitosa dictadura del frac' (ibid.). Clothes are a means of determining the variety of social species as well as being an expression of social status. These two concepts are drawn together in the above quotation where the all-conquering *frac* is seen by Galdós to have homogenised Madrid society to its detriment. Galdós feels a nostalgia for a more colourful Spain as portrayed by Velázquez and Goya, and he sees the dominance of this foreign influence in clothing as damaging to the variety of indigenous Spanish types, or at least making it less easy to identify them.

In the series of articles entitled 'Variedades' Galdós ties Spain's waning sense of nationhood to the disappearance of the variety and distinction of the country's social types:

> También han pasado a mejor vida los modelos que inspiraron el fácil pincel de Goya; [. . .] sin que nadie se admirase de aquella extraña fusión de categorias, de aquella mezcla de caracteres verificada por un principio de nacionalidad que hoy no tenemos. (III, p. 1290)

The brand of Spanishness which, in Galdós's opinion, is the most authentic is exemplified in 'El pueblo de *pan y toros*':

> El buñuelo no morirá nunca en España a pesar de su insípido sabor, de su aceite hirviente, no será destronado por el elegante Savaray, ni por el Chantilly, ni por todas esas almibaradas especies de la familia repostera que ostenta en su escaparate la pastelería Suiza. (III, p. 1291)

This follows the *buñuelo*'s introduction as the dish that typifies the Spaniards and their fiestas; it also faces more sophisticated foreign opposition and this is described in terms of family and species. The adjective *almibaradas* could well be applied to the candied egg yolks for which both the colonial Lica Manso[15] and Fortunata acquire a taste, the latter being introduced to eating *yemas* by the frenchified and treacherous Aurora.

In what is supposed to be a book review of *Fábulas religiosas y morales* by Felipe Jacinto Sala, Galdós widens the scope of his investigation, deciding that the animals which populate human moral fables deserve fresh consideration.

> Si en las hermosas tardes de verano se os ocurre dirigir vuestros pasos al Botánico, tendréis ocasión de admirar una multitud de graciosos individuos de la gran familia zoológica, encerrados allí para solaz de los *Buffones* españoles y regodeo de los chicos y nodrizas de la capital. [. . .] Juegos inocentes, carreras, luchas, castos amores, son la ocupación de estos benditos, y su posición, su vida, su constante buen humor excita tal vez la envidia de los que, al través de las rejas, les contemplan: [. . .] la raza humana les mira sonriendo, engreída con su mayor grado de perfección, mientras el gracioso bimano hace, colocado en una altura, mil grotescas contorsiones, con tal travesura y malignidad, que el espectador se apresura a acortar mentalmente la ya pequeña distancia que le separa del hombre. (III, p. 1335)

Overt reference is being made here to Darwinian theory, particularly at the end of the quotation, where the literal physical distance between the spectator and the caged beasts is seen to be analogous to 'la ya pequeña distancia'

[15] John Sinnigen makes the point 'para conseguir la aceptación y el prestigio hace falta imitar el tipo de consumo indicado por el modelo cultural, y por eso Lica tiene que "contener un poco su pasión por las yemas, caramelos y bombones" y comenzar a tomar carne y vino' in *Sexo y política: lecturas galdosianas* (Madrid: Ediciones de la Torre, 1996), p. 82.

which exists between humanity and the rest of the animal kingdom in the light of evolutionary theory. Bearing in mind that Galdós states at the beginning of the article that, apart from the would-be Spanish Buffons, the zoo is a source of entertainment for the 'chicos y nodrizas de la capital' there is even more fun being poked at the human visitors than might first appear. The wet-nurses featured in *El amigo Manso*, *Fortunata y Jacinta* and the *Torquemada* series are portrayed as a human subspecies who serve the rest of society by providing milk in the same way that cows do (see pp. 36–9). In a different scheme, namely ontogenetic recapitulation (a subject which will be dealt with in greater depth later in this chapter, pp. 53–60), but to similar effect, adults occupy the top of the evolutionary tree whereas youngsters, particularly in *La familia de León Roch* and *Fortunata y Jacinta*, display characteristics which would normally be associated with animals and/or subject races. The fact that it is those who can be viewed as being lower down the evolutionary scale in social and human terms who frequent the zoological gardens, can make the gap between the human visitors and the animal internees seem all the narrower.

Initially Galdós paints a picture of utopian contentment in the world of the captive beasts, but on reflection all is not so idyllic:

> ¡República feliz! [. . .] Este es el ideal de las sociedades, realizado en las razas irracionales para ejemplo de las racionales. [. . .] la envidia, la vanidad, la ira, la lujuria aparecen en aquella sociedad antes tan pacífica, y les verá luchar, herirse y entablar demandas escandalosas. (III, p. 1335)

At the beginning of the article Galdós allows the reader to be seduced by the idea that all animal species other than humanity are free of vices and immorality. But he now turns the tables and declares that all the negativities that are to be found in human society likewise exist in the animal kingdom. The strutting cockerel is a case in point: 'el gallo audaz, engreído con su papel de seductor, no dejará gallina con honra.' The role of the seducer is important to the plots of *Lo prohibido*, *Fortunata y Jacinta* and *Miau*, and the immorality of the three respective seducers is never in doubt. But the imagery of Juanito Santa Cruz as a hunter searching for his prey, the description of Víctor Cadalso as a man destined by his appearance to behave in the way he does and, by contrast, José Bueno de Guzmán's disingenuous protestations that he is ruled by passions beyond his control, all muddy the waters with regard to the question of determinism. Although it has been successfully argued that Bueno de Guzmán's use of naturalism is parodical,[16] it would be rash to

[16] Alfred and Luz María Rodríguez, '*Lo prohibido*, ¿una parodia galdosiana?', *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*, 60:1 (1983), 51–9 and Nicholas G. Round, 'Overstepping the Mark: *Rayuela* and *Lo prohibido*', in *On Reasoning and Realism: Three Easy Pieces* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991), pp. 51–66.

dismiss the importance which Galdós attaches to Nature's power to govern human actions. The reproductive urge which drives the *gallo* or the human male is not something upon which one can pass a moral judgement, but that man's behaviour is. There is of course a tension between these two, and it should not always be assumed that Don Benito, himself no angel in this regard, is not unsympathetic towards his male protagonists of this ilk. In his description of the animals in the zoological gardens there is a strong sense of pragmatism with regard to the 'vices' of the animals and by extension their human counterparts, but we are never allowed to forget that the *gallo*'s human counterparts do not operate in an animal's moral vacuum:

> Las escenas inmorales, escandalosas, se repetirán sin interrupción, y el espectador tendrá ocasión de ver que los vicios de la sociedad están representados en aquella otra sociedad irracional, espejo vivo en que el hombre se ve fielmente retratado. El gran Víctor Hugo ha dicho que los animales son la sombra de la Humanidad. (III, p. 1335)

This is a highly problematic declaration by Galdós. Are the 'vices' that are found in the animal kingdom, simply natural states of being that we share but choose to label with our value systems? Is it appropriate to use terms such as 'vice', 'virtue' and 'morality' when describing non-human species? Is morality born out of the instincts of animals? Is it far too simplistic to draw parallels between human and animal societies? Darwin himself has frequently been accused of indulging in anthropomorphism, particularly in his later works where he sought to identify animal responses which ran parallel to human emotional responses. Galdós here falls into the same trap (if indeed it is a trap; the jury is after all still out in this area) and has little problem imbuing beasts and their societies with very human characteristics. As I will discuss later with regard to *Miau*, in which many, if not all, of whose characters are animalised to some degree, the dog Canelo is described as having very human sensibilities and in one such instance is shown even to be standing up on his hind legs. But the dog's exaggerated human characteristics are not really the point. The fact that in the light of Darwinian theory humanity was nowhere as far removed from the rest of the animal kingdom as had previously been thought, and that some Darwinian social theories encouraged the view that the immorality in many human relations was justifiable because it followed a pattern set out by nature, creates a series of contradictory values where choice for the individual is not as simple as choosing between vice and virtue. The reference to Hugo confirms that Galdós's inspiration in this area does not all come directly from the great scientific works of the day, but that it is also safe to assume that Hugo's own assertion was informed by an awareness of the works of Buffon, Cuvier and Lamarck.

Galdós recognises that animal fables have traditionally functioned, 'cuando (los hombres) quieren dar una lección moral, en idear una sencilla

parábola, haciendo intervenir en ella dos o más animales en quienes se ha *personificado* una virtud o un vicio' (III, p. 1336). Galdós's own use of animalisation in his novels is not parabolic but he certainly manipulates the pre-existing associations of a bird or animal to denote the social function a given character performs. There remains a moral imperative in his works in his use of such associations, though it is not as straightforward as Aesop's.

William H. Shoemaker identifies *variedad–unidad* as one of the *elementos de la novela* found in Galdós's writing.[17] This duality is much in evidence in Galdós's early journalistic pieces and is bound to the notions of species and subspecies. In a dialogue that he creates to discuss social types in *La Revista de la Semana*, 11 November 1867, the discussion centres on the dichotomy that the types are by their nature quite distinct from one another and yet they all belong to a greater whole:

> Todavia me parecen todos de una misma categoría, de un mismo volúmen; me parece una carta uniforme en la cual todos los séres tienen el mismo peso específico, la misma densidad; son igualmente elásticos, dúctiles, maleables. (Hoar, pp. 234–5)

Here, before the specific social categories are dealt with, Galdós states that these social classifications are bonded not only by a common humanity, but also by what was then the most fundamental physical union.[18] Evolutionary theory is here freely mixed with a materialist viewpoint. Such a mixture was very much part of the course in 1860s and 1870s Madrid; *materialismo*, *positivismo* and *darwinismo* all 'belonged' to Spanish liberals and were often treated as extensions of each other by both conservatives and liberals. Certainly at this stage, Galdós is happy to marry the common origins of life forms with the idea that organic and inorganic matter are also 'blood brothers' at an atomic level. By the time he was writing the café scene in the chapter 'Costumbres turcas' in *Fortunata y Jacinta* nearly twenty years later, however, the author appears to be poking fun at the popular conceptions of materialism. But at the embryonic stage of his writing, such ideas served to emphasise the common origin held by all living creatures and particularly the shared origins of human social groups.[19]

[17] William H. Shoemaker, *La crítica literaria de Galdós* (Madrid: Insula, 1979), p. 189.

[18] These sentiments are echoed by Augusto Miquis in *La desheredada*, where evolutionary theory is put into a universal context: 'evolución tras evolución, enlazados el nacer y el morir, cada muerte es una vida, de donde resulta la armonía y el admirable plan del Cosmos [. . .] todo el mundo se compone de las mismas sustancias no creadas [. . .] que actúan según las mismas leyes, desde el átomo invisible hasta la inmensa multitud de cuerpos celestes' (1, 4.2. p. 67).

[19] Hoar has noted, however, that in a series of articles in 1867 'Galdós apartó en

It is to these groups that Galdós makes reference in his first article for the *Revista del Movimiento Intelectual de Europa*. The spectacle of a military parade, the soldiers and accompanying crowd, provides Don Benito with the material to offer a vision of Madrid new to his readers:

> Detras de sí dejan ellos la gran parada, la revista inmensa de tipos distintos y formas diversas. En ellos no hay revista posible: ellos son la unidad. Comprendemos la revista en la variedad, y esto sólo se encuentra en lo que la tropa deja a un lado y otro en su desfile interminable; en el ejército de paisanos, vario, híbrido, multiforme, por entre el cual se abre paso aquel trozo nacido de la falanje española. (Hoar, p. 81)

Galdós wishes his readership to review not only the military parade, but the rest of Madrid society which is out on display. There is an obvious uniformity in the dress and marching of the soldiers, used to demonstrate unity of purpose, to command respect and also to exhibit their position within a very specific hierarchy. But in the words 'en el ejército de paisanos, vario, híbrido, multiforme' the idea of clearly defined types is swept away. Particularly in the word *híbrido* and possibly in *vario* and *multiforme* as well, the notion of species rises to the surface. What Galdós means by 'hybrid' here is unqualified, whereas in his novels of the 1880s and 1890s social hybridisation through the intermarrying of social classes is a common theme. It could be that this is a reference to the 'confusión de las clases', or it could also be alluding to people's dress, as the evolution of fashion is also a recurring theme in Galdós's subsequent works, as is the hybridised fashion sense of those who find themselves in the social melting-pot:

> [. . .] nos falta la perspicacia suficiente para hacer demarcaciones exactas, para determinar formas precisas, para dar tintas claras a este grupo de gerarquías mezcladas, de formas múltiples, de colores mil. (Hoar, p. 81)

There are already suggestions here that Galdós is taking on the role of naturalist or anthropologist ('demarcaciones exactas', 'formas precisas') in his efforts to determine the precise characteristics of Madrid's social species. The expression 'gerarquías mezcladas' requires attention; it could be further evidence of interaction between the social classes, or of how in a relatively small European capital the full gamut of Spanish social classes could frequently be seen at large social events, particularly given Madrid's long history of having different social classes living in close proximity to one another. Certainly, large gatherings of people seem to provoke this mode of

seguida cualquier otra implicación teleológica y se lanzó a un análisis humorístico del costumbrismo madrileño, amalgamando la idea de la Creación con el tema de la evolución darwiniana' (Hoar, p. 67).

thought in Don Benito. The scale of such social events allows him to observe the members of Madrid society as representatives of a single species with shared characteristics, and at the same time to pinpoint those characteristics which define social subspecies. The problem he faces is that the traditionally recognisable social groups are mixing and the once clear definitions have become blurred. To identify the changing social order of Madrid and to present this mass of types which fills its streets is one of the tasks Galdós sets himself, and (in a extended version of a quotation given on pp. 16–17) he goes on to suggest how this might be achieved:

> Tanto valdria el que quisiéramos herborizar sin conocer la botánica, ó el que intentáramos formar un catálago zoológico sin tener los conocimientos de Cuvier. Dejémosles que se mezclen, se choquen y se dispersen, y pensemos en adelantar algunos dias por ver si algo ha acontecido en la semana más fácil de ser descompuesto y analizado por esta pluma pedestre y mal cortada que jamas se vió en tan apurado lance, como al querer describir la exhibición que ofrece en las calles de Madrid una aglomeración de gentes, atraidas a una fiesta popular por el llamamiento estrepitoso de tambores y campanas. [. . .] Tanto valdría meternos a bosquejar cuadros de carácter nacional sin disponer del pincel de Goya, o trazar escenas matritenses sin haber ántes acaparado la pluma del *Curioso Parlante*.
>
> (Hoar, pp. 82–3)

Galdós here makes an overt reference to Cuvier's system of species, and affirms his belief that, in order to understand humanity and human relations, one should view these things in the same way that a naturalist observes animals. It is also made plain that in the 'aglomeración de gentes' that are to be found on the streets of Madrid there lies an opportunity for society to be analysed, not so much as human beings under Don Benito's microscope, but more through the *madrileños* being considered as a 'herd of beasts' which on closer inspection can be compartmentalised into overlapping subgroups. This is further exemplified in an article written in 1865 where Galdós finds some amusement in the seasonally changing levels of courtesy displayed by barbers, doormen and other 'tip-expectant' professions:

> [. . .] notamos con gran sorpresa que la fisonomía del portero o portera está inundada de una paternal y benévola sonrisa, que contradice la proverbial aspereza del género. El sereno tambien se ablanda en estos días; y al abrirnos la puerta, manifiesta una complacencia poco comun en esa familia nocturna. (Hoar, p. 100)

They universally display a change in behaviour at the same stimulus that is, the approach of religious festivals when tipping is more commonplace. Although it could be argued this is nothing other than good financial sense on the part of this breed of workers, they are exhibiting uniform patterns of behaviour which are socially induced, in this case by the approach of

Christmas or Easter. It is from such a viewpoint that social groups become social species in the eyes of an observer as keen as Galdós. It should also be noted that in the expressions 'la proverbial aspereza del género' and 'esa familia nocturna' Galdós shows a glimpse of the social-species classification determined by profession which will later help populate his novels. In the words 'la fisonomía de portero' there is an echo of the *costumbrista* early nineteenth-century use of pseudoscience, which Galdós is happy to fuse with the burgeoning empirical and social sciences of his day.

On catching an omnibus in the Puerta del Sol, Galdós provides snapshots of various *tipos*:

> En este ambulante cajón hallaremos todos los tipos de la sociedad madrileña. El señor obeso y redondo, personificación del genio español [. . .] Una polla de esas que se ven en todas partes, almibaradas, presuntuosas, coquetas, listas, niñas con faldas y mujeres-niñas, de esas que hablan por los codos [. . .]. (Hoar, p. 208)

As these descriptions stand there is little to indicate that Galdós is presenting such personages as social species rather than the city's 'stock characters'. Only when the description of the *polla* as one of 'esas [. . .] almibaradas, [. . .] niñas con faldas' is held up to the descriptions of 'El pueblo de pan y toros' (VI, p. 1291) is the intended impression of young upstarts conveyed. The use of the adjective *almibaradas*, mentioned above in relation to foreign delicacies, suggests that this genus of young woman is not to Galdós's mind *castizo*, but bears new and possibly foreign characteristics and the use of *coquetas* possibly suggests foreign origins.

In his article 'Creación', 11 November 1867 (partially cited on p. 10), Don Benito gives his most overtly Darwinian portrayal of the inhabitants of Madrid to date:

> El conjunto de los habitantes de Madrid es sin duda revuelto, sordamente sonoro, oscilante y vertiginoso. [. . .] ¿No os parece que tiene los rasgos suficientes en su fisonomía para ser tan individual como vos y yo? Y si pudierais con ayuda de otro microscopio, examinar su interior, su fisonomía moral, su carácter, ¡cuántas cosas extraordinarias se presentarían a vuestros ojos! [. . .] Observaríais las variadísimas manifestaciones de la locura, de la pasión, del capricho; locos de genio, amantes por travesura, celosos de oficio, monomaniacos de ciencia, de galanteo, de negocios; misántropos por desengaño, por gala y por fastidio; hombres graves, hombres desheredados; hombres frívolos, hombres viperinos, felinos y caninos; individuos, en fin, unidades, caracteres, ejemplares.
>
> (Hoar, pp. 233–4)

On the above passage Hoar comments:

> El proceso evolutivo que arriba se describe, trócase de inmediato, para el autor y sus lectores, al uso del verdadero costumbrismo, en un desfile tan

> prolongado como divertido de la fauna y flora madrileña. Son de gran interés sus comentarios acerca de esa muchedumbre de tipos, las intencionadas especulaciones que formula sobre su condición y actitudes, condicionadas por la evolución a lo largo de los años. A lo Darwin, explora cada estrato de vida y disecciona con amor todo y cada cosa, desde las formas simples (el hombre, en este caso) hasta los aspectos más avanzados y complejos de su existencia terrena, representados por sus instituciones y sistemas de diversión. Es tan acabado el enfoque del cuadro de costumbres, que esta variante galdosiana obtiene un puesto distinguido, siendo probablemente la primera muestra del costumbrismo darwinista.
>
> (Hoar, p. 71)

It is apparent that as early as 1865 Galdós had seen the literary potential of viewing Madrid's population from a biological, if not wholly evolutionary, perspective. He also states his intention of doing so in the tradition of Mesonero Romanos who has already provided him with a 'catalogue' of *tipos*. Galdós holds up both the literary portraits drawn by Mesonero Romanos and the canvases of Francisco de Goya as reflections of definite, if not definitive, Spanish social types. Over the subsequent thirty years Don Benito makes innumerable remarks on the loss of these 'authentic' Spaniards, with varying degrees of nostalgia and sentimentality.

Don Benito's appetite for portraying Madrid society at mass social events as seen in his early journalistic work was undiminished when he began to write novels, despite the limitations with which this genre of writing presented him. In the opening chapter of the *Segunda Parte* of *La familia de León Roch* he paints a picture of Madrid society in its many forms:

> La esclarecida sociedad de los mataderos, de las carnicerías, de las fábricas de curtidos, los industriales del Rastro y los mercadores de la Cebada, hervían allí como potaje en el fuego, y su murmullo, unido al cascado son de un cencerro, daba la impresión de andar por allí un animal que relinchaba coceando [. . .] y el zafio ganapán a quien Naturaleza dió el empleo de lavar tripas de cerdo, porque no sirve ni servirá para otra cosa.
>
> (I, 2.1. p. 843)

The sizzling *buñuelo* described above in Galdós's journalistic works is echoed here in a novel. In both instances a wholesome *castizo* dish cooking is analogous to Spanish society and character, the bubbling crowd at the bull-ring being 'como potaje en el fuego'. The 'zafio ganapán', we are told, has his function determined by nature, but it seems far more likely that his 'profession', or rather his inability to attain a profession, has been socially determined. However, it should be noted that the gap between nature and society had closed significantly in the wake of evolutionary theory, and for many social Darwinists there ceased to be any gap at all. The narrator appears here

to be leaning towards a harsh Herbert Spencer school of thought; this is a 'dog-eat-dog' world where hierarchies are determined by natural and/or social forces:

> [. . .] se observaba la figura nacional de la chula rica, guapa hembra, vistosa, generalmente gorda y con cierta hinchazón de matrona romana unida a la desenvoltura de la maja castiza [. . .] mientras ella viva no pasará necesidades éste o el otro de aquellos feos circenses que están abajo, ya de verde y oro, ya de amaranto y plata, con los bárbaros trastos en la mano y el corazón ardiendo en heroísmo. Hay en la fofa gordura de estas mujeres y en su aspecto de hartazgo, en su mirada altiva y a veces cínica, mayormente si son tratantes en ganadería humana, un no sé qué de la depravada estampa de Vitel, Otón o Heliogábalo. (I, 2.1. p. 844)

The language of physiognomy is not in evidence in this passage and the conclusions to be drawn do not square with the tenets of that pseudoscience, but there certainly remains the impression that one's position in the social hierarchy is to some degree determined literally at face value. Also present is one of the essential Spanish types, *la chula rica*, who is described in near racial terminology. Furthermore, in 'si son tratantes en ganadería humana', we are presented with another aspect of the social speciation which is encountered in Galdós's novels, namely animalised social species. The immediate implication is that some of these 'chulas' are successful brothel-keepers, but their ill-concealed contempt for those whom they employ and exploit is generalised in this phrase to yield a wider social reference. The well-heeled classes can look down on the lower orders as if they were looking down the evolutionary tract, the coarseness of the poor seeming to affirm the view that they are less human than wealthier *madrileños*. The notion that the poor are on the market and can be bought as if they were cattle, is a theme to which Galdós returns many times in his mature works.

Throughout the *novelas contemporáneas* of the 1880s, the reader is confronted by the various members of the Pez family. In *La desheredada* Galdós introduces this clan, largely made up of civil servants, as a species capable of adapting and transforming themselves when political and financial expediency demands. In doing so, the novelist is developing a subject which had already been a focus for other Spanish writers earlier in the nineteenth century. The portrayal of the civil service by Spanish writers will be dealt with in my examination of Villaamil and the *Administración* (pp. 52–64), but here I will concern myself with overseas influences. Effie Erickson notes a possible point of departure for Galdós's uses of Darwinian imagery to lampoon the Spanish civil service:

> La desheredada [not italicised by Erikson] is the first of a series of novels on contemporary life. True to the naturalistic vein of the work, many of the

> characters are abnormal. In this novel, Galdós introduces the Pez family, which appears in its various branches in later novels. They provide him with an opportunity for satirizing nepotism. His sermon delivered on the power of the Peces reminds us strongly of Dickens' burlesque tirade on the administration of the Circumlocation Office – the Barnacle Family.[20]

A. F. Lambert appears to be convinced by Ricardo Gullón's argument that Balzac's *Les Employés* was a major influence on *Miau*. Lambert himself agrees, however, that Dickens's *Little Dorrit* could well have served Galdós with an image of bureaucratic chaos.[21] There are clear parallels between the *Peces* and the Barnacles, the Spanish civil service and the Circumlocution Office. The Barnacles of *Little Dorrit* appear to have been inspired by Darwin's work on barnacles which pre-empted the publication of the *Origin*.[22] Dickens's portrayal of a social species which has come to dominate and feed off the resources of government departments presents us with an extensive genealogical network which bears many of the characteristics of the Pez family:

> The Barnacles were a very high family, and a very large family. They were dispersed all over the public offices, and held all sorts of public places. Either the nation was under a load of obligation to the Barnacles, or the Barnacles were under a load of obligation to the nation. It was not quite unanimously settled which; the Barnacles having their opinion, the nation theirs.[23]

Dickens characterises this family as parasitic by nature: once its individuals have obtained office they cling on to it 'limpet-like', making it impossible to root them out, and they go on to thrive. Their species is characterised by self-interest; the only beneficiaries of the 'jobs' they carry out, ostensibly in the interest of the nation, are themselves and other family members. The career of Manuel de Pez is foreshadowed particularly in Tite Barnacle's brand of nepotism and his expedient choice of wife:

> As a Barnacle he had his place, which was a snug thing enough; and as a Barnacle he had of course put his own son Barnacle Junior, in the office. But he had intermarried with a branch of the Stiltstalkings, who were also

[20] Effie L. Erikson, 'The Influence of Charles Dickens on Galdós', *Hispania*, 29 (1936), 421–30 (427).

[21] A. F. Lambert, 'Galdós and the Anti-bureaucratic Tradition', *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*, 53 (1976), 35–49.

[22] Jonathan Smith has provided a detailed account of this in 'Darwin's Barnacles, Dickens's *Little Dorrit*, and the Social Uses of Victorian Seaside Studies', *Literature, Interpretation, Theory*, 10:4 (2000), 327–47.

[23] Charles Dickens, *Little Dorrit* (London: The Gadshill Edition, n.d.), vol. 1, book 1, p. 130.

> better endowed in a sanguineous point of view than with real or personal property. (*Little Dorrit*, p. 130)

Galdós not only portrays the civil service as a corrupt species which protects its own genetic line at the expense of the nation, but as seen in 'Efemérides' in *La desheredada*, the species concerned can mutate:

> [. . .] la lucha por la existencia, ley de leyes, ha llevado a los Pájaros al Gobierno, y éstos no encuentran en la Administración bastantes ramas en que posarse. Algunas Peces de menor tamaño y del género *voracissimus* quedan en oficinas oscuras. Son Peces aladas, transición zoológica entre las dos clases, pues la triunfante tuvo en situaciones anteriores sus avecillas con escamas. (I, 2.1. p. 1086)

Galdós, rather unscientifically, marries the struggle for survival and the ability to mutate to describe a social evolution. This is not the case with Dickens's 'hungry and adhesive Barnacles', who are parasites permanently 'glued to the hull of the nation'. The use of the respective species appears quite apt given that the changes of administration in Britain were relatively smooth, so that the species best adapted are simply those that can cling on to their post and/or are protected by others of their genealogical line. Spain's political instability demanded a change of emphasis; the political expediency of both the Peces and the *Pájaros* are forced to periodically 'transform' into 'flying fish' and 'scaly birds' respectively.

In Chapter 4 of *La desheredada*, 'El célebre Miquis', Galdós further develops his portrayal of Madrid's social fauna already in evidence in *La familia de León Roch* and also in his journalistic writings of the 1860s. In his book review of *Fábulas religiosas y morales* by Felipe Jacinto Sala, as discussed on pp. 23–6, Galdós stated:

> Si en las hermosas tardes de verano se os ocurre dirigir vuestros pasos al Botánico, tendréis ocasión de admirar una multitud de graciosos individuos de la gran familia zoológica, encerrados allí para solaz de los *Buffones* españoles y regodeo de los chicos y nodrizas de la capital.

The free mixing of species and social species on display in Madrid, in the Retiro zoo and in the park itself, is likewise a topic when Augusto Miquis and Isidora go out for the day:

> Pasaban otras parejas como ellos; pasaban perros, algún guardia civil acompañando a una criada decente; pastores conduciendo cabras; pasaban también hormigas, y de cuando en cuando pasaba rapidísima por el suelo la sombra de un ave que volaba por encima de sus cabezas. (I, 1.4.iii. p. 1012)

Again, humanity's proximity to other species is suggested, but here too there is the suggestion that humanity can be subdivided into its own species. The last line quoted, where passing birds are literally casting their shadows over the couple, even recalls Galdós's quoting Víctor Hugo in his article from 1866 (see p. 25). When the couple take a stroll through the Retiro zoo, the captive animals are very deliberately anthropomorphised:

> Un tanto aburrido Miquis de su papel de indicador, iba mostrando a Isidora, jaula por jaula, los lobos entumecidos, las inquietas y feroces hienas, el águila meditabunda, los pintorreados leopardos, los monos acróbatas y el león monomaniaco, aburridísimo, flaco, comido de parásitos, que parece un soberano destronado y cesante. (I, 1.4.ii. p. 1010)

Isidora is quite ignorant of the species on display, and a little later similarly requires Miquis to give a commentary on the various social groups in the Castellana:

> – Aquí, en días de fiesta, verás a todas las clases sociales. Vienen a observarse, a medirse y a ver las respectivas distancias que hay entre cada una, para asaltarse. El caso es subir al escalón inmediato. [. . .] Verás hasta las patronas de huéspedes disfrazadas de personas, y las costureras queriendo pasar por señoritas. Todos se codean y se toleran todos, porque reina la igualdad. (I, 1.4.iv. p. 1015)

Despite these attempts to disguise one's real social and financial status, for Miquis, differentiating between the various social groups is a simple as pointing out the species in the zoo, and given the proximity of the two scenes in the chapter, Galdós is being very deliberate in wanting the reader to understand the comparison through the eyes of Miquis, the young scientist. Isidora, however, sees no parallel, but is instead transfixed by the finery on display and through her fertile imagination transforms horses into mythic beasts:

> Así la realidad se fantaseaba a sus ojos maravillados, tomando dimensiones y formas propias de la fiebre y del arte. La hermosura de los caballos y su grave paso y gallardas cabezadas eran a sus ojos como a los del artista, la inverosímil figura del hipogrifo. (I, 1.4.iv. p. 1014)

Likewise, she regrets not realising sooner that it is the King's coach passing for she would have liked to have shown some respect; nor does she understand the significance of the white mantillas, whereas Miquis refuses to remove his hat. The imported king, like his animal counterpart in the zoo, is soon to be 'destronado y cesante', weakened by smaller but more tenacious beasts.

The species element, more prevalent in *Fortunata y Jacinta* and *Miau*, is already in evidence in *La desheredada*. Notably Encarnación Guillén, *la*

Sanguijuelera, belongs to a social species which is obviously linked to the specific biological species from which she makes her living. In Galdós's following novel, *El amigo Manso*, Doña Cándida is characterised as Máximo Manso's personal *cínife* because of her parasitic dependence on him. Encarnación, however, is no blood-sucker but a hard-working individual. She accuses Mariano of indolence and of being a strain on her resources: '– Ya ves qué lindo buitre me ha puesto Dios en casa' (I, 1.3. p. 1003). She accuses the exploitee of scavenging, but this is more a case of compensating for the Rufetes' financial ruination of herself. In that respect Mariano's lot is determined not genetically by his family line, but by their actions. Martha G. Krow-Lucal attempts to show not only that Encarnación's social function is closely related to the leeches she sells, but also that she fulfils a positive social role:

> [. . .] Encarnación's nickname, like her given name, was not chosen at random; it reflects her curative function (or her attempts at one). On one level the trade of leech-selling is a picturesque one which reminds us that for centuries leeches were a medical instrument; the leeches that Encarnación sells are used to bleed patients. But she herself, on another level, bears a strong relation to her worms; she is certainly not Juan Bou's hated «sanguijuela del pueblo», but rather someone who draws blood (her tongue is sharp enough) and cures sickness at the same time.[24]

However, far from 'curing' Mariano, Encarnación's employment of the boy in the rope factory is instrumental in his subsequent criminal life. His imprisonment and eventual execution are very heavily hinted at in the following passage, particularly the references to the rope itself and *la Sanguijuelera*'s constant chastising of the boy:

> – Es un gañán – dijo Encarnación, examinándole la ropa con tanta severidad como un juez que interroga al criminal ante el cuerpo del delito . . . (1, 3. p. 1002)[25]

Mariano's lack of family support is highlighted again later in the 'Efemérides' where the relative adaptation of Peces and Pájaros to the change of political regime shows not only the latter's ability to change according to their environment, but also the role played by the extensive family network,

[24] Martha G. Krow-Lucal, 'The Evolution of Encarnación in *La desheredada*', *Anales Galdosianos*, 12 (1977), 21–8 (22).

[25] Michael A. Schnepf points out that Galdós foreshadows Mariano's death in much the same way that Dickens does, for example, in *Dombey and Son* where images involving hemp and hemp seed are clear references to hangman's rope. Michael A. Schnepf, 'On the Creation and Execution of "Pecado" in Galdós's *La desheredada*', *Anales Galdosianos*, 34 (1999), 64.

particularly the Pez family. After describing the struggle for financial survival in overtly Darwinian terms, Galdós adds bluntly: 'Mariano torna a ser vagabundo.'

Mariano is not alone in his failings. José de Relimpio y Sastre may not be a criminal but is regarded as useless: 'Era el hombre mejor del mundo. Era un hombre que no servía para nada' (I, 1.8.i. p. 1034). Michael Gordon comments on the 'two conflicting strands' of Don José's character:

> [. . .] on the one hand, his uselessness, ridiculousness, and inadequacy, and, on the other, certain more positive qualities, among which inoffensiveness and selflessness occupy a prominent position.[26]

It is interesting to note how Galdós deals with social types who are not capable, or not deemed capable, of performing any kind of positive function. Peter A. Bly notes that Galdós is at times unsympathetic to Don José:

> In part Galdós chides him for his impotence: the old man simply does not have the force of character to impose his political vision on Isidora, just as he is unable to prevent male passers-by from offering her questionable compliments.[27]

However, the characterisation of Relimpio is more positive than negative in that he is shown to be a decent person whose intentions are generally worthy. Much the same could be said of Frasquito Ponte in *Misericordia*, but the latter is in an even less enviable position as he is unable to adapt to changing circumstances.[28] Galdós's Madrid is awash with characters who appear to defy categorisation because they do not perform any real function, yet even these can be generally classified as *zánganos*.

When his sister-in-law requires a wet-nurse, it is Máximo Manso aided by the jocular Miquis who finds himself charged with the responsibility of hiring a suitable *nodriza*[29] in the chapter '¡Dichoso corazón humanitario!'. Manso is unashamedly repelled by the sight of the wet-nurses. He considers

[26] Michael Gordon, ' "Lo que le falta a un enfermo le sobra a otro": Galdós' Conception of Humanity in *La desheredada*', *Anales Galdosianos*, 12 (1977), 35.

[27] Peter A. Bly, *Galdós's Novel of the Historical Imagination* (Liverpool: Francis Cairns, 1983), pp. 14–15.

[28] 'Persona más inofensiva no creo haya existido nunca; más inútil, tampoco. Que Ponte no había servido nunca para nada, lo atestiguaba su miseria, imposible de disimular en aquel triste accidente de su vida' (III, 16. p. 725). 'La miseria le apartó de sus antiguas amistades y relaciones, y así como su cuerpo se momificaba, su pensamiento se iba quedando fósil' (III, 17. 727). He is also an 'orangután *mal pintao*' who 'se petrificó en el celibato', and who, later in the novel, falls from his horse while those on bicycles win the race.

[29] The role of the wet-nurse has *costumbrista* origins, notably penned in a piece

them to be 'denaturalised', though surely 'dehumanised' would be a more accurate description, and he introduces them as the 'antipático ganado'. The harshness of Manso's description inspires pity in the reader and a certain distaste for Manso's bourgeois values. Manso recognises that the women's plight is due to their 'desgracia y pobreza', but brutally refers to them as 'la escoria de las ciudades mezclada con la hez de las aldeas' (I, 33. p. 1264). Coupled with this lack of sympathy is a sense of humour in this scene which is wicked but nevertheless funny. The humour is inevitable given the bizarre nature of a character like Máximo Manso being directly involved in what is, even without his presence, a peculiar human activity. Augusto Miquis's ready wit keeps the humour flowing which contrasts sharply with the grimness of the *nodrizas*' situation.

The women do not speak, they are spoken about, and physically examined by prospective clients, a process Manso likens to that at a horse market. The *nodrizas* have a social status little above that of an animal; their poverty, misfortune and unattractiveness has given them few options in life, and even then, the decisions appear to have been made for them by their *padres codiciosos*, *maridos* and *arrimados*.

The wet-nurse selected by Miquis, 'la única res que vale algo', had her ear bitten off by a pig as a child and the result of that bestial encounter is what distinguishes her from the rest of the 'herd'. Her background and her identity are at best vague and of little importance to those doing the hiring. Miquis comments, 'Me ha contado que era pastora. No recuerda de dónde le vino la desgracia, ni sabe quién fue el Melibeo . . . Esta gente es así' (I, 33. p. 1264). Her sole importance lies in the function of her body which gives her the social function of being a 'milch cow' for a wealthy family. The only time she breaks her silence is when she is led off by Manso:

> Ella *graznó* algo, mas no lo entendí. Como aldeano que tira del ronzal para llevarse el *animalito* que ha comprado en la feria, así tiré de la manta de lana que la pastora llevaba sobre sus hombros, y dije: 'Vamos.'
>
> (I, 33. p. 1265)

entitled 'La nodriza' by Bretón de los Herreros included in *Los españoles pintados por sí mismos*.

Galdós was not alone among his compatriots in characterising wet-nurses in this way. In *Los pazos de Ulloa* Don Pedro brings home a *nodriza*: 'Pero don Pedro entró impetuosamente, como una ráfaga de viento huracanado. Traía de la mano una muchachona de color de tierra, un castillo de carne: el tipo clásico de la vaca humana', Emilia Pardo Bazán, *Los pazos de Ulloa* (1957), p. 230. Also, in *Paz en la guerra*, Unamuno uses terminology which could be used to describe the dairy herds of the surrounding countryside when he describes 'la novia serena' as 'coloradota y más alegre que unas castañuelas, una buena moza, sanota, ancha de espaldas y de caderas, fuerte y sufrida layadora que anunciaba una madre robusta y una excelente ama de cría'. Miguel de Unamuno, *Paz en la guerra* (Buenos Aires: Escapa Calpe, 1940), p. 69.

Manso also describes her as 'una humana fiera'; the working class are, in the eyes of the bourgeoisie, sub-humans whose purpose is to be occasionally useful to other social classes. Galdós rams home the message when the family of his chosen *nodriza* beseech Manso to take them all home as servants in various capacities. Their sub-human, or certainly sub-European, status is continually reinforced by Galdós:

> Al salir observé que el ronzal arrastraba, con la bestia, otras de la misma especie, a saber: un padre, involucrado también en paño pardo, como el oso en su lana [. . .] dos hermanitos de color de bellota seca, vestidos de estameña recamada de fango, sucios, salvajes [. . .] Y en la calle el venerable cafre que hacía de padre me paró [. . .] Me aturdían, estrujándome, porque hablaban más con las patas delanteras que con la boca.
>
> (I, 33. p. 1265)

The passages cited above, particularly the exaggeration of the *nodriza–vaca* image to a comical and plainly unrealistic degree, allow Galdós rather skilfully to have it both ways: he makes a point while managing not to offend his middle-class readership too much. Manso's pseudo-liberal values are wonderfully exposed by his contempt for the *segoviana*'s family as *cafres* and *salvajes*.[30] When Manso is required to track down the mischievous Rupertico and drag him back by his ear, he makes a characteristically high-minded declaration of anti-racist principle (though even this, in its turn, is somewhat discounted in practice):

> Yo me encargaba de esta penosa comisión, tan disconforme con mis ideas abolicionistas, porque las ayes del morenito me molestaban menos que el insufrible alarido de las señoritas. (I, 8. p. 1206)

It should be noted that Máximo Manso intervenes in another, much darker 'cattle auction', when he disrupts the 'sale' of Irene by the *cínife* Doña Cándida to his brother. The irony is that Manso's role in this case is not that of a compliant purchaser but of an enraged opponent of exploitation. There is a clear difference in the nature of the exploitation in question, but that does not abrogate the quasi-slave status shared by the *nodrizas* and by vulnerable girls like Irene threatened by sexual exploitation. Also common to both

[30] Given the imagery and the terminology of the scene discussed here, it is interesting to note that Darwin, in discussing the 'Mode of Sexual Selection', comments that although 'Kafirs buy their wives,' women in Africa were seen to have some power of selection. He goes on to state that, '[. . .] Mr Leslie, who was intimately acquainted with the Kafirs, says, "it is a mistake to imagine that a girl is sold by her father in the same manner, and with the same authority, with which he would dispose of a cow" '. Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex*, with an introduction by James Moore and Adrian Desmond (Penguin Books: London, 2004), p. 667.

scenarios is the presence of the parasitic go-betweens who, if they are not the *Melibeos* or *arrimados*, are actually related to the unfortunate women. Doña Cándida too – herself characterised parasitically as Máximo Manso's *cínife* – is her victim Irene's aunt. Both episodes, moreover, have wide and disturbing implications with regard to the nineteenth-century marriage market. It is safe to assume that Galdós wishes the reader to see the two scenarios as parallel; simultaneously in Chapter 32, Manso is told he must go and 'buy' a wet-nurse for his brother's child and receives the note from Irene, who is desperate for his help in extricating her from being 'sold' to his brother. Again, while acquiring the wet-nurse, Manso is informed by Miquis that José María is paying Irene frequent visits. It should also be noted that Máximo's surname is an indication of his role in the wet-nurses' scene for he behaves as a *manso vacuno*, the pacific *guía* of a herd of cattle. Furthermore, this is Manso's more general social role in the novel, although ironically it is he who acquires *la segoviana* and who intervenes to prevent his brother's 'purchase' of Irene. Although there are other examples of social species in *El amigo Manso*, such as the *nodrizas* and the *cínife*, it would be going a little far to say that Manso himself falls into this level of classification, but he does nonetheless fulfil a species role in given parts of the novel. That said, the contrast between Manso's attitude towards Irene, whom he idealises and saves from exploitation, and his general attitude towards the family's no less exploited wet-nurse and all her 'breed', demonstrates that he does not quite have the *corazón humanitario* he would like to believe he has:

> Yo maldecía a las nodrizas, y hubiera dado no sé qué por poder hacer justicia en aquélla, más animal que cuantas nos envían montes encartados y pasiegos, de todos los desafueros que cometen las de su oficio.
>
> (I, 32. p. 1262)

Given Manso's claim that he holds 'ideas abolicionistas' which his actions show to be precisely that – 'ideas' – and the two parallel scenarios in which women are on the market, it is safe to assume that Galdós is here very much in control of the humour and the ironies. It is often assumed that Galdós is a liberal only in terms of the second half of the nineteenth century, but it seems clear from the way in which *El amigo Manso* is framed imaginatively that his liberal credentials are more modern than is commonly supposed.

As stated on pp. 16–19, Galdós's approach to characterisation was heavily influenced by Mesonero Romanos. In *Fortunata y Jacinta* he both develops this method of characterisation and includes a homage to the latter. Given that Mesonero Romanos' *nom de plume* was of course *el Curioso Parlante*, it perhaps was not difficult for Galdós to identify to which social species his mentor belonged. Although Galdós does not give us a generic term for the man who 'tiene el alma en la lengua', he does, still early on in his journalistic

career, proffer a quite precise physical description of that social type (ejemplar) renowned purely for his garrulity: 'Es redondo, corpulento, colosal; (. . .) Es viejo: tiene los ojos expresivos, animados; la nariz larga y carnosa; algo parecida a la trompa lírica del conde-duque de Olivares' (Hoar, p. 237). In Don Benito's portrayal of Mesonero Romanos there are some similar traits of the species described above:

> Algo de la bondadosa y al par burlona sonrisa de Rossini hay en la fisonomía del *Curioso parlante*, fisonomía expresiva, llena de gracia y afabilidad, siempre serena, respirando siempre buen humor e ingeniosa travesura. (III, p. 1327)

The two descriptions given are, however, far from identical, and it is only with the figure of Estupiñá in *Fortunata y Jacinta* that a true literary caricature of Mesonero Romanos is to be found. Estupiñá appears in the chapter which bears his name, notably following the long background chapter 'Santa Cruz y Arnáiz. – Vistazo histórico sobre el comercio matritense':

> Era de estatura menos que mediana, regordete y algo encorvado hacia adelante. Los que quieran conocer su rostro miren el de Rossini, ya viejo, como nos le han transmitido las estampas y fotografías del gran músico, y pueden decir que tienen delante el divino Estupiñá. La forma de cabeza, la sonrisa, el perfil, sobre todo, la nariz corva, la boca hundida, los ojos picarescos, eran trasunto fiel de aquella hermosura un tanto burlona, que con la acentuación de las líneas en la vejez se aproximaba algo a la imagen de Polichinela. La edad iba dando al perfil de Estupiñá un cierto parentesco con el de las cotorras. (II, 1.3.iii. pp. 472–3)

In particular it is the reference Galdós draws between Estupiñá and Rossini which seals the comparison. At the end of the above quotation there is reference to Estupiñá's own species, that is, he is a social *cotorra*. Vernon A. Chamberlin sees Estupiñá's physical similarity to Rossini to be an element of Estupiñá's characterisation as a *cotorra*, and cites Rossini's *La gazza ladra* ('The Thieving Magpie') as the link between the character and the composer.[31] To make it crystal clear that the character of Estupiñá is a homage to his mentor, Galdós inserts these pieces of biographical data:

> En 1871 conocí a este hombre, que fundaba su vanidad en *haber visto toda la historia de España* en el presente siglo. Había venido al mundo en 1803, y se llamaba hermano de fecha de Mesonero Romanos, por haber nacido,

[31] Vernon A. Chamberlin, 'Aristophanes' *The Birds* and the Ornithological Tour de Force in *Fortunata y Jacinta*', *Hispanic Review*, 55 (1987), 171. In the accompanying footnote Chamberlin points out that Galdós makes brief discussion of *La gazza ladra* in an article reprinted in Hoar, p. 248.

> como éste, el 19 de julio del citado año. Una sola frase suya probará su inmenso saber en esta historia viva que se aprende con los ojos.
>
> (II, 1.3.iii. p. 468)

Estupiñá also functions as a source of information for the narrator as well as for other characters, notably Doña Barbarita. Estupiñá is an example of a social breed: Don Plácido's parrot-like garrulity defines his character and to some extent his roles within the novel. In one sense he is but a menial servant and clearly not a 'friend of the family', his ill-defined role being closer to that of a domestic 'pet' than an employee. Most fittingly, he is a development of the very kind of social species with which Mesonero Romanos populated his *costumbrista* works. This tribute to his mentor at the beginning of the novel is followed by examples of Galdós's development of his style, upgraded to its full Darwinian potential.

In *La desheredada*, the *obrero-sol*, Juan Bou, is dubbed *ursus spelœus*, his scientific name although not echoing the same beast of his Catalan surname, reflects his characterisation as tough and hard-working. In 'Los peces (Sermón)' the reader is informed that Manuel Pez has earned himself a more complex Latin nickname:

> Amados hermanos míos, recordemos la opinión que acerca de esta gente formó el *Apóstol de las Escuelas*, Augusto Miquis, manchego. De sus profundos estudios ictiológicos sacó la clasificación siguiente: Orden de los *malacopterigios abdominales*. Familia, *barbus voracissimus*. Especie, *remora vastatrix*. (I, 1.12.i. p. 1054)

In *Fortunata y Jacinta*, it is Maxi Rubín and his classmates who are mockingly labelled with Linnaeus's binomial nomenclature:

> Los chicos de la clase de Botánica se entretenían en ponerse motes, semejantes a las nomenclaturas de Linneo. A un tal Anacleto, que se las tiraba de muy fino y muy señorito, le llamaban *Anacletus Obsequiosissimus*; a Encinas, que era de muy corta estatura, le llamaban *Quercus Gigantea*. Olmedo era muy abandonado, y le caía admirablemente el *Ulmus Sylvestris*. Narciso Puerta era feo, sucio y maloliento. Pusiéronle *Psuedo-Narcissus Odoripherus*. A otro que era muy pobre y gozaba de un empleíto le pusieron *Christophorus Oficinalis*. Y, por último, a Maximiliano Rubín, que era feísimo, desmañado y de cortos alcances, se le llamó durante toda la carrera *Rubinius Vulgaris*. (II, 2.1.ii. p. 596)

Maxi is not categorised as a *zángano*, although he is lazy and impractical, but his physical make-up means he is regarded by Fortunata as 'un bicho raro', despite the fact that on meeting her we are informed that 'el molusco empezaba a ser hombre'. There is some suspicion regarding Maxi's

genealogy which is introduced and then dismissed by the narrator, who cites his premature birth and the fact that he was suckled on goat's milk as the causes of his shortcomings.

The arrangements for finding a wet-nurse for Juan Evaristo are made by those who are poised to exploit the situation and make sure mother and baby are parted as soon as possible. The references to the *nodrizas* made by Estupiñá echo Máximo Manso's experiences. The latter mused, 'Faltaban en la pared los escudos de Pas, Santa María de Nieva, Ríofrío, Cabuérniga y Cerbreros, como inscripción ornamental' (I, 33. p. 1265), while Estupiñá informs Segunda:

> Ya me he enterado del artículo de amas, y tengo noticias de tres muy buenas: la una, pasiega; otra, de santa María de Nieva, y la tercera, de la parte de Asturias, con cada ubre como la de una vaca suiza. ¡Género excelente! (II, 4.6.x. p. 961)

The same basic joke is employed that the women serve the same function as cows, and therefore come from the traditional milk-producing areas of Spain. There is a difference in the quality, but then Estupiñá has had more time to pick and choose than Manso, and also fancies himself as something of an expert:

> Buenas mujeres, y no tienen pretensiones de cobrar un sentido. Como leche, *señá* Segunda, como leche, creo que la asturiana nos ha de dar mejor resultado que ninguna. Tengo yo un ojo . . . (II, 4.6.x. p. 961)

In both *El amigo Manso* and *Fortunata y Jacinta* the portrayal of wet-nurses as milch cows for middle-class families is treated with a great deal of levity and both passages are clearly meant to be comical. This does not disguise the fact that the women are bought and sold at market like cattle, which, it is safe to assume, is not very amusing for the individuals concerned. Augusto Miquis' remark that 'Esta gente es así', neatly sums up the middle-class attitude. He is specifically referring to *la segoviana*'s forgotten personal history: where she comes from, the identity of *el Melibeo*; only that she was a shepherdess is known. She has been stripped of her individuality (apart from the missing ear), but the personal details of her life are irrelevant to her function and will remain 'forgotten'. The classification of a sector of women from what would now be termed the 'underclass' defines them as a social species with a function directly compared to an animal's. The genealogy of *la segoviana* is non-existent – her status relies on her misfortune; only the poverty of her family background is certain. Nor does she bear a Christian or surname – only the milk 'brand names' suggested by Manso are offered as verbal means of identification. As with Fortunata, whose surname is never used, those at the bottom of the social scale do not get amusing or

imposing personal labels but are labelled as animals; because they serve as animals, it is suggested that their being given brand names underlines the fact that they are only valued for their product.

Fortunata herself is a *nodriza* to the young birds in her care at the family business, but when Juanito cynically labels her 'Hormiguita' on account of her thrift, this enables the exploitation of Fortunata to be viewed from a fresh perspective. Darwin, in the chapter 'Instinct' in the *Origin*, discusses at some length the slave-making instincts of various species of ants. On the *Formica (Polyerges) rufescens* he states:

> This ant is absolutely dependent on its slaves; without their aid, the species would certainly become extinct in a single year. [. . .] They are incapable of making their own nests, or feeding their own larvae.[32]

Furthermore Darwin states:

> [. . .] in the Mexican Myrmecocystus, the workers of one caste never leave the nest; they are fed by the workers of another caste, and they have an enormously developed abdomen which secretes a sort of honey, supplying the place of that secreted by the aphides, or the domestic cattle as they may be called, which our European ants guard or imprison. (*The Origin of Species*, p. 194)

The above descriptions provide a fertile ground for similes to be made with human societies; and particularly pertinent with regard to the wet-nurses is Darwin's reference to 'domestic cattle' – not only do some species contain 'slave castes', they even have, in a sense, a lower species within their ranks. During Juanito and Jacinta's honeymoon, Cataluña provides the backdrop for Galdós to tie up his image of society made up of exploitable sub-species. The latter's commercial value will relate directly to the Santa Cruz family's exploitation of Fortunata:

> En Barcelona estuvo Jacinta muy distraída con la animación y el fecundo bullicio de aquella gran colmena de hombres. [. . .] Durante tres días, la historia aquella del huevo crudo, la mujer seducida y la familia de insensatos que se amansaban con orgías quedó completamente olvidada o perdida en un laberinto de máquinas ruidosas y ahumadas, o en el triquetraque de los telares. Los de Jacquard, con sus incomprensibles juegos de cartones agujereados, tenían ocupada y suspensa la imaginación de Jacinta, que veía aquel prodigio y no lo quería creer. ¡Cosa estupenda!
>
> – Está una viendo las cosas todos los días, y no piensa en cómo se hacen, ni se le ocurre averiguarlo. Somos tan torpes, que al ver una oveja

[32] Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species* (ed.), (intro.) Gillian Beer (Oxford: OUP, 1998), p. 178.

> no pensamos que en ella están nuestros gabanes. El carmín ha sido un bichito, y el negro, una naranja agria, y los verdes y azules, carbón de piedra. Pero lo más raro de todo es que cuando vemos un burro, lo que menos pensamos es que de él salen los tambores. (II, 1.5.iii. p. 487)

Having witnessed the exploitation of women in the Catalan factories Jacinta concludes that they end up thinking «Vale más ser mujer mala que máquina buena», but simultaneously her interest in whether her husband may have sired a *hueverito* is uppermost in her mind. She has not fully made the connection between humanity's exploitation of animals, human industry's ability to turn these into something far removed from Nature's 'intention', and the potential 'use' Fortunata will serve for her own privileged family.[33] To underline his point, in the following sub-chapter Galdós has the newly-weds dine on two animals associated with Fortunata, that is *pájaros fritos* and *pasteles adornados con hormigas*. Although Jacinta's maternal instinct will demand that she goes in search of Juanito's offspring when she has not borne any of her own, the question of why she wants to raise another woman's child still needs to be dealt with. We know that as soon as she believes she has found Juanito's legitimate offspring the attention she showers on her protégée Adoración will cease, but the question needs to be asked as to why she should switch her affections to the child of her husband's mistress? She admittedly needs to provide an heir for the Santa Cruz family, but presumably the fact that she and Juanito are cousins and that before their arranged engagement he looked upon her 'más como hermana que como prima' also does much to stimulate her interest in the 'false *Pituso*' and Juan Evaristo. No matter who the mother of Juanito's children might have been, Jacinta would still be closely related to them. This is another aspect of this scenario which can be related to insect societies where sterile females serve fertile queens to whom they are sisters; their genetic proximity means that their industry is self-serving although it may appear otherwise.[34]

[33] It is worth noting that some 20 years before *Fortunata y Jacinta* was written, after a visit to the then recently opened 'Museo antropológico de la calle de Alcalá', Galdós toyed with the notion that human pelts might one day become a material used in the production of goods. On considering one human specimen in the museum he muses, 'Si él ha muerto y reposa en santa paz, lo que le dio individualidad, formas y fisonomía, existe aun curtido y adobado. Un corte de tijeras, y se hace un tambor. Unos cuantos puntos crispinianos, y se hace un par de zapatos. Un poco de arte, y se hace un forro de misal' (Shoemaker 1972, p. 539).

[34] Such ideas were not being propagated solely by Darwin: when citing Lubbock's observation that some ants bury their dead (and therefore are shown to exhibit a degree of 'religiosity'), Pedro Estasen takes the opportunity 'para dar gracias al sabio naturalista vice-canciller de la Universidad de Londres por el regalo que me hizo cuando estuvo en Barcelona de un ejemplar de su apreciabilísima monografia sobre las costumbres de las hormigas'. 'Contribución al estudio de la evolución de las instituciones religiosas o materiales para llegar a la sintesis transformista de las instituciones humanas. Artículo

Fortunata serves her bourgeois masters as an egg-supplier, but not in the manner in which her aunt and uncle do. Yet the acquistion of Juan Evaristo by the Santa Cruz family should not be seen solely as an act of exploitation. Fortunata's value to Juanito may be her sexuality and her value to Jacinta may be her fertility, but, in an act which fuses vengeance and altruism (a concept discussed later on pp. 139–44) she is for once as much exploiter as exploited when she provides the Santa Cruz family with an heir.

During the centenary of *Miau*'s publication in 1988 two articles appeared which for the first time gave serious attention to the social Darwinian dynamic present in that novel, namely 'Social Darwinism: An Unnoticed Aspect of Galdós's Animal Imagery in *Miau*' and 'El bestiario de *Miau*'.[35] In the former, Vernon A. Chamberlin proffers the opinion that 'The animal-like struggle for ascendancy and survival in *Miau* has perhaps escaped comment because Galdós does not emphasise this aspect until the novel is well advanced' (300). It is my contention that it remained unnoticed not because the species are initially presented in a light-hearted manner but rather, because 'naturalistic' imagery in Galdós's work has so persistently been attributed to the influence of French literary naturalism. This stance has blinded critics to what is an overtly Darwinian system of imagery in the novel and for it to remain an 'unnoticed aspect' for a century has deprived the criticism of *Miau* and by implication of many of Galdós's other works of an important dimension.

Luis Villaamil's grandmother and two aunts have been nicknamed the *Miaus* on account of their cat-like appearance. Galdós has a problem with portraying these characters who like so many others are at the same time depicted as both people and animals. Through Luis's eyes Galdós seduces the reader into suspending our disbelief a little further and allowing us to view the human characters as beasts. Nicole Malaret cites a key passage in this regard when she discusses the workings of the boy's imagination and how he comes to see his relatives as cats: 'la idea de que las tres mujeres eran gatos en *dos pies y vestidos de gente*, como los que hay en la obra *Los animales pintados por sí mismos*' (67). On the use of Luis's imagination Malaret comments:

> Esta confusión en la mente del niño entre realidad y ficción que consiste en admitir que los familiares pudieran ser animales es algo más que una

primero. La religiosidad en los animales.' *Revista contemporánea*, xiii. Vol. I, 1878, 66, n.1. Furthermore, in his personal library Galdós had another source of ant references in J. Michellet, *L'Insecte*, 4th edn (Paris: no publisher given, 1860).

35 Vernon A. Chamberlin, 'Social Darwinism: An Unnoticed Aspect of Galdós's Animal Imagery in *Miau*', *Romance Quarterly*, 35:3 (1988), 299–305 and Nicole Malaret, 'El Bestiario de *Miau*', *Anales Galdosianos*, 23 (1988), 47–55.

> alucinación infantil; es una reflexión del autor sobre la sociedad y por esto la comparación llega más allá del mero parecido físico. (48)

I do not disagree with Malaret's point, but would argue that Galdós is doing more than using the license of a child's imagination to open up a novelistic possibility. His reference to *Los animales pintados por sí mismos* is important for two reasons. First, it acknowledges a specific source for this technique of characterisation; and secondly, it serves as a literary shorthand, since a large proportion of his readership would have been familiar with this work. This meant that Galdós did not have to spend too long, particularly at the start of the novel, in overcoming the considerable obstacle of presenting animalised characters in what would generally be termed Realist fiction. By using the literary and pictorial references already embedded in the mind's eye of his readership, Galdós can ingeniously implant the idea of animalised social species into the plot, in what is after all a highly unusual portrait of society for a Spanish novel of its era.

Although head of the *Miau* household, Don Ramón Villaamil, does not himself physically resemble a domestic cat like his wife and daughters, but is instead a 'tigre tísico'. His grandson is never described as being physically cat-like, but as Malaret observes, he is a *Miau* because his family are, not because he himself looks like a cat. His classmates and even his teacher call him by the family nickname; society has already labelled him as member of a distinct species, or, as Malaret states:

> A fuerza de vivir con las Miaus, se le han imprimido los caracteres de la comunidad felina, que vienen a ser caracteres adquiridos, en virtud de la ley de herencia de las variaciones expuesta en las teorías de Darwin. (49)

This of course is not the law professed by Darwin; Luis's feline characteristics are not a direct result of his biological inheritance, as Chamberlin concludes:

> Although in *Miau* Galdós continued to use animal imagery to describe the human species in its social habitat – as he had done so successfully in *La desheredada* and *Lo prohibido* – he now chose to make the dynamics of that imagery flow not from adverse heredity, but from a human predicament similar to that of a handicapped animal in a vicious environment. (304)

Luis's 'inherited' traits are more a product of his familial and social environment, and, as such, are the result of Lamarckian transformation. Lamarck proposed that individuals were modified in their own lifetime and then passed these modifications on to their offspring. The scenario depicted in *Miau* leans towards a social and psychological application of Lamarckian theory. What exactly Luis inherits from his family biologically is not clear, although

several critics have claimed that Luis's dreams are actually hallucinations and have assumed therefore that the boy suffers from the same delusions as his grandfather, and is potentially as mentally unstable as his late mother and Abelarda. Theodore A. Sackett and Germán Gullón have argued, successfully I believe, that Luis's visions are in fact dreams and not the result of mental disturbance and therefore genetic inheritance ceases to be an issue.[36] Furthermore, as Eamonn Rodgers has established, Víctor Cadalso's role is instrumental in the mental deterioration of his late wife, Don Ramón's subsequent demise and in Abelarda's savage attacks on her nephew.[37] In this way, Luisito does inherit characteristics of his 'species', but he acquires them from his family during his lifetime. Goldie Morgentaler has identified that Pip's development in *Great Expectations* was a departure from Dickens's earlier novels in the fact that genetic inheritance ceased to be a factor:

> Dickens, whose early belief in the primacy of hereditary factors in the formation of human identity weakened as he matured, took from Darwin's theory many things, but the centrality of heredity to human development was not one of them. Instead, Darwin's *Origin* seems to have inspired Dickens to wonder what human development would look like if heredity was entirely discarded as a factor in the formation of self. The result was a novel in which adoption, adaptation, and the vagaries of life experience play a far more crucial role in the development of personality than inherited traits passed on by parent to child.[38]

Much the same could be said of Luis Villaamil's treatment by Galdós. Whereas in *La desheredada* it appears that the Rufetes do share certain characteristics, after Galdós's parodical portrayal of the Bueno de Guzmán family's shared traits in *Lo prohibido*, there can be little doubt that the novelist made environmental factors the most important in the psychological make-up of his characters. Malaret observes 'un tipo de mímesis' in the *Miau* family. Abelarda is not as markedly feline as her mother and sister but, the narrator states, 'al juntarse con las otras dos parecía tomar de ellas ciertos rasgos fisiognómicos' (112). This is a problematic statement; Abelarda is not shown here to be acquiring a mode of behaviour but 'ciertos rasgos fisiognómicos'. Galdós does not appear to be describing a logical scenario; physical features do not simply 'rub off' on people, even if they are in close proximity! But this was not such an absurd notion in 1880s Spain. First, the

36 Theodore A. Sackett, 'The Meaning of *Miau*', *Anales Galdosianos*, 4 (1969), 30 and Benito Pérez Galdós, *Miau*, introduction by Germán Gullón (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1997), pp. 38–9.

37 Eamonn Rodgers (ed.), *Miau*, Critical Guides to Spanish Texts, 23 (London: Grant & Cutler, 1978), p. 29 and p. 45.

38 Goldie Morgentaler, 'Mediating on the Low: A Darwinian Reading of *Great Expectations*', *Studies in English Literature 1500–1900*, 38:4 (1988), 707–21.

word *fisiognómicos* indicates that we are in the realms of pseudoscience, although Galdós's literary usage of this discipline should not be taken as a sign of a belief in or adherence to it. His frequent use of physiognomy is a simple device where it is to be understood that a character's face is the mirror of their personality. Therefore, by implication, Abelarda's propensity to acquire the facial characteristics of her mother and sister should be taken to mean that her character is likewise moulded by her immediate environment. But it should also be noted that there were people, including Emilia Pardo Bazán, who *did* believe such an acquisition of facial characteristics to be a genuine phenomenon.[39] Pardo Bazán's naive suggestion owes more to Lamarck than to Darwin, but it should be noted that Lamarckian theory is more readily usable in fiction where the changes in an individual can be expressed, whereas with Darwinian theory it would have to be in a generational context.

Why Galdós has made his central characters feline is a moot point; his sources of inspiration for creating a household of *Miaus* has been attributed to Cervantes by Weber,[40] meanwhile Chamberlin notes that:

> [*Madrileños*] traditionally referred to themselves as *gatos*, and we may be sure that Galdós wished his readers to enjoy this reference, for he describes one character as "pequeño, genuino *gato* de Madrid, rostro enjuto y color de cera, bigote y perilla teñidos de negro, melenas largas y bien atusadas". (300)[41]

It should also be noted that Villaamil is named a *tigre enfermo* in the alpha manuscript and, as has already been noted (p. 34), the old lion past its prime in the Retiro zoo is referred to as a *cesante* in *La desheredada*. It is safe to assume therefore that this Darwinistic use of feline imagery had been on Galdós's mind for some time. Furthermore, the bestial behaviour exhibited in *Miau* was likewise a feature of his novels before 1888. In *Fortunata y Jacinta*, *Mauricia la Dura* is shown not only to display periodic atavistic savagery, but

[39] Harry L. Kirby points out that Pardo Bazán's understanding of evolutionary theory is flawed in many areas, notably, 'she erroneously observes that Spaniards who have lived in Manila "mudan de color y aún de fisonomía, y transmiten esta mudanza a sus hijos"', quoted by Harry L. Kirby Jr, 'Pardo Bazán, Darwinism and *La Madre Naturaleza*', *Hispania*, 47 (1964), 734.

[40] Robert J. Weber, *The Miau Manuscript of Benito Pérez Galdós*, University of California Publications in Modern Philology, no. 72 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California, 1964), p. 12.

[41] Galdós extends the same device in *Lo prohibido*, when the holidaying *madrileños* are seen to show great interest in the rather pathetic naval vessel on display. The narrator comments, 'Los *gatos* de Madrid se quedaban con medio palmo de boca abierta admirando la limpieza y el orden de a bordo, [. . .] la presteza con que los marineros suben como ratones por la jarcia'. (II, 2.4.ii. p. 344)

also to display feline characteristics to the point of catching a mouse and toying with it in las Micaelas. Abelarda and her late sister are also prone to bouts of characteristically feline retrogression. Malaret acknowledges the influence of the *Origin* on Galdós's descriptions of the atavistic aggression displayed by several other characters in *Miau*, but in particular by Abelarda, and she cites this passage:

> [. . .] como las fieras enjauladas y entumecidas recobran, al primer rasguño que hacen al domador, toda su ferocidad, y con la vista y el olor de la primera sangre pierden la apatía perezosa del cautiverio, así Abelarda, en cuanto derribó y clavó las uñas a Luisito, ya no fue mujer, sino el ser monstruoso creado por un tris por la insana perversión de la naturaleza femenina. (II, 2.4.ii. p. 343)

The woman's rage destroys her self-control – in 'ya no fue mujer' Galdós makes it explicit that she has been momentarily taken over by instincts which civilisation has failed to quell completely. Abelarda has been classified by Galdós as belonging to a specific social species, and although the description is similar to those of Mauricia's and Fortunata's respective bestial regressions, in Abelarda's case her regression compliments her feline status. Mauricia does have many feline characteristics, but this is not her social category. In this regard both she and Fortunata are seen as mavericks who need to be rounded up and brought to heel. Fortunata's social role as *gallina*– egg-supplier does not so neatly accommodate her tigerish bouts of aggression. Malaret asserts that Villaamil's 'agresividad no es innata ni gratuita', but to dismiss the animal atavism displayed by Villaamil and indeed by other characters as purely a product of his social environment only tells half the story. After all, Darwinism diminished the supposed gulf between humanity and other living creatures. Particularly in the *Descent*, Darwin makes plain his belief that we share a vast array of emotional responses with other animals. In the 'law of the jungle' society under which the Villaamils are struggling to compete, their social environment unsurprisingly elicits instinctive, bestial responses. These responses can be viewed either as a momentary reversion to an animal state or as part and parcel of being human, that is, it is not because of degeneration, but because human beings are to some degree still animals.

Another possible source of reference for Galdós may have been Edgar Quinet's *La creación*, where he discusses mankind's belligerency and forms a possible link between Fortunata and Mauricia's status as beasts and *amazonas*:

> El retroceso al tiempo en que aun no existía la humanidad, el reinado de los dientes de la sierpe, de las garras, de las escamas, de las quijadas poderosas. El hombre desaparece en ella: se cubre de una coraza como de un sistema de rugosas escamas; se arma de la espada como de una garra de

> leon o de tigre. Vedle ahí convertido en león, en tigre, en oso de caverna, en serpiente tifón: ¿le reconoceis? (pp. 436–7)

The selfishness which is at the heart of the scheme of social Darwinism in *Miau* is caused by human beings being driven by instincts, and this generates a tension between whether we judge the characters' actions to be amoral or immoral in consequence. To what extent we consider ourselves to be animals is the key issue, and having animalised the characters of *Miau* in the beta manuscript, this is clearly a question Galdós wished his readers to consider. This egotism is self-perpetuating: an environment moulded by the self-serving favours the self-serving. This is a depressing scenario, and Galdós offers us very little as an escape from this stifling jungle. The author does not proffer any adequate spiritual solutions: even the retreat into the imagination is poor compensation for society's losers. Chamberlin links Galdós's portrayal of the atavistic tendencies of the Villaamil women with Darwin's assertion that species have but three choices, to 'adapt, flee or be destroyed'. In Abelarda's circumstances these three options are respectively an unhappy marriage to Ponce, elopement with Víctor, or to commit suicide by throwing herself off the viaduct on the calle de Segovia. The flight, namely, the never-to-happen elopement, is more of a flight into Abelarda's internal reality. Rodgers describes Abelarda as 'vapid' and few would argue, but not only does she recognise her own mediocrity, she is also aware of her inability to transform herself into anything else. The opportunities afforded to her by external reality are far from savoury, whereas Víctor's advances themselves belong to hackneyed fiction. This is also a gender issue, as many of the male characters are but *zánganos* and *ordinarios*, yet still have opportunities to improve their lot. Abelarda on the other hand only has her imagination as a coping mechanism to deal with the mediocrity of her existence. It is therefore hardly surprising that she is prone to 'let off steam' on occasions. Weber, however, views it differently and cites a key passage to demonstrate his point:

> Since her attacks upon Luisito are best explained by a congenital physical disease, they fall outside the moral issue.
>
> Esta hostilidad hacia la pobre criatura era semejante a la que se inició la víspera en el corazón de Abelarda contra su propio padre, hostilidad contraria a la naturaleza, fruta, sin duda, de una de esas auras epileptiformes que subvierten los sentimientos primarios en el alma de la mujer B:511. (Weber, p. 73)

Weber takes the narrator's assessment at face value, without questioning whether or not Abelarda's *hostilidad* is actually 'contraria a la naturaleza'. If anything her behaviour is very natural given the circumstances in which she finds herself; it is, however, contrary to the way nineteenth-century society wished to see itself. It is worth remembering that Abelarda's suffering takes place behind closed doors – those a rung lower down the social scale such as

Mauricia vent their *hostilidad* in full public view and are given worse labels than '*Miau'*. The real root of Abelarda's frustration is similar to her father's, in that is she is unable to compete successfully, in her case in the marriage market. Her only genuine offer comes from the hapless Ponce and therefore even a cruel egotist such as Víctor is a welcome prospect. The main reason why she attacks Luis is that he is weaker than her; she can only take out her frustration on someone lower down the pecking order, as Víctor can do with her, and Luis sees himself doing with Posturitas.

The atavism displayed in *Miau* and other novels cannot simply be regarded as a distancing mechanism. This conclusion implies that such behaviour is nothing but a fictive device, whereas everyday experience tells us that people frequently lose control and carry out actions which appear to be bestial. Galdós lived in a era of Spanish history when there was a bountiful supply of barbarity carried out under the conditions of war, as well as in the degrading living conditions of many of Don Benito's fellow citizens. It is not just Spanish society, but humanity which finds itself at a difficult juncture. From being the 'end-product' of universal creation, mankind has to come to terms with being nothing other than an 'accident' or 'by-product' of an unguided process. What is more, elements of our pre-civilised and pre-human past are still with us and are wont to resurface given the chance. That is say that the *Miaus*' atavism does complement their feline status, but it should not be forgotten that outbreaks of violence are not limited to any one group or social class. Juanito Santa Cruz, for instance, takes part in the San Daniel riots (a laudable revolutionary social awareness is unlikely in his case), becomes aggressive when drunk on his honeymoon, and dishes out a nasty beating to Maxi Rubín, yet he is not compared to a beast. Or rather, he bears the name of an exceptionally well-regarded beast, noble in its mythological reputation and royal in its associations: he is *El Delfín*. The difference lies in the fact that *El Delfín* is at the top of the social hierarchy and as such can exercise control over his future in a way that Abelarda, for example, cannot. His status as a 'hunter of exploitable animals' underlines that, from a social Darwinian perspective, he is superior to the lower orders, although in moral terms he is *la escoria de la ciudad*. Although not moneyed like Juanito, Víctor Cadalso has the advantage of being male and also a *gallardo modelo*, and he similarly finds himself in a position to exploit those lower down the scale. It is the inhuman cruelty displayed by Víctor and Juanito which results in the respective atavistic violence of Abelarda and Fortunata; it is society's victims who are treated as animals, and their occasional bouts of bestial behaviour are taken as an affirmation of their animal status, despite its being clear that the fault lies with the exploiters rather than the exploited. Therefore, it is worth bearing in mind that scenes of bestial regression are part of a defining process determined by middle-class attitudes and frequently shared by the narrator. Galdós's readership may well have identified with the narrator's view point, but would have found that this was

at the same time contradicted by the vein of tragedy that runs through the Villaamil household.

The animalisation then, is implemented in such a way that, although the reader is drawn into envisaging the characters as humanoid beasts (notably the female *Miaus*), we are not usually allowed to forget their human status. However, the image of Mendizábal as a gorilla cannot, I find, be dropped from the imagination so easily. That Mendizábal is openly referred to as proof of Darwin's 'hipótesis audaces' cements his representation as semi-human in the mind's eye and he never makes it further up the scale than that. Although there is clearly intentional comedy in his characterisation, it is important that he retains his ape-status because he is a throwback in a way that the other characters are not; that is, he embodies an outdated, simplistic, reactionary mindset as well as fulfilling the role of a 'beast' immersed in the social struggle. As with the traditional *costumbrista* species, Mendizábal's external features are an all too obvious clue to his character, but unlike his literary forebears, Galdós has the opportunity to use evolutionary theory as a device to present the qualities of Mendizábal and those of his (social) ilk – as a less developed species, still able to co-exist with the more sophisticated species. In fact his very backwardness, both his brand of blind conservatism and simple-mindedness, would be of service to many in the power structure. He may be a throwback, but unlike Villaamil he has not lost his usefulness to others and can therefore retain a position, albeit lowly, within the social hierarchy.

Malaret takes a different approach; in recognizing Mendizábal's reversion to bestial instinct in his pursuit of Villaamil she claims that he embodies 'toda la sociedad animalesca animada por el egoísmo y la injusticia'. This may be true of many of the characters which inhabit the civil service in *Miau*, but as stated above Mendizábal does not really fall into the same catagory as the Peces or Víctor Cadalso as he has neither the foresight nor the ability to manipulate to gain the success they do. Bly suggests a more enlightened point of view with regard to the throwback gorilla:

> [. . .] what Villaamil fails to realize is that Mendizábal is a silent reminder that had Spanish politics after 1833 taken a different course and the Carlists, not Queen Cristina's Liberals, triumphed in the First Carlist War, he and the other functionaries in Pantoja's office, whether of *progresista* or *moderado* persuasion, would never have enjoyed their comfortable positions. (Bly 1983, p. 130)

Certainly the differing purposes of the animalisation technique render generalisations about it inadequate. To take another example, Doña Pura takes 'las penas de la vida' and turns them into something sweet, 'como la abeja, que cuanto chupa lo convierte en miel'. Were it not for the Darwinian scheme

present in the novel the bee analogy would not be worth further consideration, but the allusions to animal retrogression put it in a different light, although here it is ironic that Pura's brand of romanticism is described in such naturalistic terms. In light of the *Origin*, Dickens had also pondered on a bee's faculties and saw something human in its abilities, and by implication something of a bee in the human:

> [. . .] the honey-making architectural bee, low down in the scale of life with its insignificant head, its little boneless body, and gauzy wing, is our type of industry and skill.[42]

The implication is simple enough, that there appear to be traits of animal behaviour which we have inherited and these are not just restricted to bouts of bestial violence. What is different about the bee analogy applied to Pura is that it describes the processes of her imagination. In the case of Pura and her daughters the use of the imagination is a form of escapism from the tedium of their lives and for Abelarda in particular it is a source of temporary self-delusion. For Galdós, the imagination is, of course, the source of his fictional creativity, and the attempt to pin down the source of such a capacity raises questions which he as a novelist clearly asked himself on many occasions, as is evident for instance in the opening chapters of *El amigo Manso.* The evolutionary purpose of the faculty of imagination is a subject examined in greater depth later (pp. 165–77), but it should be seen as an important aspect of the internal, psychological struggle of the protagonists in *Miau*.

It is appropriate at this juncture to consider the importance of ontogenetic recapitulation in the outbreaks of animal atavism displayed by many of Galdós's characters, and also its import in the developmental and hierarchical schemes at work in *Miau*. Søren Løvtrup defines ontogenetic recapitulation thus:

> The development of the individual organism obeys the same laws as the development of the animal series; that is to say the higher animal, in its gradual evolution, essentially passes through the permanent organic states which lies below it. This statement, representing the so-called 'Meckel-Serres law', clearly asserts that the embryo passes through stages corresponding to the *adults* of lower forms.[43]

[42] Levine 1988, p. 127, reproduced from: Charles Dickens, 'Our Nearest Relation', *All the Year Round* (May 28, 1859), 114–15. Similarly, as discussed on pp. 63–4 in *Fortunata y Jacinta*, Galdós compares the Catalan factories to *colmenas* and Fortunata's natural hard-work ethic makes her *una hormiga*.

[43] Søren Løvtrup, *Darwinism: The Refutation of a Myth* (London: Croom Helm, 1987), pp. 67–8.

One of the co-formulators of this law, Serres, phrased it as follows:

> An animal high in the organic scale only reaches this rank by passing through all the intermediate states which separate it from the animals placed below it. Man only becomes man after traversing transitional organisatory states which assimilate him first to the fish, then to reptiles, then to birds and mammals.[44]

Haeckel coined the phrase 'ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny'; in other words the embryos of higher animals pass through the adult forms of lower organisms. He understood the importance of ontogenetic recapitulation and opted for the Meckel-Serres (as opposed to von Baer's) version of recapitulation in his Biogenetic Law, but as Løtrup states, this presented its problems:

> [Meckel-Serres's] recapitulation leads to quite baroque consequences, for instance that the human child represents the adult form of an ancestor. For this reason Darwin, and still more Haeckel, had to rely upon various secondary mechanisms to ensure agreement between life and theory.
>
> (p. 68)

This scheme of development predated the *Origin* by over half a century, but took on greater prominence in the light of Darwinian theory. One of the major consequences of ontogenetic recapitulation was that up to a point higher animals had a development parallel to that of much simpler organisms. As has been stated, the focus tended to be on the developing foetus, but there was some debate as to the nature of the development. For instance, there are some notable differences between the Meckel-Serres Law and von Baer's Law. Ruse comments:

> Both sides see general resemblances in early embryos. Dealing with vertebrates, for example, both see the early embryo in all forms as being like the adult form of the most primitive vertebrates (lowest down the scale or closest to the type), the primitive fish. But the transcendentalists see the embryo as being exactly like an adult fish; the von Baerian sees it as exactly like an embryonic fish and only approximately like an adult fish.
>
> (Ruse 1981, p. 96)

The implications for humanity were potentially huge. For example, as stated above, the prospect that 'the human child represents the adult form of an ancestor' would clearly cause much consternation. The 'ancestor' could be a less developed form of human being or from even lower down the evolutionary scale. Also, if in his embryonic and juvenile phases of development

[44] Michael Ruse, *The Darwinian Revolution* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1981), p. 95.

he was in parallel with the adulthood of lower life forms, adult modern man could share traits with such organisms which did not sit comfortably with mankind's perception of itself. It is worth noting that Quinet applies 'la doctrina de la embriogenia' to the whole of human history and beyond, concluding:

> El paralelismo entre el desarrollo del gérmen en el individuo y el desarrollo del universo organizado puede seguirse en evidentísmos rasgos sobre la frente de los pueblos y de los Estados. (p. 361)

There are also implications for the treatment of 'subject races' which will be touched upon here, but the main focus will be on children, and Luisito Villaamil in particular. In his analysis of the *Miau* manuscripts, Robert Weber rightly draws a parallel between scenes taken from *El Doctor Centeno* and the opening passage from *Miau*. I cite here the relevant texts, but have also included the beginning of the first paragraph cited by Weber together with the end of the preceding one, as well as the final Beta version and part of the Alpha version of *Miau*:

> *El Doctor Centeno*
>
> La inquietud, la rebeldía, el mareo, la invención de peregrinas diabluras eran lo frecuente y lo más propio de estómagos vacíos. Quién gastaba su poca saliva en mascar y amasar papel para tirarlo al techo; quién dibujaba más monos que vieron selvas africanas; quién se pintaba las manos de tinta a estilo de salvajes. . .
>
> Cuando la clase concluía, sobre las cinco de la tarde, después de diez horas mortales de banco duro, de carpeta negra, de letras horribles, de encerado fúnebre, el enjambre salía con ardiente fiebre de actividad. Era como un furor de batallas, cual voladura de todas las malicias [. . .] Una tarde de enero, un chico que había estado preso, sin comer y sin moverse en todo el día, salió disparado, ebrio, con alegría rabiosa. Sus carcajadas eran como un restallido de cohetes; sus saltos, de gato perseguido; sus contorsiones, de epiléptico; la distensión de los músculos, como el blandir de aceros toledanos; su carrera, como la de saeta despedida del arco. (I, 1.2.iii. p. 1332)
>
> ¡Momento feliz! Creeríase que el día, perezoso, daba un salto y se ponía en pie . . . Iban saliendo los escolares a escape y atropelladamente: *el último quería ser primero.* (IV, 1321) (Weber, p. 11)
>
> *Miau*
>
> Los inquietos cuerpos, entumecidos por la circunspección de clase, necesitaban violenta gimnasia, los pulmones aire, los espíritus embriaguez de alegría. Salieron como digo, en tropel, a empujones, *el último quería ser primero* . . . (Alpha *Miau*, Weber, p. 11)

> Ningún himno a la libertad, entre los muchos que se han compuesto en las diferentes naciones, es tan hermoso como el que entonan los oprimidos de la enseñanza elemental al soltar el grillete de la disciplina escolar y *echarse a la calle* piando y saltando. La furia insana con que se lanzan a los más arriesgados ejercicios de volatinería, los estropicios que suelen causar a algún pacífico transeúnte, el delirio de la autonomía individual que a veces acaba en porrazos, lágrimas y cardenales, parecen bosquejo de los triunfos revolucionarios que en edad menos dichosa han de celebrar los hombres . . .
> (II, 1. p. 985)

The scenes clearly stem from Galdós's fascination with children's behaviour. Given that the first of them comes from *El Doctor Centeno* which appears to be more a personal sounding board for ideas than a cohesive novel, the scene was ripe for a reworking in one of his more focused works. The reworking in *Miau* demonstrates Galdós's understanding of aspects of atavistic behaviour and schemes of recapitulation. In *El Doctor Centeno*, the school children are described in animalistic terms, behaving as a herd driven by instinct, displaying a bestial regression which is initially missing from *Miau* where Galdós chooses to invest his text with a plethora of animal references only after the 'Miau, Miau' teasing of Luisito's classmates. In the scene from *El Doctor Centeno* there is another bestial reference which is this time intrinsically linked to an anthropological scheme of regression, which does not appear in *Miau*. The use of ink to create to create 'una manada de salvajes' from a group of Madrid's children is used in 'Una visita al Cuarto Estado' in *Fortunata y Jacinta* where the children's 'subject race' status is apparently contradicted by comments such as: 'los pequeñuelos no parecían pertenecer a la raza humana [. . .] semejaban micos, diablillos o engendros infernales (II, 1.9.ii. p. 536)'. In *El Doctor Centeno*, the boys are only drawing pictures of monkeys but, given the mention of 'selvas africanas' and that they paint their hands 'a estilo de salvajes', the inference can be safely taken that their behaviour is being likened to that of primates as well as 'primitive man'. In the earlier novel therefore the scenario starts with European children exhibiting the behaviour of adult 'savages' and those on the next rung down the evolutionary ladder; it is only when they are 'released' on to the street that their regression reaches the bestial depths. But in the same scene the inherent violence in the *enjambre* of children is likened to that of a battle, and this is mirrored in *Miau* where it is likened to political uprisings. Notably Galdós comments that their aggression seems like 'el bosquejo de los triunfos revolucionarios que *en edad menos dichosa* han de celebrar los hombres' [my italics]. The simile to adult violence in *El Doctor Centeno* is not qualified, but here the reference is to the past – and to a very recent and *European* past.[45] From these extracts we are left with a scheme which ranges

[45] Geoffrey Ribbans has observed that the boys with whom the young Mariano associates in *La desheredada* 'are a juvenile, folk-hero version of contemporary adult violence

from animalistic, to 'savage', to adult European; a scheme where the European children would be located between the 'subject races' and the adult Europeans. Nineteenth-century colonial exploitation and the earlier enforced slavery of black Africans in particular could be justified by the claim that 'subject races' were simply inferior beings, and this was deemed to be 'scientifically' endorsed by Darwinian theory and schemes of recapitulation. The development of the 'savage' was thought to be stunted, so that an adult would not develop into a fully evolved adult like the European masters. The stage of development achieved by an adult African was therefore believed to be similar to that of a European child; the British imperial view in this area was perhaps better honed than any other, and in the following quotation the African is pushed even further back along the developmental tract:

> As the type of the Negro is foetal, so that of the Mongol is infantile. And in strict accordance with this, we find that their government, literature and art are infantile also. They are beardless children whose life is a task and whose chief virtue consists in unquestioning obedience.[46]

It would be tempting to assume that despite Galdós's liberal inclinations he was, after all, a man of his century and may well have shared these commonly held views. However, his comparison of the schoolboys' aggression to that of European adults suggests that his manipulation of these terms of reference is quite the contrary. Galdós uses the midway point on the developmental scale, namely, childhood, to demonstrate that European man, just like any other, is susceptible to violent, bestial regression and therefore implicitly dismisses any imagined evolutionary differences between Europeans and their colonial subjects.[47]

The evolutionary tract between humans and animals and the developmental ladder of childhood to adulthood are both toyed with by Galdós in *Miau*. When these are not taken into consideration, part of the picture is

[. . .] They seem to declare: 'España, somos tus polluelos, y, cansados de jugar a los toros, jugamos a la guerra civil'. Conversely, those who resort to actual civil war – Cantonalists, Carlists – are behaving like irresponsible children.' Geoffrey Ribbans, *History and Fiction in Galdós's Narratives* (Oxford: OUP, 1993), p. 142.

46 E. B. Tylor, *Anthropological Review*, IV (1866), 120.

47 Galdós elsewhere demonstrates a parodical use of colonial terminology and is under no illlusion as to what 'civilisation' means in colonial terms: 'De esta vez, tenedlo por cierto, la salvaje África, la más ignota y ruda de las partes del mundo, entrará en las vías de la civilización. En toda la costa se establecen factorías. El inmenso continente poblado de negros indómitos, de monos que parecen personas y de hombres emparentados con los brutos, se ve atacado por todas partes, acariciado, solicitado por los europeos, que lo explotarán y lo domesticarán, vistiendo a los bozales, enseñándoles a beber vino y cerveza, instruyéndoles en el uso de la pólvora e iniciándoles en el regalo de nuestras costumbres'. This passage, «Furor colonial y otros furores», is cited in John H. Sinnigen, *Sexo y política: lecturas galdosianas* (Madrid: Ediciones de la Torre, 1996), p. 81 n. 39.

missing. For instance, regarding Luis's fight with Posturitas, Bly comments: 'Luisito feels the satisfaction of an adult at his physical superiority over weaker brethren', and quotes the following passage as proof:

> [. . .] sentía en su alma los primeros rebullicios de la vanidad heroica, la conciencia de su capacidad para la vida, o sea, de su aptitud para ofender al prójimo, ya probada en la tienta de aquel día. (II, 9. p. 1009)[48]

The question remains whether Luis feels 'the satisfaction of an adult' or whether an adult feels the satisfaction of a child in similar circumstances.[49] A scheme of recapitulation makes it increasingly difficult to decide whether behaviour such as 'brute aggression' really does belong to the realm of brutes.[50] The schoolyard scrapping between Luis and *Posturitas* is behaviour to be expected from boys. Lucille V. Braun has pointed out that Posturas fights like a cat,[51] although it should be noted that he is at the time affecting a cat's behaviour only to provoke Luis. It should also be noted that although Luis beats Posturas in the fight and also feels a certain satisfaction when he

[48] Peter A. Bly strongly disagrees with Rodgers in his analysis of the opening paragraph of *Miau*, the latter seeing the scene as purely ironic: 'its sole function [. . .] is to create an atmosphere, and a certain set of attitudes and expectations in the reader' (Rodgers 1978, p. 22). Bly contends that, like Mariano's gang fight in *La desheredada*, the scene foreshadows tragic future adulthoods, Peter A. Bly, *Galdós's Novel of the Historical Imagination* (Liverpool: Francis Cairns, 1983), p. 131 n. 18.

[49] It should be noted that Peter Bly agrees with Nicholas G. Round on the point that the Bringas children are a reflection of their parents, and goes on to comment, 'This aspect of the novel might be interpreted as proof of its Naturalism: Isabelita's epileptic nightmares and her mania for collecting things seem to be inherited from her father, Alfonsín's bustle, noise, excitement, from his mother. However, these family resemblances really form part of his already established pattern of mutually reflecting attitudes. The behaviour of the three Bringas children puts that of their parents into proper perspective, but so also does that of the Tellería and Pez children. Therefore, Galdós is not so much interested in demonstrating Naturalism's laws of heredity as in showing how much the adult world is remarkably childlike and immature. The inevitable corollary of this parallel is that the children can also behave like adults.' Bly thereafter cites the passage which concludes, 'Las breves cláusulas que ligeras se cruzaban eran, por un lado, lo más insulso del perfeccionado lenguaje social, y, por otro, el ingenioso balbucir de las sociedades primitivas.' Peter A Bly, *La de Bringas*, Critical Guides to Spanish Texts, 30 (London: Grant & Cutler, 1981), pp. 80–1.

[50] Kate Flint comments that in *Great Expectations* 'aggression [. . .] is an indeterminate quality. It certainly links humans – at a relatively early, instinctual stage of their personal development – to animals. When Pip fights Herbert, the 'pale young gentleman', there is no apparent pretext on either side. Scrapping seems to be a form of activity natural to boys – "Indeed", commented Pip, "I go as far as to hope that I regarded myself while dressing, as a species of savage young wolf, or other wild beast" '. 'Origins, Species and *Great Expectations*', in *Charles Darwin's 'The Origin of Species'* (ed.) David Amigoni & Jeff Wallace, (Manchester & New York: Manchester University Press, 1995), p. 163.

[51] Lucille Braun, 'The Epithet "Miau" as Structural and Thematic Element', *Romance Quarterly*, 35:3 (1988), 312.

witnesses the boy's funeral, this is, of course, not a 'Darwinian victory' in the sense that one animal has struggled successfully to overcome another. Posturas dies from typhus whereas Luis and his other classmates do not; the latter are no 'fitter' than the unfortunate Posturas, but they survive. Another parallel may be drawn between the children's and adults' respective struggles, between the morally arbitrary nature of the 'survival of the fittest' of biological Darwinism and that of the social Darwinian scenario in which Villaamil is embroiled. Furthermore, the boys' name-calling, scrapping and vying for supremacy in the schoolyard runs in parallel to the competition for jobs that Villaamil and his peers are involved in at the civil service. Don Ramón is a *tigre tísico* who is never going to compete with sufficient vigour to outshine an 'eagle' such as Víctor, while Doña Pura bemoans the fact that her husband's aggression is not used for his or his family's benefit, 'no muerdes, ni siquiera ladras': if he ever had one, the tiger has now passed his predatory prime. Víctor's offspring may be a *Miau*, but given that 'el chico más aplicado de la escuela', the good-natured Silvestre Murillo, is described as having 'el hocico muy parecido al de un ratón', Luisito's chances of prospering would seem at least to be better than some others'.

Galdós offers yet another perspective in the form of the Mendizábal's dog, Canelito. When Luis stops to admire toys in the shop window and the dog stands on his hind legs to take a look himself, the reader is asked to consider how much these two beings have in common. The dog also 'talks', or rather thinks in language, and absurd as this may seem there is a point to be considered here. For instance, it begs the question as to how much of human behaviour is reasoned and how much is simply an instinctive response which may be justified in language and thus thought to be reasoned. Also, Luis and Canelo's relationship questions how much of the time human beings use their higher faculties: the boy responds to the stimulus of the toy shop window, the dog responds to the stimulus of the boy's action – on a universal scale there is very little between their respective behaviour. Two further twists are that Canelito is an adult dog and as such is shown to go off in search of some females of his species, thus demonstrating that while his species is lower down the evolutionary tract, as an individual he is higher up the developmental scale than Luis.[52] There is also the irony of a boy, labelled a *Miau* having a dog for a best friend; in hierarchical terms Canelo should perhaps be higher up the scale than the boy. Canelo's owner, Mendizábal, adds a further dimension still to this scenario; being an adult member of a sub-human, throwback, political species he should perhaps be grouped together with Luis and Canelo in the middle ground between the adult higher species and the less mature lower creatures.

[52] Darwin considered dogs to be highly evolved and in *The Descent of Man* he comments: 'Besides love and sympathy, animals exhibit other qualities connected with social instincts, which in us would be called moral; and I agree with Agassiz that dogs possess something very like a conscience.' (*The Descent of Man*, p. 127)

Galdós, here as elsewhere, provokes more questions than he deigns to answer, but through his experimenting with the possibilities afforded by schemes of social species and recapitulation, questions are continually being provoked. To what degree are the bestial qualities found in human beings 'bestial' and to what degree are they 'human'? Are base instincts containable, and if so is this desirable? It is also worth recalling Don Benito's comments on the 'Fábulas religiosas' (considered on p. 25), where he cites Victor Hugo's expression, 'los animales son la sombra de la Humanidad'. Galdós questions the belief that animal societies are free of strife:

> ¡República feliz! [. . .] Este es el ideal de las sociedades, realizado en las razas irracionales para ejemplo de las racionales. [. . .] la envidia, la vanidad, la ira, la lujuria aparecen en aquella sociedad antes tan pacífica, y les verá luchar, herirse y entablar demandas escandalosas. (III, p. 1335)

This passage has clear resonances in *Miau*. First it reminds us of Don Ramón, shortly before his suicide, addressing the birds who are free of the 'struggle for life' as the *cesante* sees it. Galdós makes clear reference in this scene to the Beatitudes (Matthew 6.26), and appropriately so, given that Villaamil sees himself as a martyr and specifically a Christ-figure. But also the *cesante* sees himself as trapped and persecuted, and quite distinct from everyone and everything else as they appear to him to be free of responsibilities. In the same way that school days are only 'the best days of one's life' in retrospect (we know they are not for Villaamil's grandson who is in conflict and struggle with his classmates and teacher in the same way that his grandfather is with the *Administración*), when Don Ramón looks further down the evolutionary and developmental tracts he envies the birds' freedom in the same way that he imagines his grandson's daily life to be carefree. The opening passage of the novel has thus set the tone for this scenario. Children, and animals lower down the evolutionary tract have their own struggles, and it is only through the self-obsessed eyes of someone such as Villaamil that this cannot be recognised. The other side of the coin here is Christ's Sermon on the Mount and the 'birds of the air'. Villaamil spends his whole time lost in relatively trivial concerns or, as Rodgers comments, the tragedy in *Miau* lies in the fact that, 'he (Villaamil) is so totally absorbed in the pursuit of his goal that he cannot see that it is unworthy of such single-minded dedication' (Rodgers 1978, p. 39). This is exemplified in the fact that although one of the key boundaries between humanity and the rest of the animal kingdom is self-awareness, within the novel a dog is shown to have a level of self-awareness never to be attained by Villaamil.

As already discussed on pp. 16–19, Galdós was keen to imitate the work of the *costumbristas*, who had portrayed Spanish social types as species and who were also wont to lampoon the many shortcomings of the Spanish civil

service. In 'Galdós and the Anti-bureaucratic Tradition' A. F. Lambert sees Galdós's characterisation of civil servants and *cesantes* as an extension of a Spanish literary tradition 'made familiar to readers of Mesonero Romanos in the 1830s and 1840s and later modified by such writers as Gil de Zárate' (Lambert 1976, 35). Lambert goes on to comment that 'La empleomanía', published in 1832 and Mesonero's first article on the theme of bureaucracy, 'is derivative from Jouy', but is also 'reminiscent of a Spanish satirical tradition established since the eighteenth century at least' (35–6). In the famous *costumbrista* work *Los españoles pintados por sí mismos* (1843–4), Antonio Gil de Zárate had characterised the *cesante* as 'un animal . . . bastante parecido al hombre . . . Especie que no fué incluída por Linneo en su clasificación del reino animal . . ., [probablemente] porque viviendo en país donde no existía, no tuvo ocasión de observarla.'[53] This is an important point of departure when considering Galdós's characterisation of Villaamil, in that Linnaeus identified species and named them, but positioned them in a fixed hierarchy in which transformation was not thought to be possible. In Villaamil's case, he may be involved in a social Darwinian struggle for survival, but he belongs to a species in Linnaeus's terms: he is unable to adapt to the necessities demanded by his circumstances. As discussed earlier, the Peces and the *Pájaros* are able to adapt, to transmute metaphorically, in order to survive and prosper. However, Villaamil's characterisation in *Fortunata y Jacinta*, where he is dubbed *Ramsés II* on account of his mummified appearance, underlines that he does not belong to a more modern generation of *cesantes* – he is a throwback, and should therefore be seen to be a little closer to Mendizábal than is usually thought.

That is not to say that adaptability was not an area explored by the *costumbristas*. In the passage quoted by Lambert from 'Gustos que merecen palos' there exists further evidence that the *costumbrista* writer provided ideas which would later encourage Galdós to develop a Darwinian perspective of human society:

> [. . .] la eterna sonrisa de sus labios, en fin, y la movilidad elástica de su espina dorsal dan a conocer a primera vista la ductilidad de sus opiniones, la moderación de sus deseos y la actitud curvilínea del humilde pretendiente. (II, 212. p. 39)

Flexibility of character is described in terms of biological adaptability, which bears the hallmark of Buffon and Lamarck, while the relation of outward appearance to character belongs more to the pseudoscience of Lavater and Gall. But whereas Galdós uses aspects of physiognomy in his characterisation of Villaamil, the ability to transform one's outlook is absent in Don Ramón.

53 Antonio Gil de Zárate, 'El cesante', *Los españoles pintados por sí mismos* (Madrid: Gaspar y Roig, 1851), 45.

As quoted above, Rodgers sees Villaamil's obsession with regaining employment as his tragic flaw, but this is in competition with his inability to adapt. It should also be said that, although providing for his family is not foremost in his mind as he traipses around the administration building, he does need employment for the basic necessities of surviving. Also, however misguidedly, he is dedicated to the civil service and it is very evident that dedication is not a trait shared by the majority of his contemporaries. The latter's greatest 'quality' is the one which Villaamil so significantly lacks: that of self-preservation by means of adapting to shifts in political power. Five years after *Miau*, Galdós wrote a 'definitive guide' to certain social types, *el cesante* being one of them:

> La política ha engendrado este tipo [. . .] no presentándose con carácter epidémico y asolador hasta que empezaron con tanto estruendo y saña las luchas políticas del siglo en que nos ha tocado vivir [. . .] Empezaba entonces una terrible lucha por la existencia, pues el cesante de la administración no puede, ni sabe, ni quiere allegarse otras maneras de vivir. [. . .] Un cambio político radical, ayer como hoy, si bien con las atenuaciones que trae el progreso, produce en todas las clases sociales movimiento y perturbación grandes. [. . .] Para unos el cambio es la muerte, para otros la vida.[54]

The case for greater sympathy for Villaamil is strengthened by the overtly Darwinian scheme described by Galdós. The fate of the *cesante* is determined by forces beyond his control, and economic life and death are presented as the inevitable result of the struggle for survival. That the civil service is seen as a source of jobs rather than an effective means of administering the country and that employment is hardly awarded on merit, should not detract from the fact that Don Ramón is involved in 'una terrible lucha por la existencia'.

To what degree *Miau* should be seen as a backlash against Herbert Spencer's social Darwinism is difficult to quantify, but the following passage is worthy of consideration:

> To become fit for the social state, man has not only to lose his savageness, but he has to acquire the capacities needful for civilised life. Power of application must be developed; such modification of the intellect as shall qualify it for its new tasks must take place; and, above all, there must be gained the ability to sacrifice a small immediate gratification for a future great one. The state of transition will of course be an unhappy state. Misery inevitably results from incongruity between constitution and conditions. All these evils which afflict us, and seem to the uninitiated the obvious

[54] Pérez Galdós, Benito, *Fisonomías sociales* (Obras inéditas), prologue by Alberto Ghiraldo (Madrid: Renacimiento, 1923), pp. 267–8.

> consequences of this or that removable cause, are unavoidable attendants on the adaption now in progress. Humanity is being pressed against the inexorable necessities of its new position – is being moulded into harmony with them, and has to bear the resulting unhappiness as best it can. The process *must* be undergone, and the sufferings *must* be endured. No power on earth, no cunningly-devised laws of statesmen, no world-rectifying schemes of the humane, no communist panaceas, no reforms that men ever did broach or ever will broach, can diminish them one jot. Intensified they may be, and are; and in preventing their intensification, the philanthropic will find ample scope for exertion. But there is bound up with the change a *normal* amount of suffering, which cannot be lessened without altering the very laws of life.[55]

In Spencer's model, suffering is inevitable and the misery of the likes of Villaamil would be seen as necessary for social advancement. Given that it would not make any tangible difference to the successful running of the country whether Villaamil were to be re-employed or not, the scenario is seen to be not only cruel, but not even beneficial to the society in broader terms. Furthermore, in the words 'no cunningly-devised laws of statesmen, no world-rectifying schemes of the humane, no communist panaceas . . .' one is immediately reminded of both Villaamil's and Pantoja's prescriptions for the health of the nation. Lambert erroneously connects Pantoja's Marxist ideas on wealth with the 'el socialismo manso' professed by the likes of Manuel Pez (p. 46). The latter's political expediency, marked by his clan's ability to 'mutate', may be described by the narrator as *socialismo*, but it bears no obvious resemblance to that ideology. On the other hand, Pantoja's opinions on wealth stand in total contrast to the social Darwinian struggle in which he is immersed: 'Según Pantoja, no debía ser verdaderamente rico nadie más que el Estado. Todos los demás caudales eran producto del fraude y del cohecho (II, 21. p. 1046). Furthermore, we are told that 'Moralmente era Pantoja el prototipo del integrismo administrativo' and this notion of an absolute type is extended to his physicality:

> El tipo fisonómico de este hombre consistía en cierta inercia espiritual que en sus facciones se pintaba. Su frente era ancha, lisa, y tan sin sentido como el lomo de uno de esos libros rayados para cuentas, donde no se lee rótulo alguno. [. . .] Sus labios fruncidos parecía que se violentaban al desplegarse para hablar, cual si fuesen expresamente creados para la discreción.
>
> (II, 21. p. 1046)

The son of a porter 'de la Sala de *Mil y Quinientas*', Pantoja was actually raised within the administration and has never even left Madrid. The

[55] Herbert Spencer, *The Man Versus the State: with Four Essays on Politics and Society* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1969), p. 140. First published in 1884. First Spanish translation: *El individuo contra el Estado*, Seville (trans.) S. García del Mazo, 1885.

pseudoscientific physical description, along with the absolute nature of his character and the sense that his moral probity makes him a 'prototype', determine that Pantoja should be seen as the embodiment of administrative rectitude. This marks him out from the species of *Miau*, because he is much closer to Plato's essential types than Darwin's species. Although Pantoja appears to be a Marxist, he is far from being a revolutionary Leninist.[56] When one of Pantoja's minions suggests that revolt is in the air, Villaamil bays for a Paris *Commune*-style uprising (I, 26. p. 1062) that is reminiscent of Francisco Bringas's horror that the Paris Commune will be repeated in Madrid, because unlike Villaamil he is an *empleado* and has something to lose. Villaamil and Francisco Bringas see revolution as being their salvation and doom respectively, and no doubt if their employment situations were reversed so would these outlooks. Those such as the *Peces* understand that evolution, or rather adaptation, is the real key to survival, no matter what the political circumstances. Again, in Pantoja's radical ideological leanings, an alternative to the status quo is offered. But in his own way Pantoja has worked the system to his advantage and appears only to pay lip service to left wing ideology. Although as stated above he is an idealist, described in the terms of Idealism, the irony is that Pantoja is just another very specific social species who has benefited from the individualistic and corrupt system, but also purports to adhere to Marxist ideas which themselves were heavily influenced by Darwin.

The *laissez-faire* capitalism characterised in the opening chapters of *Fortunata y Jacinta*, and yet more so in the *Torquemada* series, is not on display in *Miau*; here the focus is on the civil service. The struggle for survival is more neatly encapsulated in the tension between the *empleados* and the *cesantes*. In Galdós's novels previous to *Miau*, there are cases of social species being exploited by those higher up the socio-economic hierarchy, but in his novel of 1888 the real competition in society is shown to be not between distinct social groups, but between groups and individuals within their own class.

Animalisation and atavism are usually claimed to be ironic distancing mechanisms which prevent the reader from identifying too closely with the characters. This does appear to be a case of twentieth-century methodology being imposed upon Galdós, although no critic has yet gone as far as to compare this to Brecht's *Entfremdung* technique. Also, the charge that Galdós's sole purpose in this area is the creation of an ironic and/or

[56] In *Los españoles pintados por sí mismos* Gil de Zárate claims that the *cesante revolucionario*, 'es una de esas alimañas que salidas de lo más corrompido de la sociedad, abortan las revoluciones para deshonrar el pueblo, gangrena del estado, ruina de los hombres de bien, y destrucción de todo buen gobierno' (p. 103). This, however, is a description which seems closer to Galdós' Peces than to revolutionaries of any more authentic kind.

distancing mode is made inadequate by the sheer volume of references to animals and characters' bestial regressions, particularly in *Miau* and *Fortunata y Jacinta*. One of the reasons critics have come up with these unsatisfactory conclusions is that there has been a failure to recognise Galdós's use of social species throughout his literary career and that these species frequently operate within a Darwinian dynamic.

The sheer breadth of *Fortunata y Jacinta* gives us a world populated with types and those diverging from type. For instance, the episode where Juanito has José Ido del Sagrario fed a plate of chops exposes not only *El Delfín*'s cruelty, but how in a Madrid of social species there exists a propensity to deviate from the norm. It should also be noted that Ido's delusion that his wife habitually commits adultery is supported by his conviction that she shares the beauty of the *Venus de Médicis*. The use of this icon of Renaissance beauty in relation to the unfortunate Nicanora pokes fun at the notion of ideal types, given that we know the bestial squalor she and her family inhabit.

Again the notion of Platonic essence and the evolutionary concept of species appear to be in conflict. However, the generational scheme of evolutionary change advocated by Darwin can be made to fit with the idea of essential types. The fact that some people are born less gifted or/and in less favourable circumstances than others and are therefore destined to be limited in their 'choice' of occupation can be made to square with Platonism, whose political application contends that within the state, individuals are capable of a specific occupation and should not deviate from this role. But there is a collision of ideologies if the social evolutionary concept being applied is Lamarckian. From that perspective, individuals can 'transform' themselves within their own lifetime and pass any benefits of this transformation on to their offspring. The concept of a *specified* role smacks of determinism, but Fortunata demonstrates that such roles can be subverted, and the social order questioned.

In conclusion, it can be seen that from the mid-1860s onwards Galdós self-consciously manipulated the approach of the *costumbrista* writers of the early nineteenth century. In particular he was drawn to the work of Mesonero Romanos, who had based his observations of Madrid's 'social fauna' on the work of the great naturalists of *his* generation, Cuvier and Linnaeus, and who had recognised that social change inevitably made some traditional 'social species' less identifiable, and some disappear altogether. Galdós's experimentation in his early journalistic work is evidence of this manipulation, and also of how he was beginning to incorporate the more advanced biology of his own day into what was still an essentially *costumbrista* take on the populace of Madrid. Discussion of how human activities, including mass social events are understood by Galdós to be distinct but not separate from the processes of life found elsewhere in the world are in evidence at this age of his career, as is

the potential for experimentation, which foreshadows some of the examples seen in the novels of the 1880s. In 1878 in *La familia de León Roch*, such experimentation made its way into Galdós's novel for the first time; by 1888 this experimentation had reached its peak in the Madrid 'jungle' depicted in *Miau*. The bleak vision of Madrid offered to us in *Miau* contains not only schemes of recapitulation, but is also shown to be underpinned by an amoral social Darwinian dynamic which bears all the hallmarks of the laissez-faire model of social evolution proffered by Herbert Spencer. Galdós's early experiments, referred to as *el costumbrismo darwinista* by Leo J. Hoar, had come a long way in twenty years.

Also introduced in this chapter is a theme that will be revisited in 'Darwinian Perception and Evolutionary Aesthetics', namely the apparent clash between the Platonic ideal and Darwin's mutable species. A world now governed by processes posed all manner of issues for late nineteenth-century Europe, not least how mutability and variability could find application to social and class structures. The dynamic of such structures was complex and in a perpetual state of flux, and as such, was a source of anxiety for those who had come to see science as a means of stabilizing their world and cementing their place within it. Not only is this scenario a backdrop to Galdós's life and to those of his fictional creations, but it has implications for Galdós's understanding of such fundamental ideas as 'essence', 'type', 'perfection', and 'beauty'.

I shall now turn to the question of how the concepts of 'evolution' and 'transformation' impacted on Galdós's fictional creativity.

2

EVOLUTION AND TRANSFORMATION

It is not difficult to see why the application of evolutionary theory to the processes of social change was attractive to people in the last half of the nineteenth century. Faith in science as a guarantor of social progress was widespread, and here was a scientific theory which seemed to confirm that belief. Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer and to some extent Darwin himself all held that human society, like Nature, was inevitably advancing in a positive direction.[1] The nineteenth century in Spain was marked by political and social instability; the process of industrialisation there lagged far behind that of Spain's European neighbours, as did the levels of infrastructure. It was therefore not surprising that the painful processes of change endured by the nation came to be viewed as part of the country's evolution into a prosperous and modern European state. Some people from modest backgrounds were creating their own wealth and the nature of Spanish social classes inevitably changed as well. As elsewhere, the newly moneyed classes in particular were keen to embrace the concept of evolution, as it seemed to validate their financial and social advancement, even if the process did not did not favour everyone. Peter J. Bowler confirms that the European bourgeoisie were in general only too happy to adopt social Darwinian ethics:

> Spencer merely naturalized the moral values that the middle class had at

[1] As Stephen Jay Gould points out, 'evolution' was not a term used by Darwin, Haeckel or Lamarck. Respectively, these three cornerstones of European biology used the terms 'descent with modification', 'Transmutations-Theorie' and 'transformisme'. 'Evolution' as a technical biological term had previously been related to the (now) bizarre concept of 'preformation'; the use of the word 'evolution' came from the English vernacular meaning which 'was firmly tied to a concept of progress'. 'Thus Darwin shunned evolution as a description for his 'descent with modification', both because its technical meaning contrasted with his beliefs and because he was uncomfortable with the notion of inevitable progress inherent in its vernacular meaning.' Stephen Jay Gould, *Ever Since Darwin: Reflections on Natural History* (New York, London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1979), pp. 34–6. Galdós's 'Observaciones sobre la novela contemporánea en España' (1870) and his acceptance speech to the Real Academia Española 'La sociedad presente como materia novelable' (1897), bear testament to the changing use of such terms. In the earlier statement he makes use of 'transformación', but never 'evolución'; in the later speech he repeatedly makes use of 'evolución'. (Bonet 1972, pp. 115–32 and pp. 173–82 respectively).

> first tried to justify by religion. Nature now became God's agent for rewarding the liberal virtues of thrift and enterprise.[2]

Although this brand of social theory is commonly termed 'Darwinian', it really owes more to the work of Lamarck, as his theories were more open to this line of interpretation by social theorists. L. J. Jordanova comments,

> Lamarck offered psychologists and social theorists ways of linking the physiological, mental, and cultural aspects of evolution, as he had done for Spencer. The notion of habit Lamarck employed could provide a biological account of the processes the nascent social sciences were seeking to explain, such as the progress of civilisation or the development of the human races.[3]

Herbert Spencer, although a contemporary and a partisan of Darwin, was himself in important respects Lamarckian, and furthermore,

> The use Spencer made of Lamarck's ideas illustrates the manner in which evolution was part and parcel of social theory – a point of some importance, since Lamarck clearly saw the social realm as governed by natural laws, and his ideas were attractive to Spencer precisely because of the link between biological and socio-cultural evolution that they encouraged.
> (p. 107)

In a general sense, both Spencer's and Lamarck's theories could be seen to dovetail with each other and indeed with those of the French Positivists. There was, however, a crucial difference between the two schools of thought:

> Both (Spencer and Lamarck) took it for granted that evolution is progressive, that the development of human society represented a continuation of the biological hierarchy driven by essentially the same forces. [. . .] (Spencer) held that it was essential for nature to take its own course, while the Lamarckians thought that man already could see the goal of the process and could speed up development toward it. (Bowler 1984, p. 240)

For *laissez-faire* economists like Spencer, the notion of intervention, of 'meddling' with social–natural processes was unacceptable; any pain endured as a result of non-intervention was simply a price that had to be paid for the long-term benefit of society. At the other end of the political spectrum, such notions were scorned. D. R. Oldroyd quotes Engels:

2 Peter J. Bowler, *Evolution: The History of an Idea* (Berkeley: University of California, 1984) p. 240.

3 L. J. Jordanova, *Lamarck* (Oxford: OUP, 1984), p. 109.

> The essential difference between human and animal society consists in the fact that animals at most *collect* while men *produce*. This sole but cardinal difference alone precludes the simple transfer of laws of animal societies to human societies.[4]

Oldroyd goes on to comment:

> [T]here is a Lamarckian component to human evolution that almost entirely destroys the putative analogies between animal and human societies. The Social Darwinists, in their eagerness to argue their theories with the help of the prestige of Darwin's science, usually overlooked entirely this 'cardinal difference' and all it entailed. (pp. 238–9)

Engels's 'cardinal difference' has immediate implications when considering commonly held views on social evolution and the accumulation of wealth over more than one generation: assuming an individual to be more 'vigorous' simply because he is wealthy, emerges as either a naive or, more probably, a disingenuous viewpoint.

Spencer saw the processes of social evolution as inevitably producing not only a more advanced, richer and healthier society, but also an ever more complex one. In the same way that very simple organisms had eventually evolved into far more complex creatures, so would human society:

> Spencer had formulated a law of evolution according to which everything must develop from incoherent homogeneity to coherent heterogeneity – a "law" which to some extent came into the "predetermined evolution" class, though Spencer substituted the Unknowable God – and regarded Darwin's Malthusian Natural Selection theory as a partial explanation only.[5]

In Spain, the Krausists gave social Darwinian theories a mixed reception, but Francisco Giner for one pronounced that societies ought to evolve gradually, thus avoiding violent social change:

> La historia muestra que cada revolución violenta va seguida de su correspondiente contrarrevolución, que por lo general desbarata aquello mismo que se proponen los que han hecho la revolución: 'está ya bien duramente probado . . . que las revoluciones, como tales revoluciones, sólo siembran dolores, desdichas, odios, salvaje atavismo, para recoger . . .

[4] D. R. Oldroyd, *Darwinian Impacts: An Introduction to the Darwinian Revolution* (Parramatta: New South Wales University Press, 1980). Quoted from K. Marx & F. Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, 2nd edn (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1965), p. 284.

[5] Alvar Ellegård, *The Reception of Darwin's Theory of Evolution in the British Periodical Press, 1859–1872* (Gothenburg: Göteborgs Universitets Årsskrift, 1958), p. 255.

> algunos frutos que se habrían obtenido por otros caminos y probablemente con mayor rapidez'.[6]

Giner's aversion to bloody revolution also found philosophical sanction in the Krausist notion of historical process. Krause's vision of human history and the development of human society was a gradualist one which sat comfortably with the scientific discoveries of Lyell and the evolutionists. Giner comments:

> [. . .] el único cambio real y permanente es aquel que se produce por *evolución* lenta y segura, aquel que llega por sus pasos contados, cuando las funciones mismas que desarrolla el cuerpo político y social exigen la creación de órganos adecuados a su eficaz desenvolvimiento.
>
> (López-Morillas 1988, p. 122)

Although Giner advocates an 'evolución lenta y segura' and is set against sudden social change, this does not mean he expected individuals to be passive in the striving towards an improved society. Miguel de Unamuno comments on Giner's own relentless 'struggle':

> Aquel hombre, que se pasó la vida clamando: '¡paz, paz!' era un gran luchador. No podía ser de otra manera. La verdadera paz, la paz fecunda, la paz digna, la paz justa, no se obtiene más que con la lucha.[7]

Unfortunately for the Krausists, the results of Spain's social evolution were far removed from what they had envisaged, and the blame for this was laid squarely upon the burgeoning middle class by Giner:

> La vulgaridad es la tónica de la burguesía, el canon por el que se rigen las modernas mesocracias. Bajo su imperio, la sociedad pierde su variedad y energía, justamente aquello que pudo hacerla digna y amable, y se convierte en una masa uniforme en la que despuntan sólo los más ruines apetitos. (López-Morillas 1988, p. 25)

The heterogeneity predicted by Spencer as the result of an evolutionary process is sadly lacking in Spain, as is any greater vitality; in fact just the reverse appears to have taken place. There has been a 'levelling out' of social groups which has resulted in an amorphous middle class, a theme to which Galdós returns time and again, for it is precisely within these social shifts that

6 Juan López-Morillas, *Racionalismo pragmático: El pensamiento de Francisco Giner de los Ríos* (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1988), p. 123.

7 Miguel de Unamuno, 'Recuerdo de don Francisco Giner', *Obras completas*, Introduction, bibliography and notes by Manuel García Blanco, III (Madrid: Escelicer, 1966), p. 1178.

for him humanity exposes its true nature. In his 1897 speech to the Real Academia Española, Galdós states:

> La crítica sagaz no puede menos de reconocer que cuando las ideas y sentimientos de una sociedad se manifiestan en categorías muy determinadas, parece que los carácteres vienen ya a la región del Arte tocados de cierto amaneramiento y convencionalismo. Es que al descomponerse las categorías, caen de golpe los antifaces, apareciendo las caras en su castiza verdad. Perdemos los tipos pero el hombre se nos revela mejor, y el Arte se avalora sólo con dar a los seres imaginarios vida más humana que social.[8]

Galdós does not of course deal with the changes in his society simply at a macro- or a micro-level. Geoffrey Ribbans comments:

> [Galdós] demonstrates a deeper concern than most for the minor occurrences of history [. . .] together with an acute awareness of the cumulative undercurrent of historical development [. . .] In addition [. . .] he is, in Sir Isaiah Berlin's terms, a fox as well as a hedgehog. This is at once the sign and the consequence of his extraordinary capacity for the creation of representative types, 'embedded', in Auerbach's phrase, in historical reality and 'emplotted' as Hayden White terms it, in a fictional structure.
>
> (Ribbans 1993, p. 247)

Processes of social evolution are occasionally painted with a very broad brush by Galdós, but, as stated above, his characters are 'embedded' within the patterns of social change and are representative of it. This book therefore deals not only with the impact of evolution and transformation on society at large and how characters are shown to cope with and be part of the processes of change, but also with the transformation of individuals, usually under the influence of one or more third parties. This area has already received significant critical attention,[9] usually focusing on the importance of Krausist theory in the moulding of personalities, but it merits some attention from a Darwinian perspective. In the early 1950s Sherman H. Eoff had recognised that evolutionary theory was central to Galdós's understanding of humanity:

> At the lower limits of his [Galdós's] perspective he sees man as a biological and psychological organism. If the function of an organism's parts is

[8] Laureano Bonet, *Benito Pérez Galdós. Ensayos de crítica literaria* (Barcelona: Ediciones Península, 1972), p. 177.

[9] Particularly so in Lou Charnon-Deutsch, 'The Pygmalion Effect in the Fiction of Pérez Galdós', in *A Sesquicentennial Tribute to Galdós 1843–1920* (ed.) Linda M. Willem, (Newark, Delaware: Juan de la Cuesta, 1993), pp. 173–89 and Catherine Jagoe, 'Krausism and the Pygmalion Motif in Galdós's *La familia de León Roch*', *Romance Quarterly*, 39. 1 (Spring) (1992), 41–52.

> thought to be merely that of keeping it alive in movement without direction, the result is a nihilistic view of life. If the viewpoint is that the organism, while seeking a goal of self-determination, assimilates its environment and transforms itself, the process, on a psychological and even on a biological plane, can be interpreted as one of self-expansion. At this point psychology gives way to philosophy and Galdós, who takes over the role of philosopher, visualizes the activity as one of spiritual self-expansion. His view of the life process, therefore, is one of dynamic, evolutionary movement upward. He may not have realized that he was an exponent of evolution as a theory, but he embodies an enlightened version of the evolutionary conception of human experience as probably few men of his century did.[10]

It is the strong contention of the present study that Galdós did understand evolutionary thought and was quite consciously applying it in his fiction. Before examining processes of evolution in Galdós's novels, it is worth noting that these ideas were already developing in his consciousness as early as the mid-1860s. In *Revista del Movimiento Intelectual de Europa* in 1865, for example, Galdós comments on the destructive nature of progress:

> *Esto matará a aquello.* Mató la imprenta a la arquitectura, según dice el autor de Ruy Blas y de Lucrecia Borgia. Antes de esto, el arte gótico cristiano mató la belleza formalista del paganismo. (Hoar, p. 112)

The phrase *esto matará a aquello* is an extension of the previous heading for his articles, *In principio . . .*: it also occurs in articles in *La Nación*. Whereas in the articles entitled *In principio* Galdós comically combines the Genesis version of Creation with evolutionary theory, this more brutal vision of the world is devoid of a Creator and instead focuses on life as a process. Galdós gives the negative emphasis to the continuing process of change: the success of the new predicates the failure of the old. Clearly Galdós has not jumped on the popular Liberal bandwagon which welcomed evolutionary theory as confirmation that natural and social processes were in essence 'progressive'; he had already identified the darker implications of such models. The 'dog-eat-dog' vision of social processes delineated by Galdós in these articles, could just as well have been entitled 'survival of the fittest', the expression coined by Herbert Spencer and used by Darwin in later editions of the *Origin.* In highlighting the observed similarities between human types or social species and analogous groups in the rest of the animal kingdom, Galdós is already beginning to draw the parallel between the harshness of the natural world and the living conditions endured by many of Madrid's citizens. Galdós's interpretation is certainly not unwarranted, in the first place because 'those that survive to reproduce are simply labelled after the event as 'fitter'

[10] Sherman H. Eoff, 1954, pp. 151–2.

than those that do not: natural selection is the *differential* loss of differently constituted individuals' (Howard, p. 22). Also, if it is accepted that there is no possibility of divine intervention, no supernatural guiding hand pushing humanity towards a morally-based future, the most vigorous people and ideals are unlikely to have a sense of moral purpose at the centre of their being; particularly if their environment is corrupt and self-serving.

Galdós's eponymous protagonist León Roch is representative of the second generation of new money: his father, having made his fortune as a *chocolatero* in Valencia, planned for his son not only to be moneyed and educated but also to be the bearer of an aristocratic title. The narrator comments on this general state of affairs:

> [. . .] las familias nobles del día [. . .] no vacilan en aceptar las alianzas convenientes y sustanciosas, fundiendo la nobleza con el dinero [. . .] La sociedad moderna tiene en su favor el don del olvido, y se borran con prontitud los orígenes oscuros o plebeyos. El mérito personal unas veces, y otras la fortuna, nivelan, nivelan, nivelan con incansable ardor, y nuestra sociedad camina con pasos de gigante a la igualdad de apellidos. No hay país ninguno entre los históricos que esté más próximo a quedarse sin aristocracia. A esto contribuyen, por un lado, el negocio, haciéndonos a todos plebeyos, y, por otro, el Gobierno, haciéndolos a todos nobles.
>
> (I, 1.viii. p. 801)

This 'confusión de las clases' which will be revisited time and time again in the *novelas contemporáneas* is already being portrayed in a negative light by Galdós. Although social hierarchies are being broken down and reformed, it is stressed that this is a process of levelling down. It appears that society is becoming ever more homogenised – the reverse of the scheme of progression anticipated by Herbert Spencer – as the middle classes and the aristocracy are becoming an amorphous single class. However, in another sense the *confusión* is the sign of a more complex social hierarchy than one made up of the more simply defined social classes that existed a few generations earlier. Certainly, the reader is not given the impression that the arrival of new money and the second generation of new money signify a positive advance in Spanish society.

The nineteenth-century marriage market was a key factor in the process of social hybridisation. A wealthy man such as León Roch can 'take his pick', but given that he is also a man of science and philosophy, he can also think:

> Yo labraré mi vida a mi gusto, como los pájaros hacen su nido según su instinto. He formado mi plan con la frialdad razonadora de un hombre práctico, verdaderamente práctico. (I, 1.vii. p. 795)

León Roch fails to see the inherent contradiction in claiming that his carefully planned life, and specifically his marriage, is analogous to the instinct which drives birds to build nests. From both a personal and political

perspective Federico Cimarra strongly disapproves of León's marriage to and 'education' of María:

> Por acá no somos sabios, ni después de enamorarnos como cadetes hacemos un estudio exegético de las cualidades de las dignas hembras que van a ser nuestras mujeres . . . No aspiramos tampoco a fabricar caracteres; esta manufactura la tomamos como está hecha por Dios o el Demonio. Eso de casarse para ser maestro de escuela es del peor gusto. A otra cosa más que el carácter debemos atender en estos apocalípticos tiempos que corren. La desigualdad de fortuna entre los seres creados, y el desgraciado sino con que algunos han nacido; el desequilibrio entre lo que uno vale y los medios materiales que necesita para luchar con y por la vida, ¡oh!, el pícaro *struggle for life* de los transformistas es mi pesadilla . . ., la falta de trabajo que hay en este maldito país, y la imposibilidad de ganar dinero sin tener dinero . . . (I, 1.vii. p. 796)

Cimarra finds the idea of moulding another human being to be anathema; his assertion 'Eso de casarse para ser maestro de escuela es del peor gusto' has perhaps ever greater relevance when applied to the Krausist Máximo Manso's attempt to mould Irene in *El amigo Manso.* Moreover, Cimarra lumps his objections to León Roch's marriage together with his broader complaints regarding contemporary society. He makes a link between León's attitude and what he sees as the hypocrisy of those who profess Darwinian ideology, or rather Spencer's ideology, and yet, who, like León Roch, have never had to struggle themselves for their economic survival. There is much special pleading in what Cimarra has to say, but there is some validity in his argument. León's wealth, which he has acquired through no effort of his own, means that he can acquire the wife of his choice. One is reminded of Engels's 'cardinal difference' between human beings and animals, that the former have means of production and wealth creation. Furthermore, wealth can be accumulated and transferred from one generation to the next, a scenario which does not have an obvious parallel in the animal kingdom. As such, León Roch, occupying the lofty economic and social position he does, is able to select the wife of his choice without ever having had to prove that he is a more 'vigorous' individual. So not only is León's choice of wife not 'instinctive'; it can in no way be justified by use of scientific theory.

León Roch may be spectacularly unsuccessful in moulding his wife into his ideal, but that is not to say that transformation is impossible. María does, at one point, undergo an aesthetic transformation in order to manipulate her estranged husband León Roch. But it is only after la de San Salomó's interference that her Nature-given beauty is seen as a weapon:

> Quitaron el paño, y nació, digámoslo así, sobre el limpio cristal inundado de claridad, la imagen hechicera de María Sudre. Fué como un lindo ejemplo de la creación del mundo. (I, 2.xiv. p. 898)

The 'icing on the cake' is when María is 'crowned' with a hat:

> ¡Efecto grandioso, sin igual! Inmensa victoria de la estética! María Egipciaca estaba elegantísima, hechicera; era la elegancia misma, el figurín vivo. Encarnaba en su persona el ideal del vestir bien, este infinito del traje, que unido al infinito de la belleza produce maravillosas estatutas de carne y trapo ante las cuales sucumben a veces la prudencia y la dignidad, a veces la salud y el dinero de los hombres. (I, 2.xiv. p. 899)

The use of evolutionary terms, the two 'infinites', simultaneously presented in one person, is at odds with the viewpoint of the person being described. The combination of her beauty, a 'fluke' of Nature and the active choice to beautify herself even further, produces something near 'perfection'. A notable difference between Galdós and Krausist theory, is that the author rejects the notion of perfection as an attainable or desirable quality. Here, however, the perfection in question is purely aesthetic, something that appears to be achievable – and hardly surprising given that the starting point is María's archetypal beauty. This transformation is superficial, literally dressing up; no change in María's personality is achieved either by her husband or herself. The only changes observed are temporary emotional shifts. María's sudden need to confront her husband and to beautify herself for the occasion is stimulated by jealousy. La de San Salomó's malicious lying is likewise motivated by a mixture of spite and jealousy evident when she sees María elegantly dressed: 'Oh, qué bien está esta pícara! – dijo la de San Salomó con cierta envidia.' (I, 2.xiv. p. 899) She successfully toys with María because she knows which basic emotions are strongest, and she therefore can easily manipulate her subject as if conducting an experiment:

> – No, tonta – manifestó la de San Salomó, poniendo la cara que es de rigor cuando se coge una aguja larga y muy fina y se atraviesa de parte a parte el pecho de un pobre bicho destinado a las colecciones de Historia Nacional –. No, tonta; el papá es tu marido. (I, 2.xiv. pp. 896–7)

By this stage María is burning with jealousy, a force which Galdós does not in this instance refer to directly as being an atavistic impulse, though his use of metaphor points towards its evolutionary significance:

> [. . .] quien la [mujer] hace siempre con éxito es el *mayor monstruo*, la terrible ira calderoniana, los celos, pasión de doble índole, perversa y seráfica, como alimaña híbrida engendrada por el amor, que es ángel, en las entrañas de la envidia, hija de todos los demonios. (I, 2.xiv. pp. 895–6)

Catherine Jagoe and Lou Charnon-Deutsch have dealt with León Roch's attempt to mould his wife into his ideal woman. Both argue successfully that Roch to some degree represents Krausist values and Jagoe also comments

that he fits a pan-European model of 'Victorian' man who views a wife to be complementary to her husband and a household dispenser of morality and virtue (Jagoe, 42–3). The starting points for both Charnon-Deutsch and Jagoe are Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and European gender construction; not surprisingly nineteenth-century science does not loom large in their respective articles. But as in the case of *Fortunata y Jacinta* (see p. 89), Galdós was fully capable of blending such disparate sources as Greek mythology, gender issues and nineteenth-century notions of transformation into a coherent and purposeful imaginative vision.

Despite the fact that the Darwinian debate is openly discussed between the characters as part of their broader ideological arguments, the social evolution of León Roch and others like him and the resulting social hybridisation are not here described by Galdós in the transformational and evolutionary terminology that will be employed in later novels. León's failure to mould his wife also means that transformation from this perspective is never likely to materialise, although the measure of potentiality which exists for it is explored in the emotional shifts of María Egipcíaca.

It is in the chapter 'El célebre Miquis' where the affable Augusto Miquis takes Isidora Rufete for a stroll through the Retiro that *La desheredada*'s first direct references to the experimental sciences and specifically to transformism and evolutionary theory occur. The narrator presents these theories as part of the armoury of a forward-thinking liberal:

> Todas las teorías novísimas le cautivaban, mayormente cuando eran enemigas de la tradición. El transformismo en ciencias naturales y el federalismo en política le ganaron por entero. (I, 1.4.ii. p. 1008)

It is unclear at this point whether in this context the reader should understand *el transformismo* to be simply another way of saying *el darwinismo*, with the narrator, making the common mistake of not distinguishing between the two. Possibly, indeed, Miquis is more of a *transformista* than a *darwinista*. It becomes apparent from his subsequent eulogies of the wonder of modern science, that he is widely, if rather diffusely, informed on such matters. He has aligned himself with the Haeckelians (perhaps also, somewhat anomalously, with the Krausists) and thus sees evolutionary theory as a guiding universal principle. As he exclaims at this point:

> – Señores, evolución tras evolución, enlazados el nacer y el morir, cada muerte es una vida, de donde resulta la armonía y el admirable plan del Cosmos. (I, 1.4.ii. p. 1009)

At this stage of the novel there are, as yet, no instances of evolution or transformation. The references to evolutionary theory are used to contrast

Miquis's faith in science with Isidora's quixotic grasp of Nature. Quite some time has elapsed in the novel by the start of the *segunda parte*, where in the chapter 'Efemérides', Galdós, while embedding the lives of the characters into the historical process, refers repeatedly to the latter as a process of evolution. Before we are given the *efemérides* proper, the news of Isidora's now two-year-old son is broken by Miquis: 'Es algo monstruoso, lo que llamamos un *macrocéfalo*, es decir, que tiene la cabeza muy grande, deforme. ¡Misterios de la herencia fisiológica!' (I, 2.1. p. 1083). There has been much critical appraisal of the import of Riquín's head, but whatever broader socio-political inference is drawn, there is a painful irony in the comparison between Riquín's natural inheritance and the financial inheritance sought by Isidora. When Isidora asks Miquis whether the child's large head will be full of talent, the doctor retorts, 'Yo le digo que su delirante ambición y su vicio mental le darán una descendencia de cabezudos raquíticos' (I, 2.1. p. 1083). Isidora does not see the benefits of gradual change; she repeatedly refuses to accept advice like this from Miquis which warns against quick-fix solutions. In much the same way as Isidora regards determining the origins of life as something akin to 'unweaving the rainbow', her own struggle to 'prove' her familial origins is doomed to failure, being founded on an unwillingness to accept rationality rather than romantic delusion. The importance of origins and inheritance to Isidora is the basis of the novel, but it is her inability to adapt her ambitions in this regard to actual circumstances which eventually destroys her. The chapter title 'Muerte de Isidora. Conclusión de los Rufetes' reminds the reader that Isidora's death actually spells extinction for the Rufete line, none of whom has been able to achieve a firm grasp on reality or adapt to their circumstances.

It is not, of course, suggested here that Galdós was in the habit of reading Darwin's work and finding immediate application for it in his novel writing, but in relation to social evolution it seems evident that the novelist's outlook is directly and quite openly indebted to that of the scientist. In the chapter 'Difficulties of the Theory' in the *Origin*, Darwin explores in depth the formation of organs and other body parts and how such specialisation could have occurred, for instance:

> [. . .] in the same manner as, on the view entertained by some naturalists that the branchiae and dorsal scales of Annelids are homologous with the wing-covers of insects, it is probable that organs which at a very ancient period served for respiration have been actually converted into organs of flight. (*The Origin of Species*, p. 156)

He goes on to comment that a giraffe's tail 'looks like an artificially constructed fly-flapper' and again suggests scenarios for this specific development. Darwin understands that it is initially very difficult for people to accept that such specialised adaptation and 'perfection' in structure can have

been created without the help of a Creator who had designed them thus. From this perspective Darwin defends his theory by largely standing by a traditional dictum of natural history, 'Natura non facit saltum':

> Why should not nature have taken a leap from structure to structure? On the theory of natural selection, we can clearly understand why she should not; for natural selection can act only by taking advantage of slight successive variations; she can never take a leap, but must advance by the shortest and slowest steps. (*The Origin of Species*, p. 158)

The correspondence between Darwin's sentiments and the 'Moraleja' at the end of *La desheredada* is, I believe, self-evident:

> Si sentís anhelo de llegar a una difícil y escabrosa altura, no os fiéis de las alas postizas. Procurad echarlas naturales, y en caso de que no lo consigáis, pues hay infinitos ejemplos que confirman la negativa, lo mejor, creedme, lo mejor será que toméis una escalera. (1, 2.xix. p. 1181)

When in the Castellana, Miquis coments to Isidora:

> – Aquí en día de fiesta, verás a todas las clases sociales. Vienen a observarse, a medirse y a ver las respectivas distancias que hay entre cada una, para asaltarse. El caso es subir el escalón inmediato. [. . .] Lo que no se tiene se pide, y no hay un solo número uno que no quiere elevarse a la categoría de dos. El dos se quiere hacer pasar por tres; el tres hace creer que es cuatro; el cuatro dice: «Si yo soy cinco», y así sucesivamente.
>
> (I, 1.4.iv. pp. 1015–16)

Isidora, however, cannot bear the thought of a gradual development towards the top of the social pecking order. Unlike the *Peces aladas* described in the 'Efemérides', her *alas postizas* are incapable of taking her anywhere other than on flights of fancy.

The description given of Isidora's house in the Calle de Hortaleza is a reflection of her aspirations:

> No estaba mal decorada la casa, si bien dominaba en ella la heterogeneidad, gran falta de orden y simetría. 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. [. . .] 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. (I, 2.1. p. 1084)

For Isidora, the process of creating a home, like so much else, is something she does not wish to spend any time over: the generational scheme of gradual

progression is not for her. Some of the furniture has what Isidora lacks – 'un origen noble'. Different 'classes' of furniture are found in close proximity, similar to that of Madrid's social classes. The heterogeneity of so many contrasting styles is presented as something positive by the narrator, yet with an underlying sarcasm because the *heterogeneidad* has not been achieved through a process of evolution à la Spencer, but almost by accident and notably through the misfortune of others (*liquidaciones*). The final sentence also serves as a reminder that the trappings of a noble origin can be acquired: one simply has to pay for them.

The importance of clothing as a means of defining a person's social background is a theme in *La desheredada* as in many of the *novelas contemporáneas*, and the point is made that only the keen observer can accurately determine someone's standing:

> [. . .] la hija de un empleado de doce mil reales apenas se distingue, en la calle, de la hija de un prócer –, las de Relimpio se emperifollaban tan bien con recortes, desechos, pingos y cosas viejas rejuvenecidas, que más de una vez dieron chasco a los pocos versados en fisonomías y tipos matritenses. (I, 1.8.iii. p. 1039)

The idea of clothing being a measure of social progress is introduced here, and although it is not developed as fully as it will be in *Fortunata y Jacinta*, there is nonetheless a warning in the narrator's rhetoric that such progress is not inevitably positive:

> ¿Qué mujer no tiene sombrero en los años que corren? Sólo las pordioseras que piden limosna se ven privadas de aquel atavío; pero día llegará, al paso que vamos, en que también lo usen. La Humanidad marcha, con los progresos de la industria y la baratura de las confecciones, a ser toda ella elegante o toda cursi. (I, 1.8.iii. p. 1039)

Clothing is an important resource in the marriage market: the Relimpio daughters for instance, are so skilled in masking their poverty by means of dress and a certain elegance, that on their trips to the Teatro Real they have a good many suitors who look upon them as 'lo granadito de la sociedad'. This prompts the narrator to comment that 'La confusión de las clases es la moneda falsa de la igualdad' (I, 1.8.iii. p. 1040). One's *atavío* plays its role in sexual selection not only for its aesthetic enhancement but also because it can suggest higher social standing and greater wealth. Melchor, who similarly masks his poverty, has another perspective on the social levelling down exemplified in clothing: 'Es cruel eso de que todos seamos distintos por la fortuna y tengamos que ser iguales por la ropa. El inventor de las levitas sembró la desesperación en el linaje humano' (I, 1.8.iii. p. 1041).

Melchor, and others who founder, are shown to do so because they fail to follow social evolutionary 'laws'. However, one family that does work with

the political and social shifts is the Pez family. The political principles of Don Manuel José Ramón del Pez are, we are told, not worthy of discussion because 'tenían por atributo primero una adaptación tan maravillosa como la de los líquidos a la forma y color del vaso que los contiene' (I, 1.12. p. 1053). The description of his transformational abilities is tied to an analogy which belongs to the realm of physics. As the description continues, a 'social Newtonian' law emerges as part and parcel of his character:

> Si un carácter ha de formarse de una sola pieza y de una sola sustancia, descartando las demás como puramente ornamentales, el carácter de don Manuel se componía de una sola y homogénea cualidad, la de servir a todo el mundo, prefiriendo siempre, por la ley de gravitación social, a los poderosos. (I, 1.12. p. 1053)

It is not only a question of pleasing his political masters. Don Manuel, like all of his clan, is predisposed to facilitate employment in all branches of the civil service for his fellow Peces:

> No como una segunda fase de su carácter servicial, sino como una ampliación de él, tenía don Manuel la virtud de la filogenitura, o sea protección decidida, incondicional, una protección frenética y delirante, a la copiosísima, a la inacabable, a la infinita familia de los Peces.
>
> (I, 1.12. p. 1054)

Later in the 'Efemérides' chapter, the reader is informed that as the civil war continues, Melchor attempts to turn his luck around with a new project:

> Trátase de comprar habichuelas podridas y arroz picado para vendérselo al Gobierno como bueno. Para realizar sus milagros, este taumaturgo cuenta con amistades de valer en altos centros, y aun aparenta entusiasmo por el nuevo régimen, tomando una actitud completamente pisciforme.
>
> (I, 2.1. p. 1086)

Melchor's shameless opportunism, adapting to circumstances in the manner of the Peces, will have its parallel in the 'noble' forebears of the Aguila sisters of the *Torquemada* series (see pp. 98–9). By 1875 the Peces are having to fight to hang on to the posts within the *Administración* where only the 'fittest' or most adaptable survive:

> [. . .] la lucha por la existencia, ley de las leyes, ha llevado a los Pájaros al Gobierno, y éstos no encuentran en la Administración bastantes ramas en que posarse. Algunas Peces de menor tamaño y del género *voracissimus* quedan en oficinas oscuras. Son Peces aladas, transición zoológica entre las dos clases, pues la triunfante tuvo en situaciones anteriores sus avecillas con escamas. Mariano torna a ser vagabundo. (I, 2.1. p. 1087)

In considering the economic and social success of the Peces relative to the failure of the Rufete family, and of Isidora in particular, the role of origins is vital. The genetic line which Isidora tries to establish is that of a family of dreamers rather than 'doers'. But those who attain success do so through their extended family networks, and although the Rufetes do help each other on occasions this falls a long way short of the *filogenitura* characteristic of the Peces. Nor does Isidora prove able to deal with the practicalities of daily survival. Yet before condemning her out of hand as someone who regards mere survival as beneath her, it is worth reflecting on the lot of the Relimpio sisters, sewing in a dimly lit room in obedience to that law which Isidora fails to respect: 'aquellas pobres chicas, sometidas a la ley de la necesidad, que obliga a comprar el pan de hoy con los ojos de mañana' (I, 1.8. p. 1037). Isidora's inability to adapt to her circumstances and environment are often criticised as her flaw. But not all those who 'play by the rules' are significantly rewarded, and those who succeed at this game are shown as being the most manipulative, corrupt and cynical members of society. If it were not for her own admixture of selfishness and greed, her refusal to transform herself into what is demanded by 'la ley de la necesidad' or 'la lucha por la existencia, ley de las leyes' would be indeed be 'noble'.

Evolution and transformation are not immediately obvious in *El amigo Manso*, but the socio-economic rise of José María Manso is described in the following terms:

> Pronto sería yo hermano de un marqués de Casa-Manso o cosa tal. [. . .] Lo del título era un fenómeno infalible en el proceso psicológico, en la evolución mental de sus vanidades. José reproducía en su desenvolvimiento personal la serie de fenómenos generales que caracterizan a estas oligarquías eclécticas [. . .] Es curioso estudiar la filosofía de la historia en el individuo, en el corpúsculo, en la célula. Como las ciencias naturales, aquélla exige también el uso del microscopio. [. . .] esta sociedad que despedaza la aristocracia antigua y crea otra nueva con hombres que han pasado su juventud detrás de un mostrador [. . .] partícipes de una soberanía que lentamente se nos infiltra, todo, en fin, reclama y quizás anuncia un paso o transformación, que será quizás la más grande que ha visto la historia. (I, 15. p. 1223)

Thereafter Máximo Manso writes 'pensando en estas cosas fui al cuarto de Irene, y todo lo olvidé desde que la vi.' He then asks Irene what she was reading, and given her evasive response he muses that perhaps she was engrossed in his '*Memorias sobre la psicogénesis y la neurosis*, o los *Comentarios a Du Bois-Raymond*, o la *Traducción de Wundt*, quizás los artículos refutando el *Transformismo* y las locuras de Haeckel' (I, 16. p. 1223). Despite the fact that he has just given a psycho-evolutionary interpretation of José María's mental state and described his brother's rise in social

Darwinian terms, he has himself published work, some of which at least labels this kind of social theorising as 'madness'. This vacillation is typical of the uneasy balance which Manso struggles to maintain (and, perhaps rather in spite of himself, does maintain) between an ethical and scientific mode of awareness – or in Krausist terms, between *ideal* and *vida*. Not only are Manso's 'readings' of his brother and Irene woefully off the mark, he is also blinded to the 'cattle auction' in which these two and Cándida are involved. Furthermore he is in practical terms an out-and-out social Darwinist. This is seen not only in his treatment of Rupertico and his participation in the 'purchasing' of the wet-nurse and her family (see pp. 36–9), but also, as his nieces and nephew run to meet him immediately after the passage cited above, Manso describes the latter (Pepito) thus: 'Era un gracioso animalito que no pensaba más que en comer, y luchaba por la existencia de una manera furibunda.' (I, 16. p. 1223). This scenario is a clear example of Manso's theoretical image of the world and of himself, and his misreading of both. He may not like the social Darwinian milieu in which he finds himself, but he does operate within it, although unlike his brother he is not predisposed to working it to his advantage. Francisco Caudet comments:

> Galdós más que idealista era positivista. O mejor dicho, su idealismo estaba impregnado de positivismo. No en balde veremos que, en esta novela (*El amigo Manso*), Hegel es progresivamente sustituido por Spencer.[11]

Caudet's statement should perhaps be modified to 'el idealismo alemán es progresivamente sustituido por el darwinismo social', because Manso's philosophically harmonious vision of the universe (not necessarily Hegelian) is at loggerheads with his brother's selfish pragmatism which has driven his social rise and almost sees him purchase the vulnerable Irene. Máximo, of course, is instrumental in saving Irene from this fate, yet it must be said that neither brother is entirely victorious as an outcome; Idealism and social Darwinism are both shown to be flawed in the novel, although the former does work as a check on the latter. The Darwinian imperative also forces Manso to understand the practicalities of life; when he (eventually) realises that the starving Irene is in greater need of food than books, he refers to her hunger as 'la necesidad orgánica, la imperiosa ley de la vida animal'.

In the first chapter of *Fortunata y Jacinta* the narrator commentates on the precociousness of Juanito Santa Cruz and his peers:

> Los temas más sutiles de Filosofía de la Historia y del Derecho, de Metafísica y de otras ciencias especulativas (pues aún no estaban en moda

[11] Benito Pérez Galdós, *El amigo Manso* (ed.) Francisco Caudet (Madrid: Cátedra, 2001), p. 63.

> los estudios experimentales, ni el transformismo, ni Darwin, ni Haeckel) eran para ellos lo que para otros el trompo o la cometa. ¡Qué gran progreso en los entretenimientos de la niñez! (II, 1.1.i. p. 448)

Galdós here introduces the theme of the 'inevitability of progress', but he also places the speculative and experimental sciences, which have encouraged such a view, as subject to that same inevitability. This can be taken, complacently, as a predestined perfection of human knowledge; or they might, like everything else, just happen at a given time and for that time. This issues in a mocking attitude which is maintained by the narrator throughout. The novel as a whole brings into serious doubt such automatically positive notions of progress, but this remains the viewpoint of the mercantile class all along.

Don Baldomero's upbringing was marked by his father's discipline and work-ethic; of his own far softer attitude towards his son he comments 'la civilización, hija, es mucho cuento' (II, 1.1.ii. p. 451). Baldomero reflects that his own education had not even equipped him by the age of twenty-five to be able to talk comfortably to members of the opposite sex and so he remarks 'en lo referente a sociedad, yo era un salvaje' (II, 1.1.ii. p. 451). The anthropological analogy is revealing when tied to his notion of civilisation. He sees his social evolution in Darwinian terms whereby it is the next generation, Juanito Santa Cruz, who is the real beneficiary of his father's endeavours. Although Baldomero has developed into a more civilised human being during his adult life, Juanito has the opportunity to start much higher up the scale. Don Baldomero's own kindly disposition leads him to indulge his son in a way that his own father would not have done, but still more importantly it is his economic success which allows him to be indulgent. His economic and social evolution have given him the means to demand very little of Juanito. The narrator rhetorically muses on the significance of this paternal indulgence:

> ¿En qué consistía que, habiendo sido él educado tan rígidamente por D. Baldomero I, era todo blanduras con su hijo? ¡Efectos de la evolución educativa, paralela de la evolución política! (II, 1.1.iv. p. 461)

The exclamatory nature of the second sentence already hints that the narrator is unimpressed by such reasoning. Baldomero himself, however, justifies his leniency and generosity towards his son by claiming that it is in the natural order of universal progress, although his understanding of such concepts remains at a basic level:

> Esto no era una falta de lógica, sino la consagración práctica de la idea madre de aquellos tiempos: el progreso. '¿Qué sería del mundo sin progreso?', pensaba Santa Cruz, y al pensarlo sentía ganas de dejar al chico entregado a sus propios instintos. Había oído muchas veces a los economistas que iban de tertulia a casa de Cantero, la célebre frase *laisser*

> *aller, laisser passer* . . . El gordo Arnáiz y su amigo Pastor, el economista, sostenían que todos los grandes problemas se resuelven por sí mismos, y D. Pedro Mata opinaba del propio modo, aplicando a la sociedad y a la política el sistema de la medicina expectante. La naturaleza se cura sola; no hay más que dejarla. [. . .] Don Baldomero no lo decía así; pero sus vagas ideas sobre el asunto se condensaban en una expresión de moda y muy socorrida: 'el mundo marcha'. (II, 1.1.iv. p. 461)

Baldomero can justify spoiling his only son by drawing the parallel between his easygoing attitude and the *laissez-faire* economics from which he has profited, when the real reason lies in his own personality: 'Don Baldomero no tenía carácter para poner un freno a su estrepitoso cariño paternal' (II, 1.1.iv. p. 461). It is an example of finding scientific justification for acting on basic human instincts and in this sense he *is* paralleling the social Darwinism proclaimed by his business associates. The social Darwinian attitude, or rather that of the school of thought propagated by Herbert Spencer, towards economic and social freedom was clearly most welcomed by those who profited from it, in this case Madrid's mercantile class and *laissez-faire* economists. The narrator makes it clear in the words 'la idea madre de aquellos tiempos' that by the mid-1880s this faith in the inevitability of progress had come under serious question. Similarly, in the following chapters it becomes clear that parental leniency has produced a young man of dubious quality.

The economic rise of the Santa Cruz family is embedded within Spain's political, social and economic fortunes:

> En este interesante período de la crianza del heredero, desde el 45 para acá, sufrió la casa de Santa Cruz la transformación impuesta por los tiempos, y que fue puramente externa, continuando inalterada en lo esencial. En el escritorio y en el almacén aparecieron los primeros mecheros de gas hacia el año 49, y el famoso velón de cuatro luces recibió tan tremenda bofetada de la dura mano del progreso, que no se le volvió a ver más por ninguna parte. (II, 1.1.v. p. 462)

The ironic tone of the above quotation does not disguise the fact that there is a downside to this scheme of progress in that some things are bound to become obsolete when advances take place. The advances here are technological, and the anthropomorphic image of the 'victim' is a source of humour. But when the 'struggle for life' scenario is applied to real people, the humour is lost. It should be noted that biological Darwinists borrowed heavily from the field of economics, and economists in turn used Darwinian theory as a justification for their economic and social policies. In *La creación*, Edgar Quinet finds an absolute parallel in the evolution of manufactured products and biological evolution:

> De esta manera, y por causa análoga, en las sociedades humanas, máquinas superiores hacen desaparecer las inferiores, y con ellas todo un grosero

> mundo de industria elemental. El pez huesoso reemplaza al pez cartilaginoso, el monodelfo sucede al didelfo, como el barco de vapor sucede al de vela, ó el tejido mecánico á la antigua lanzadora del tejedor.
> (Quinet, p. 268)

As stated earlier, Baldomero II likens his younger, unsocialised self to a member of a subject race. When Jacinta and Guillermina take upon themselves to make 'una visita al cuarto estado', they descend into a 'pre-civilised' Madrid where they encounter Ido's children:

> Era una manada de salvajes, compuesta de dos tagarotes como de diez y doce años, una niña más chica, 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. [. . .] Los dos aludidos, mostrando al sonreír sus dientes blancos como leche y sus labios más rojos que cerezas entre el negro que los rodeaba, contestaron que sí con sus cabezas de salvaje. (II, 1.9.ii. p. 536)

So filthy are the children that their age and gender are indeterminate: moreover their appearance is at best semi-human. This appearance lends itself to a description at once objectified and picturesquely specific, in terms which would match the anthropological discourse of the time. Their social status is glossed as a subject-race status, and this is confirmed in the language used by Nicanora herself, '– Canallas, cafres, ¡cómo se han puesto!' (II, 1.9.ii. p. 537) Nicanora's profession of *lutera* means that both she and her children are constantly covered in ink from the *papeles de luto* she prepares:

> Era la señora de Ido del Sagrario, que tenía en la cara sombrajos y manchurrones de aquel mismo betún de los caribes y las manos enteramente negras. (II, 1.9.ii. p. 537)

Geoffrey Ribbans has observed that la señora de Ido is the most poorly paid character in the novel: whereas 'Don Baldomero has an annual income of 25,000 *duros* [. . .] Nicanora, Ido's wife, gets a *real* per ream of mourning paper, making six or seven *reales* a day.'[12] The reference to *betún de los caribes* underlines Nicanora's slave status; people who are treated as subject races but who are not confined to the colonies. The ink metaphor used in *El*

[12] Geoffrey Ribbans, *Fortunata y Jacinta*, Critical Guides to Spanish Texts, 21 (London: Grant & Cutler, 1977) pp. 62–3.

amigo Manso by Doña Javiera to describe Rupertico has a resonance here: those at the very bottom of Madrid's economic hierarchy are essentially *negros*/*cafres* to their bourgeois masters, and Galdós uses the ink spread over the hands and faces of Nicanora to reinforce this idea.[13]

Baldomero and his fellow businessmen, by contrast, can reflect that they came from modest backgrounds, and evolved financially and socially over their lifetime to occupy positions of power. They maintain that this rise from 'savage' to father of a 'crown prince' is not just achievable, but almost inevitable. Clearly, so far as the vast majority of the 'el cuarto estado' are concerned, this evolutionary scenario will pass them by; they are destined to remain at the bottom of the social ladder. Most poignant is the case of 'El Pituso', who like the other children raised in the 'Cuarto Estado' is characterised as belonging both to a subject race and a species other than human. Isabelita says of him, 'No hace más que arrastrarse por los suelos y dar coces como los burros' (II, 1.10.v. p. 573), whereas the narrator alludes to his 'skin colour':

> La lengua que sacaba, por tener la creencia de todo negrito, que para ser tal negrito, debe estirar la lengua todo lo más posible, parecía una hoja de rosa. (II, 1.9.iii. p. 539)

At Benigna's house the boy's total lack of social training becomes apparent; he is obviously used to living off scraps of food, and like an untrained puppy he urinates where he should not. Jacinta cannot wait to tame the beast, declaring 'Así le domesticaremos', and the boy for his part duly behaves like her pet dog:

> El instinto, fuerte y precoz en las criaturas como los animalitos, le impulsaba a pegarse a Jacinta y a no apartarse de ella mientras en la casa estaba . . . Era como un perrillo que prontamente distingue a su amo entre todas las personas que le rodean, y se adhiere a él y le mira y acaricia. (II, 1.10.v. p. 574)[14]

[13] Spencer exaggerates to a bizarre degree the perceived similarities between European children and adult members of subject races. Naturally he views that as part of the march towards heterogeneity and also as a form of recapitulation: 'In the infant European we see sundry resemblances to the lower human races: as in the flatness of the alæ of the nose, the depression of its bridge, the divergence and forward opening of the nostrils, the form of the lips, the absence of a frontal sinus, the width between the eyes, the smallness of the legs. Now as the developmental process by which these traits are turned into those of the adult European, is a continuation of the change from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous displayed during the previous evolution of the embryo; it follows that the parallel developmental process by which the like traits of the barbarous races have been turned into those of the civilized races, has also been a continuation of the change from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous.' Herbert Spencer, *First Principles*, 2 vols (London: Williams & Norgate, 1911), II, p. 275.

[14] See p. 141 for a similar dog-like description of Felipe Centeno.

Childhood behaviour, – in this instance, moreover, the childhood behaviour of the lower social classes – is shown to display aspects of a primitive, bestial atavism which is then 'domesticated' out of the young before they reach adulthood. However, there is a clear parallel between the middle class's perceptions of Darwinian biological principles and their attitude towards social, economic and even educational 'transformations'. The description of the working class as animals and subject races denotes their subservience, and also reflects the perceived primitiveness of those who are some way further back down the socio-economic evolutionary tract. The imagery used eases the middle-class conscience because it implies that the suffering of the lower orders is bearable for them, insofar as they are not equipped with the same human faculties as a civilised person. This posture is all the more ridiculous considering Baldomero's self-confessed rise from 'savagery' in the space of a few years. Though the limitations of his earlier self which he has in mind were no doubt different, one has a strong overall sense of circumstances altering cases.

The business of the Santa Cruz family, clothing, undergoes its own transformations:

> La sociedad española empezaba a presumir de *seria*; es decir, a vestirse lúgubremente, y el alegre imperio de los colorines se derrumbaba de un modo indudable. Como se habían ido las capas rojas, se fueron los pañuelos de Manila. La aristocracia los cedía con desdén a la clase media, y ésta, que también quería ser aristócrata, entregábalos al pueblo, último y fiel adepto de los matices vivos. (II, 1.2.v. p. 463)

Clothing is seen as the mark of social advancement: economic growth has a 'trickle-down effect' on the style of dress of the respective social classes. But this is not all. The narrator voices animosity towards these changes: 'Estamos bajo la influencia del norte de Europa, y ese maldito Norte nos impone los grises que toma de su ahumado cielo' (II, 1.2.v. p. 463). However, it is not just the aesthetics of the northern Europeans which cause resentment. Their economic prowess means that they treat Spain as an undeveloped nation open to imperial-style exploitation:

> Las comunicaciones rápidas nos trajeron mensajeros de la potente industria belga, francesa e inglesa, que necesitaban mercados. Todavía no era moda ir a buscarlos al Africa, y los venían a buscar aquí, cambiando cuentos de vidrio por pepitas de oro; es decir, lanillas, cretonas, y merinos, por dinero contante o por obras de arte. (II, 1.2.v. p. 463)

Although Spain is advancing, it is still 'primitive' in European eyes and this is compounded by Spain's inferiority complex. The transformation in clothing is not only represented in the social hierarchy within Spain, but in a hierarchy of nations. Isabel Cordero's business acumen means that she sees the benefits

of following the lead of the more industrialised nations in the North, to the dismay of the narrator who bemoans the loss of colourful *castizo* fashions and more besides:

> ¿Qué corriente seguirían? La más marcada era la de las *novedades*, la de la influencia de la fabricación francesa y belga, en virtud de aquella ley de los grises del Norte, invadiendo, conquistando y anulando nuestro ser colorista y romanesco. El vestir se anticipaba al pensar, y cuando aun los versos no habían sido desterrados por la prosa, ya la lana había hecho trizas a la seda.
> (II, 1.2.v. p. 464)

The language used is interesting; in the struggle between nations, in this case between their economies, and by extension their cultures, Spain is felt to be hopelessly out-gunned. There are two schemes at work here: the struggle between cultures, which is being won by the northern Europeans, influences in its turn the social evolution going on within Spain. Both of these interrelated scenarios are symbolised by fashion. The upsurge of a Spanish middle class, should, one might think, be a positive sign of progress, but it is seen by the narrator as more of a levelling down of Spanish culture and society:

> Era por añadidura, la época en que la clase media entraba de lleno en el ejercicio de sus funciones, apandando todos los empleos creados por el nuevo sistema político y administrativo, comprando a plazos todas las fincas que habían sido de la Iglesia [. . .] y fundando el imperio de la levita.
> (II, 1.2.v. p. 464)

The rise of the middle class, which has been swollen by the creation of an inflated civil service and the disentailment of Church property, is symbolised by the *levita*. The frock coat is a recurring symbol in the *novelas contemporáneas* of an homogenised culture where class boundaries, apart from that marking off the working class, are no longer clearly visible. The narrator finds himself claiming that in the first half of the nineteenth century there existed a social heterogeneity which has been eroded by an amorphous middle class, where the inter-marrying between individuals from different social backgrounds has led to the disappearance of the authentic Spanish types discussed in the previous chapter.[15]

Like Don Baldomero II, Fortunata herself undergoes a transformation, which is brought about through the advice and tuition of an array of characters, although she never becomes the *persona decente* that most of them would have her become. Fortunata's attempt to injure Aurora at the end of the

[15] As stated on p. 71, from Galdós's own perspective, it is the collapse of clear social categories which allows us to better understand our fellow citizens.

novel underlines the fact that she has not changed much from the tigerish woman who appears earlier in the novel, but neither is she the same as the Fortunata who first appears in the doorway in la Cava de San Miguel.

It is also important to note that like María Egipcíaca, Fortunata is likened to a piece of uncut stone, ripe for sculpting. But whereas León Roch may have regarded María as a *tabula rasa*, a piece of statuesque marble that he could rework himself, with the block of unhewn stone that is Fortunata the emphasis is different. The perspectives of Juanito, Villalonga and to some degree the narrator hold that Fortunata forms part of the *cantera* of the *pueblo*, a resource from which the middle class can 'replenish' itself from time to time. The idea is most clearly expressed when Villalonga tells of Fortunata's reappearance in Madrid:

> 'Fortunata . . . Pero no tienes idea de su transformación. [. . .] no puedes formarte idea de la metamorfosis. [. . .] De fijo que ha estado en París, porque sin pasar por allí no se hacen ciertas transformaciones. [. . .] ¿Te acuerdas de lo que sostenías? . . . «El pueblo es la cantera. De él salen las grandes ideas y las grandes bellezas. Viene luego la inteligencia, el arte, la mano de obra, saca el bloque, lo talla . . .'. (II, 1.11.i. p. 586)

Fortunata's transformation, it appears, is largely due to a greater exploitation of her natural assets and a more frenchified dress sense. This would seem to fit the pattern of evolution discussed above, but the image of her and her class as a *cantera* which can exploited and transformed appears to be more related to the Pygmalion scenario studied by Jagoe and Charnon-Deutsch. However, in Herbert Spencer's law of evolution, organic and inorganic matter transform under the same principle, namely that all matter will pass from a state of homogeneity to one of heterogeneity. Though Spencer himself does not seem to know what universal 'dynamic' guides this law[16] (and Haeckel is similarly vague) there is a general faith at work here that Newtonian physics will somehow be amenable to Darwin's hypotheses. In this sense, although the 'block of stone' image of the *pueblo* foregrounds passivity, or rather its lack of self-determination, the image also falls into an overall pattern of evolution. In the same way that Baldomero and his *confrères* see economic progress in Spencer's terms, so Juanito justifies his exploitation of Fortunata through Spencer's philosophy and possibly Haeckel's science.

Torquemada's rise to economic prominence is matched by a social evolution which manifests itself in several ways. One of these is the change in Torquemada's clothing throughout the tetralogy, the subject of Terence

[16] Herbert Spencer, *First Principles*, 2 vols (London: Williams & Norgate, 1911), I, pp. 217–21.

Folley's major study.[17] Folley makes two main points. The first is that Don Francisco's change in dress fails to disguise the fact that his character remains fundamentally unchanged right up to the end of *Torquemada y San Pedro*. Folley's second major point is that Torquemada's attire characterises him as a usurer: his creaking boots, which he subsequently changes; his cape, which as Folley points out, is discarded when he is not in public, is still worn at home; and most significantly, his cane, which Folley observes as being the item which most defines Torquemada, it being 'the symbol of his trade' (39).

With regard to Torquemada's unchanging inner nature, Folley argues that 'an element of satire and sarcasm frequently emerges from the description, to remind us of the essentially superficial nature of the process undergone' (33). Yet a rather different conclusion emerges from H. B. Hall's article on Torquemada and his linguistic development. Hall notes:

> Torquemada learns a new language as part of his striving after a new way of life, a new personality. This can only grow; it cannot be superimposed. The mask tends to become the face, or the face tends to conform to the mask. The transformation will never be complete, but once under way it cannot be wholly reversed.[18]

Folley appears to attach too much importance to the point that clothing is literally superficial, and fails to recognise that even a veneer has its own reality. This external, material transformation does not simply mirror Torquemada's social rise; it is an integral part of it. Folley comments:

> The author's attitude toward the apparent evolution of Torquemada is revealed with particular clarity by his reference to certain individual items of the character's appearance: Torquemada's headgear, his walking-stick, his shoes and above all, the usurer's typically Spanish cape. (33–4)

The fact that Torquemada retains many elements from his earlier life assures Folley that the usurer has not really changed at all. Hall's account, though, remains more nuanced and more convincing: although Torquemada's transformation is 'incomplete', it is 'irreversible' and therefore his personality can be said to have changed. The sentence quoted above comes from the start of Folley's examination of his second major point: that Don Francisco's attire is typical of a Madrilenian usurer. This he establishes convincingly; his discussion of Torquemada's cape being particularly illuminating. However, Folley ignores Galdós's longstanding notion of 'generic types', an early formulation of which makes specific reference to *el avaro* who is presented as an example

[17] T. Folley, 'Clothes and the Man: An Aspect of Benito Pérez Galdós' Method of Literary Characterization', *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*, 49 (1972), 30–9.

[18] *Galdós Studies I* (ed.) J. E. Varey (London: Tamesis, 1970), p. 152.

of 'las variantes innumerables de esta especie multiforme' (Hoar, p. 235). Clothing, in particular, marks out this species:

> Viste con modesto, mas no desaliñado traje: revelando por su forma una venerable antigüedad, casi parece nuevo, cuando se considera la pulcritud y lisura de la tela, en la cual la activa precaución de veinte años no ha dejado caer una mancha, ni ha permitido el deterioro de un hilo. (Hoar, p. 235)

Folley asserts that 'the function Galdós assigns to Torquemada's walking stick is restricted principally to the requirements of characterisation, with an element of comic relief' (35). He claims that Torquemada has retained the same stick throughout all the changes in his life. His last citation concerning the stick is from *Torquemada y San Pedro*: 'avanzaba despacito por la calle de Cuchilleros, cargando el cuerpo sobre el bastón, como si anduviese con tres pies' (II, 2.8. p. 1598). Both the stick itself and the lifelong attachment to it are elements in Galdós's original typology: almost thirty years earlier, he had characterised *el avaro* in these terms:

> Lleva un pesado bastón, que es un aditamento del brazo: bastón ó cetro enigmático, articulado en la mano desde hace cuarenta años, y que, como integrante parte del organismo, obedece a todos los movimientos y conmociones de éste. (Hoar, p. 236)

Yet the detail, as used in the Torquemada novels, also lends itself to schemes of association that are dynamic and transformational. The most obvious cultural reference of the image of an old man with a stick apparently walking using 'three legs' is from the riddle of the Sphinx. Like that story's image of Man passing through the three stages of his development, Torquemada's social evolution is at one point classified into three stages in keeping with French Positivism. In *Torquemada en la cruz* his rise is also measured in terms of a human development, the first stage of which is the 'embryonic' when he sees the world through the eyes of a child again (II, 1.11. p. 1392). Whether, in fact, Torquemada undergoes a transformation, an evolution or a development of some other kind will be discussed later, as will the reasons for the loss of the *avaro* and the other recognisable species of Madrid (see pp. 102–7).

In his Academy speech 'La sociedad presente como materia novelable' (Bonet, p. 20), Galdós alludes to 'la vestidura, que diseña los últimos trazos externos de la personalidad' but also to 'el lenguaje, que es la marca de la raza'. Language defines us as humans: other animals do produce utterances, but true verbal communication is unique to our species, and therefore it became an important area of discussion in the late nineteenth-century Darwinian debate. Vernon A. Chamberlain successfully argues that the use of idiosyncratic language helps to define character. Regarding Torquemada specifically he comments:

> When the usurer becomes the most important character in four novels, Galdós changes the focus from the external observation, with accompanying social-amenity, *muletilla* quoted above, (Torquemada's simple greeting), to an intimate study of the personage and his innermost feelings, thoughts, and personality evolution.[19]

In viewing Torquemada in a broader literary context, Hall states that 'the novelist frequently makes use of newly acquired speech habits as an index of the aspirations of his character' (p. 145). In particular Hall makes the comparison between José María Manso's acquisition of 'socially acceptable' language and that of Don Francisco. The passage from *El amigo Manso* cited earlier in this chapter (p. 81) and by Hall makes it clear that a linguistic evolution is needed to aid the social evolution of the lower middle classes and that such transformations can be studied as if they were biological. The better versed Torquemada becomes in the social culture of the group he is now entering, the more highbrow the subject matter of his conversation becomes. Language is the tool which allows him not only to acquire information but to express ideas towards which he may have lurched instinctively in the past. His banquet speech, in which he praises the values of *laissez-faire* economics, is a success, although still a struggle for the usurer. His linguistic development has been rapid, and although even by the time of his speech he is still making dreadful gaffes and at times little sense, he has apparently been able to pass himself off as being well-informed and eloquent. Certainly Torquemada has a struggle to articulate abstract ideas because they are alien to his very material world. He has, Hall notes, 'the tendency to translate difficult and unpalatable ideas into the readily understandable terms of business dealing. Thus, the God–man relationship becomes a creditor–debtor relationship' (p. 144). Hall sees in Torquemada's initial difficulty with language not so much a lack of linguistic sophistication due to his scant education, but something deeper: 'as he gropes for words to explain his action to Cruz we see how the man's speech derives directly from his innermost nature, how a linguistic deficiency is at bottom a moral deficiency' (p. 144). Whether this 'moral deficiency' has even started to be 'corrected' is a moot point. As to the degree of Torquemada's linguistic development and, by extension, the evolution of his character, Hall shows greater insight than Folley or Chamberlain. In citing Galdós's term 'la máscara de la finura' to describe the style of language used by the likes of Donoso, he understands that the 'mask' begins to become a permanent fixture, and that the instances of reversion to type are not simply examples of the 'mask slipping':

> [. . .] the frequent fluctuations in Torquemada's style of speech which occur

[19] Vernon A. Chamberlin, 'The *muletilla*: An Important Facet of Galdós' Characterization Technique', *Hispanic Review*, 29 (1961), 305.

> throughout the whole period of his social ascent, are the outward manifestations of a deep seated duality which is never resolved. Already, the fact that his reversion to vulgar speech is not wholly an involuntary relapse but contains an element of deliberate choice suggests that his new persona is establishing itself as something against which he feels the need to react on occasion. It is beginning to take over. (p. 152)

It must be presumed that humanity's cerebral, linguistic and cultural evolution developed in tandem with each other. Mankind could only have started to entertain deeper philosophical, moral and spiritual ideas through developing at the same time the language to cope with them. In Torquemada's evolution, as elsewhere in the later *novelas contemporáneas*, a possible spiritual salvation is held out as a potential goal and source of meaning for human existence. Hall states:

> On the social plane, then, Torquemada has by now undergone a partial but irreversible metamorphosis whose principal outward manifestation is linguistic. On the spiritual plane, which of course is not wholly separable from the social, the situation is still unclear. (p. 160)

As Hall suggests, the barrier which separates Torquemada from God is Gamborena's language (p. 163). Death comes to Torquemada too soon for the reader to know for certain whether he would have been capable of a truly spiritual existence. Although Darwinian theory had caused a great deal of consternation regarding humanity's moral and religious objectives, Galdós sees the pinnacle of human evolution as the high spiritual and moral ground. Like language, decision-making based on moral and spiritual rationales is seen as being largely the preserve of *homo sapiens*. But in the *Descent* Darwin had already suggested that some forms of spirituality were in evidence among the higher mammals. This would suggest that the end product of all life forms is a highly moral and spiritual humanity, or alternatively that morality and spirituality are simply rationalised instincts. The former is the more palatable view, as it gives humanity back a purpose that the *Origin* was felt to have 'stolen'.

Don Francisco is introduced as a miser not of the *antiguo cuño* and therefore not a 'metaphysical usurer'. This is a consequence, it is explained, of the disentailment of Church property: 'Viviendo el Peor en una época que arranca de la desamortización, sufrió, sin comprenderlo, la metamorfosis que ha desnaturalizado la usura metafísica, convirtiéndola en positivista' (II, 2. p. 1340). Thomas F. Glick confirms this:

> Había, además, tanto entre los positivistas como entre los darwinistas, pensadores que formularon una metafísica materialista, 'que presentan, con notoria ligereza, como irrecusable resultado de la observación científica,

> fruto necesario del positivismo y como ineludible consecuencia de la teoría de la evolución. (Glick 1982, p. 37)

Torquemada, between 1851 and 1868, is still shabbily dressed and somewhat unkempt. It is from around 1870 onwards that his wealth creation really begins. The disentailment of Church land has transformed metaphysical usury into a positivist usury, and in this Torquemada is representative of 'the capitalist class, his life the rise of that class and the transformation it effects in society' (Hall, pp. 136–7). But to understand Torquemada's rise fully, it is necessary first to examine his background. Carlos Blanco Aguinaga points out that Galdós uses the term *raza histórica* in reference to the aristocracy, and that this should not be seen in late twentieth-century terms but 'desde el darwinismo social del XIX.'[20] Blanco Aguinaga's primary concern is not with Galdós's choice of expression, but with the role history plays in the novels – here specifically in the *Torquemada* series. The choice of expression, however, may not be a casual one: arguably Galdós was not simply reaching for a vogue-term with no particular intentional force. One reasoning for thinking so is the fact that social evolution forms such an integral part of the development of the series. In any case, Blanco Aguinaga seems too quick to dismiss the notion of 'race' as unimportant in the reading of the novels, even though its operation there remains highly ambiguous.[21]

In *Torquemada en la hoguera*, Don Francisco is described as being 'Hombre de composición extraña de lo militar y lo eclesiástico.' Similarly in *Fortunata y Jacinta* his face has 'ciertos rasgos de tipo militar con visos clericales', and in *La de Bringas* he is presented as having 'un cierto aire clerical'. As will be suggested (see pp. 104–5), with reference to Morentín and Zárate, Torquemada's appearance is representative of a society where the 'generic types' have blended together and are becoming more difficult to identify, although there is no denying that the two components do suggest the absolute and tenacious power Torqemada has over his victims.

Following disentailment, the material wealth of the major spiritual institution (i.e. the Church) has provided the catalyst for the 'usury class' (and other like-minded middle-class capitalists) to become the financial power of the nation. Torquemada is still, by the end, unable to make the distinction between spiritual and material existences, and it is also apparently beyond him that Saint Peter (Gamborena) is not like the Inquisitor (Torquemada).

[20] Carlos Blanco Aguinaga, *La historia y el texto: Tres novelas de Galdós* (Madrid: Nuestra Cultura, 1978), p. 107.

[21] Sara E. Schyfter certainly overstates the Jewish element but concludes that 'Torquemada as *converso* is an outsider to the end and his Jewishness, though symbolic, is nevertheless real.' Sara E. Schyfter, *The Jew in the Novels of Benito Pérez Galdós* (London: Tamesis, 1978), p. 118.

The terms of the 'deal' to be struck are set by Gamborena and Cruz, who justifies her stance thus:

> – Piénselo bien, y verá que, en cierto modo, es una restitución. Esos cuantiosísimos bienes de la Iglesia han sido, y usted no hace más que devolverlos a su dueño. ¿No entiende? Oiga una palabrita. La llamada desamortización, que debiera llamarse despojo, arrancó su propiedad a la Iglesia, para entregarla a los particulares, a la burguesía, por medio de ventas que no eran sino verdaderos regalos. [. . .] ¡Feliz aquél que, poseyéndola temporalmente por los caprichos de la fortuna, tiene virtud para devolverla a su legítimo dueño! (II, 3.4. p. 1614)

Those who consider themselves to be spiritually guided, Gamborena and Cruz in this instance, deem that they have a right to the nation's wealth. Yet more ironically the archetypal aristocrat Cruz sounds strangely similar to the Marxist civil servant Pantoja in *Miau*, the Church here assuming the unique institutional role of Pantoja's State. Torquemada is not slow to see the irony of the Church taking his money, although he fails to perceive any corresponding irony in his own purchase of reputation by these means:

> ¡Cuánto mejor que en las de un heredero pródigo y mala cabeza, que lo gaste en porquerías y estupideces! Ya veo que se harán capillas y catedrales, hospitales magníficos, y que la posteridad no dirá: '¡Ah, el tacaño! . . . ¡Ah, el avariento! . . . ¡Ah, el judío! . . .', sino que dirá: '¡Ah, el magnífico! . . . ¡Oh, el generoso prócer! . . . ¡Oh, el sostenedor del cristianismo! . . .'. (II, 3.5. p. 1615)

The positivism adopted in shifting aspects and degrees by Torquemada and the Aguila sisters holds that developments are, by their nature, progressive and that evolution is a 'one-way street' to improvement. This is paralleled in Torquemada's accumulation of wealth, his 'positivist usury', which was itself triggered off by the disentailment. In the end, a large portion of his money is 'returned' to the Church, and the heir to his remaining wealth is an imbecile. The 'San Eloys' reach a dead-end; the newly acquired family name will presumably die with Valentinico and they will, therefore, be 'extinct'.

David G. Turner outlines Comte's understanding of the 'Positive era':

> Comte had analysed man's social evolution as passing through three stages: the religious, when all phenomena were conceived by men as being animated by desires and a will like their own, the metaphysical, when causes and abstractions replaced the desires and will, and the new Positive era, characterised by a scientific search not for an Absolute, but for laws and relationships between phenomena.[22]

[22] David G. Turner, *Unamuno's Webs of Fatality* (London: Tamesis Books, 1974), p. 29.

Torquemada has positivist ideals, but retains elements of his other 'two stages'. Just as a man's lifetime is divided into three in the riddle of the Sphinx, so Torquemada lives through, and carries some of the baggage of, the three stages described by Comte. The ideological metamorphosis in Torquemada's character and outlook is paralleled in his social evolution. This is described in terms of two metaphors; one is developmental, that is, from an 'embryonic' to an 'adult' phase, and the other transformational, whereby Torquemada changes from being a beast into a civilised 'European'. In Rafael's view Torquemada remains a *búfalo salvaje* and to his business associates he is nothing more than a *jabalí* which sniffs out 'financial truffles'. Fidela treats him affectionately, but still as a beast:

> ella le llamaba a él su *borriquito*, pasándole la mano por el lomo como a un perrazo doméstico, y diciéndole:
> – *Tor*, Tor . ., aquí . ., fuera . . ., ven . . ., la pata . . ., ¡dame la pata!
> (II, 3.9. p. 1537)

These attitudes would seem to undermine the scheme of Lamarckian evolution, but they ignore the change which Torquemada undergoes. After his first evening of instruction from Donoso he sees the world through new eyes and wonders, 'Pero ¿me he vuelto yo niño?' After his first step up the evolutionary ladder, he views his former life and acquaintances accordingly: 'Amigos encontró que no andaban a cuatro pies por especial gracia de Dios.' Even his own daughter is seen from a changed perspective, which also gives him an opportunity to use some of his newly-acquired vocabulary: 'Eres muy ordinaria, y tu marido el cursi más grande que conozco, *uno de nuestros primeros cursis*.' Torquemada sees Donoso as the Messiah and listens to him on his knees 'algo como el sermón de la Montaña, la nueva ley que debía transformar el mundo' (II, 1.11. p. 1392). So, at the very start of his social evolution, the idea of religious conversion, with the documented ambiguities that this implies, is tied to the human development and evolutionary metaphors. Two chapters later, the narrator makes the nature of Torquemada's social transformation clearer:

> Al compás de esta transformación en el orden económico, iba operándose la otra, la social apuntada primero tímidamente en reformas de vestir, y llevada a su mejor desarrollo por medio de transiciones lentas, para que el cambiazo no saltara a la vista con crudezas de sainete. (II, 1.13. p. 1396)

There is a special mention here of the two most striking aspects of his evolution: 'Y si en los hábitos, particularmente en el vestir, la evolución se marcaba con rasgos y caracteres que podía observar todo el mundo, en el lenguaje no se diga' (II, 1.13. p. 1396).

A development like Torquemada's demonstrates the major flaw in social evolution for the individual. A higher position in the social hierarchy may be

attainable for a man such as Torquemada, but he will never be completely comfortable with it. In theory he rises from the lower middle classes to the aristocracy; in practice, he ends up stranded somewhere between the two. His son, who towards the end of *Torquemada y San Pedro* is increasingly referred to as 'el heredero de San Eloy', ought to be the chief beneficiary of his father's social and economic rise, but his disabilities mean that he will never be higher up the scale, even if he were to reach adulthood. Torquemada's positivist outlook combined with his innate materialism fosters the view that human and social evolution are unerringly progressive. Though embarrassingly conscious of the anomalies inherent in his own socially hybrid state, it never enters into his narrow 'scientific' conviction that the second-generation social hybrid of his own begetting will be anything other than a genius – at least until experience has proved him to be tragically and definitively wrong.

Valentinico is quite the opposite to the prodigy his father had so confidently predicted. The hybrid of two social classes fails to develop into anything approaching his parents' expectations, and it is reasonable to assume that he will never have any children of his own, or indeed, as stated above, reach adulthood himself. In the chapter 'Hybridism', Darwin concludes that 'First crosses between forms, sufficiently distinct to be ranked as species, and their hybrids are very generally, but not universally, sterile' (*The Origin of Species*, p. 223).[23] Valentinico is the progeny of two social classes who are brought together respectively by economic necessity and a desire to rise in society. It should be pointed out that although Torquemada is attracted to both of the Aguila sisters when he begins to 'court' them, and is in awe of both of them on account of their beauty and social graces, there is no passion involved. Neither of the sisters finds Torquemada remotely attractive, so emotional blackmail and the prospect of financial security are required to bring about the union. The noble ideas professed by Cruz have been tested by economic reality; for her own and her family's survival she is willing to 'prostitute' her sister. Only Rafael, literally blind to the miserable reality daily faced by his sisters, remains faithful to his aristocratic principles. Rafael does demonstrate that however ill-founded the Aguila family's notions of moral superiority might be, while their standard of living is bearable, or thought to

[23] Darwin further comments that hybrids are generally less vigorous and that they tend to die prematurely (*The Descent of Man*, pp. 199–201). With regard to Torquemada's expectations that his second son will be a 'Newton', it is worthy of note that Darwin, in his chapter on 'Mental Powers', argues: '[. . .] Nor is the difference slight in moral disposition between a barbarian [. . .] and a Howard or a Clarkson; and in intellect, between a savage who uses hardly any abstract terms, and a Newton or Shakespeare. Differences of this kind between the highest men of the highest races and the lowest savages, are connected by the finest gradations. Therefore it is possible that they might pass and be developed into each other' (*The Descent of Man*, p. 86).

be so, they are held in deadly earnest. Rafael cannot adapt to the present that confronts him, and he perishes because of it.

To make this scheme work, and to represent artificial selection as leading to sterility in both a biological and a social sense, calls for some poetic licence on Galdós's part. When the aristocracy is referred to as *la raza antigua* and is seen as unable to interbreed with those outside their class, it should not be understood that Galdós believed it to be a separate race. Rather he was deploying a stereotypical image of the aristocracy to assist the functioning of his plot:

> [. . .] el tipo aristocrático presentaba en ella una variante harto común. Sus cabellos rubios, su color anémico, el delicado perfil, la nariz de caballete y un poquito larga, la boca limpia, el pecho de escasísimo bulto, el talle sutil, denunciaban a la señorita de estirpe, pura sangre, sin cruzamientos que vivifican, enclenque de nacimiento y desmedrada luego por una educación de estufa. (II, 1.5. p. 1378)

Even if this description were to be taken at face value, Fidela's aristocratic delicacy would not emerge as completely genetic in its origins: her pampered upbringing also played a part. The narrator, who is presenting her as Torquemada sees her, notably fails to mention at this point that the Aguila family barely has enough to eat, which would also account for a certain slenderness. It could be argued, indeed, that Europe's aristocrats were inbred and as such were in fact genetically distinct. In *Torquemada y San Pedro*, Fidela is compared to members of that classical example of inbred aristocrats, the Hapsburg family:

> En sus mejillas veíanse granulaciones rosadas, y sus labios finísimos e incoloros dejaban ver al sonreírse parte demasiado extensa de las rojas encías. Era, por aquellos días, un tipo de distinción que podríamos llamar austríaca, porque recordaba a las hermanas de Carlos V y a otras princesas ilustres que viven en efigie por esos museos de Dios, aristocráticamente narigudas. (II, 1.1.7. p. 1557)

Yet that line of thinking is, in the end, represented as fallacious. It is made abundantly clear in the *Torquemada* series, that the aristocracies are founded on wealth and those with wealth can buy their way into *la raza antigua*. The Aguila sisters are, in many ways, an echo of the daughters of Don Manuel José Ramón del Pez. Physically these latter share the 'typical' attributes of aristocratic young ladies:

> Eran dos niñas preciosas, de hermosura delicada y frágil, de esa que luce en la juventud con la belleza enfermiza de una flor de estufa, y luego se disipa en el primer año de matrimonio; rubias, delgadas, quebradizas, porcelanescas. (I, 1.12.ii. p. 1055)

Señora Pez, given the rise in fortunes of the Pez family, believes that only millionaires or perhaps even royalty would make suitable future husbands for her two daughters. In principle 'old money' such as the Aguila family would not entertain the possibility that the likes of the Peces were on a social par with them, but in 'Efemérides' Galdós includes a detail which allows the reader to see both the Peces and the Aguilas as opportunistic breeds of an essentially similar kind:

> Recobran los Peces hijos sus puestos, con lo que la Administración nacional queda asentada sobre fundamentos diamantinos. Todo va bien, admirablemente bien. La guerra civil avanza. Sobre las ruinas de las fortunas que desaparecen, elévanse las colosales riquezas de los contratistas. (I, 2.1. p. 1086)

The Aguila family never were 'old money' themselves, their previous fortune having been made from selling meat (of presumably dubious quality) to the army during the first Carlist War. Spain's political instability has not been disastrous for everyone, and Galdós clearly has a certain distaste for those within and without the civil service who have turned the ravages of war to their personal advantage. The difference between the two sets of daughters is simply that the state of their families' respective fortunes is moving in opposite directions. However, the novel's symbolic scheme of the newly-moneyed *plebeyo* Torquemada marrying into 'old money' relies on the use of stereotypes. So perhaps the anomalies should be noted but not seriously questioned, or rather taken with a pinch of salt, much as Juanito Santa Cruz's title of *Dauphin* should. It is important to recognise, however, in the words of Blanco Aguinaga, that Valentinico is still the 'engendro imposible del matrimonio aristocracia-burguesía' (p. 120). Valentinico serves as a reminder that social engineering will not produce the precise fruits expected and desired. On the contrary, this hybrid falls well below the expectations of Torquemada and the Aguila sisters, the former believing that he can make deals with God and Nature, much to the scorn of Rafael: 'pretende que la Naturaleza sea tan imbécil como él' (II, 1.10. p. 1471). Galdós does not appear to be saying that people from different social classes should not intermarry, but he does seem to be saying that this type of arrangement, based on economic interests and social pretensions, is destined to fail. It is interesting to note that Pedro Estasen y Cortada, who according to Thomas F. Glick was the 'most significant evolutionary sociologist in late nineteenth-century Spain',[24] ties child development to humanity's development, in an effort to justify social elitism:

[24] Thomas F. Glick, *The Comparative Reception of Darwinism* (Austin: University of Texas, 1972), p. 321.

> Estasen makes a brief and fascinating digression on the biogenetic law: just as ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny within the womb, so does the extrauterine development of the human being recapitulate the social history of mankind. The socialization process of a child is a 'sociological résumé of the life of humanity.' The perfection of motor control in the individual is therefore seen as analogous to the development of social control. Aristocrats are nothing less than the select, who have proven themselves fit to occupy the highest role in social life. Estasen makes it clear that the only aristocrats worthy of the title are aristocrats by virtue of intelligence. The moneyed aristocracy of his day represents not a fulfillment of the natural order but an unjust distortion of it. (Glick 1972, pp. 322–3)

Estasen's views on the aristocracy are not dissimilar to Gamborena's; his socialisation analogy echoes Torquemada's rise from his 'embryonic' to 'adult' phases, while also giving meaning to the characterisation of Don Francisco's second son.

Valentinico is presented as a bestial and savage creature, with little chance of development from this state, despite his parents' hope that his disabilities mask a great intelligence. Much to Fidela's dismay he continues to crawl on all-fours and when Augusta attempts to make him stand upright the boy goes wild, 'dando patadas con pies y manos, que por un instante las manos más bien patas parecían'. Whereas his father gains a higher grasp of language as he advances socially, Valentín's linguistic abilities are very unlikely to develop beyond primitive utterances: 'El demonio del chico la insultó con su lengua monosilábica, salvaje, primitiva, de una sencillez feroz, pues no se oía más que pa . . . ca . . . ta . . . pa . . .' (II, 1.8. pp. 1558–9). Mother-love blinds Fidela into believing she can understand her son's utterances: 'Fidela, única persona que las entiendía, y de ello se preciaba como de poseer un idioma del Congo, ponía toda su buena voluntad en la traducción, y casi siempre sacaba repuestas muy bonitas' (II, 1.9. p. 1562). The reference to the Congo is an echo of Gamborena's tales from around the globe: 'las dificultades para apropiarse los distintos dialectos de aquellas comarcas, algunos como aullidos de cuadrúpedos, otros como cháchara de cotorras' (II, 1.5. p. 1554). The parallel appears to be intentional, particularly when Valentín's utterances are described as 'el asmático aullar de un perro' and 'su ininteligible cháchara'. Darwinian theory evoked the idea that languages and forms of language had developed and were developing in species other than mankind. Such opinions were met with great opposition: for example, Max Müller writing in 1861 claims, 'no process of natural selection will ever distil significant words out of the notes of birds or the cries of beasts.'[25] Notably, Fidela,

[25] F. Max Müller, *Lectures on the Science of Language* (London, 1861), I. 357, reproduced in Gillian Beer, *Open Fields: Science in Cultural Encounter* (Oxford, OUP, 1996), p. 99. The point is made by Beer that *The Descent of Man* successfully argues that human speech was developed by natural and sexual selection.

who believes she can understand Valentín's gibberish, gives her opinion that painting and writing should imitate Nature very directly, and when asked for the musical form which adheres to this principle she replies 'En música . . ., ¿qué sé yo? No haga usted caso de mí, que soy una ignorante . . . Pues, en música . . ., la de los pájaros' (II, 1.9. p. 1468). Beer summarises Darwin's view of music as being 'the antecedent to language' whose 'beauties [. . .] give an evolutionary advantage to the most skilled musicians, whether animal or human.' (Beer 1983, p. 100).

The boy's inordinately large mouth is not a trait of either parent – at which Augusta can only exclaim '¡Misterios de la Naturaleza!' (II, 1.9. p. 1562). Certainly the importance of genealogy is recognised, but it does not work in the manner expected by the characters. Augusta reasons hopefully, 'Niños que parecían fenómenos resultaron después hombres de extraordinario talento. La Naturaleza tiene sus caprichos . . .' (II, 1.8. p. 1560).

It seems apposite at this point to mention some pre-Darwinian notions of human evolution. John C. Greene comments:

> The characteristic of human nature, Monboddo and Rousseau discovered, was to develop and, in developing, to transform itself and its natural environment. Thus the idea of evolution got its first foothold not in the field of natural history, where both organic form and physical environment appeared immutable, but in his mind and culture.[26]

The Scottish naturalist Lord Monboddo (James Burnet, 1714–99) took particular interest in orang-utans and the 'wild children of Europe' in his attempts to prove that humanity was essentially primitive. Monboddo saw human development as occurring in three stages. The first of these was exemplified by Peter, 'the wild boy of Hanover', the second by the orang-utan, and the third by a wild girl who originated from Labrador (pp. 212–13). The latter informed Monboddo that 'the people of her country [. . .] had besides language, a kind of music which they formed in the imitation of birds' (p. 214). Greene goes on to cite Jean Itard's partially successful attempt to educate and civilise 'the wild boy of Aveyron'. Itard concluded:

> First, that man is inferior to a large number of animals in the pure state of nature, [. . .] Second, that the superiority said to be natural to man is only the result of civilization, which raises him above other animals by a great and powerful force. (p. 214)

Not only do these descriptions bring Valentinico and others of Galdós infant characters to mind, but they also recall José María Bueno de Guzmán's

[26] Greene, John C., *The Death of Adam: Evolution and Its Impact on Western Thought* (Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University, 1959), p. 211.

physically degenerate state in the chapter 'Nabucodonosor' in *Lo prohibido*. Itard, it might be noted, failed to teach the boy to speak. Fidela states that there have been cases of imbeciles who became geniuses but it is clear that this will not happen to Valentinico. He is not a mute, and even though the housemaid teaches him to pronounce a few words, he cannot master language. Augusta goes so far as to compare the boy with Victor Hugo, who, it is claimed, was a slow developer. The allusion has several possible significant overtures. Hugo was the author of a Torquemada play of his own, and there are echoes too of Galdós's early article on the use of animals in fables, where he states that 'El gran Víctor Hugo ha dicho que los animales son la sombra de la Humanidad' (see p. 25). The bestial, sterile hybrid produced is a degenerate dead-end, and as such Valentinico is the unfortunate shadow cast by the marriage of two social classes.

As mentioned earlier, Fidela's 'choice' of husband barely falls within any obvious account of 'Sexual Selection'. Darwin himself rather optimistically suggests that civilised man differs from the savage in that marriage is not forced upon the female (*The Descent of Man*, pp. 653–4). However, a woman may wish to marry a man not for the more obvious reasons one might associate with sexual selection, but because of factors such as wealth and social prominence. These would be taken into account, not merely in order that she herself might enjoy a higher standard of living, but so that her future offspring would have a much better chance of success. This is not ostensibly why Fidela marries Torquemada, but the sacrifice she makes is partly on behalf of her family and therefore her genetic line. She behaves in accordance with the values of her environment and these values come to fruition; her son is born with a title and an enormous inheritance. In terms of economic and social standing, then, her son is a success. However, the disparity between Nature's laws and schemes of human valuation appears to be insurmountable.

Nevertheless, the extinction of the San Eloy 'dynasty' and the means and nature of Torquemada's wealth creation can be seen as linked. Edgar Quinet, in his exploration of the parallels between political economy and evolutionary theory cites the case of industrial innovation which, as in the case of a vegetable or animal group acquiring some new faculty, will bring a degree of overall progress. In the case of animals and vegetables some individuals are bound to lose out, but Quinet sees Man's ability to create products which can benefit the whole of society as the fundamental difference between humanity and the other organisms, and so 'por este medio se corrige la ley de Malthus' (pp. 282–3). But Don Francisco is not an industrialist or an innovator; his wealth is the 'bubble money' of the stock exchange. This wealth which has not brought the prosperity it could have to thousands of his fellow countrymen, is, it is safe to presume, then 'returned' to the Church on his death. Only a venture to build a railway line to his home town stands out as a possibly innovative project, but this like his family line leads to a deadend. It is by no means clear that the line will be built at all (many of the lines thus

legislated for came to nothing in practice). And even if it is, it will end up in Villafranca del Bierzo. Quinet goes on to state that in nature the accumulation of 'wealth', that is, food stuffs, must be reinvested in reproduction otherwise the species is doomed:

> La naturaleza tendría que vivir de su capital, pero ese capital se agotaría pronto: los séres no seguirían renovándose; llegado el término de su existencia, perecerían con sus órdenes, sus géneros, sus especies. [. . .] Por aquí se ve, en la naturaleza, es una necesidad para el trabajo acumulado producir algo, sin lo cual el fondo o capital mismo desaparece, y la especie con el indivíduo. (pp. 284–5)

In this sense the fate of Don Francisco's two sons can be seen to be analogous to the production and disposal of his wealth. In Spencer's opinion: 'Evolution is an integration of matter [. . .] during which the matter passes from an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity, to a definite coherent heterogeneity.' In the light of Torquemada's incoherent rise, this law seems to be poorly formulated. In the course of the *Torquemada* series, the reverse of this process appears to have taken place and there is no sign of that changing. Perhaps Galdós sees this particular period of social transition as only partially complete, and believes that the types of definite, coherent, recognisable 'species' that were in evidence previously have not yet fully evolved into the *típicos genéricos* that will exist in the future. In his speech to the Real Academia Española he states:

> Examinando las condiciones del medio social en que vivimos como generador de la obra literaria, lo primero que se advierte en la muchedumbre a que pertenecemos, es la relajación de todo principio de unidad. Las grandes y potentes energías de cohesión social no son ya lo que fueron; ni es fácil prever qué fuerzas sustituirán a las perdidas en la dirección y gobierno de la familia humana . . . Cierto que la falta de unidades de organización nos va sustrayendo los carácteres genéricos, tipos que la sociedad misma nos daba bosquejados, cual si trajeran ya la primera mano de la labor artística. [. . .] Es que al descomponerse las categorías, caen de golpe los antifaces, apareciendo las caras en su castiza verdad. Perdemos los tipos pero el hombre se nos revela mejor, y el Arte se avalora sólo con dar a los seres imaginarios vida más humana que social. Ya nadie desconoce que, trabajando con materiales puramente humanos, el esfuerzo del ingenio para expresar la vida ha de ser más grande, y su labor más honda y difícil, como es de mayor empeño la representación plástica del desnudo que la de una figura cargada de ropajes, por ceñidos que sean. Y al compás de la dificultad crece, sin duda, el valor de los engendros del Arte, que si en las épocas de potentes principios de unidad resplandece con vivísimo destello de sentido, en los días azarosos de transición y de evolución puede y debe ser profundamente humano. (Bonet, pp. 176–81)

Galdós sees the accepted forms of social classification as stifling to the artistic process. In his view, during periods of transition when the thin veneer of society is shifted, as happened following disentailment for example, humanity is uniquely exposed.

The narrator claims that Zárate is typical of 'nuestra sociedad de uniformidades y de nivelación fisica y moral', and so makes a direct link between the social mores and the generic make up of contemporary Spain. He goes on to assert that the *tipos génericos* are fast disappearing and again stresses the moral differences between the classes and social groups. One generation back, things were apparently different, it being much easier to distinguish between social types simply from their physiognomy – 'el genuino tipo militar' recognisable by 'su marcial facha', for example. Also, it is noted, industrial processes have made good clothing more affordable to a large section of the population and this has added to the 'confusion'. However, greater emphasis is placed on physiognomy; pertinently *el avaro* could not in times gone by be mistaken as belonging to any other *casta* but his own. The modern *pedante*, which includes Zárate, has undergone a transformation greater than any other generic type. He has a smattering of knowledge in all areas of the sciences and arts, and to the disgust of the narrator, he fuses them together.

Essentially, the narrator is claiming that one cannot 'judge a book by its cover' any more. It should be noted that in *Fortunata y Jacinta*, set between 1869–76, occupations and roles are defined by appearance. For instance Fortunata, the daughter of egg-producers duly supplies an egg of a different sort for the Santa Cruz family,[27] while José Izquierdo is destined to become a painter's model because his face fits the existing standard. By the mid-1890s, we are led to believe, the clearly recognisable social types have all but disappeared. Morentín is said to be representative of the economic, social and genetic melting-pot of late nineteenth-century Madrid: 'Era el tal soltero, plebeyo por parte de padre, aristócrata por la materna, socialmente mestizo, como casi toda la generación que corre' (II, 1.7. p. 1463). The description of Morentín's character centres on his lack of passion and the fact that his existence is one of compromise. He has the trappings of the social elite, well educated and able to 'hold his own' in social intercourse, but he does not believe in, or care about, anything except having a quiet life.[28] The only

[27] To any accusations that this analogy is 'reductive', I would have to agree that perhaps it is. However, the only real information that Galdós gives us with regard to Fortunata's family is that they are egg producers. It must also be remembered that Fortunata offers an egg to Juanito on their first meeting. That is not to say of course that the two mutually-attracted individuals are actually thinking about ovaries. However, when Fortunata steps forward to show herself in a better light at that encounter, *fundamentally* (i.e. considered at a species level), she is not only offering Juanito the hen's egg she is eating.

[28] It is worthy of note that such bland characters occur in Balzac's work and their

evident passion in his character is that which he reserves for married women, but even here he is too petrified by the thought of a scandal to fulfil this desire.

Ironically, Morentín's heterogeneity is quite a homogenous characteristic, in the sense that it is symptomatic of the levelling down of Spanish society. The inter-marrying of social classes has diluted the characteristics which previously defined them and has produced a larger social group which does not bear easily recognisable traits. His homogeneity is reflected in his non-committal approach to love, life and politics. On the last of these, it is notably stated, 'pues ni siquiera pasión política sintió nunca, y aunque afiliado al partido canovista, reconocía que lo mismo lo estaría en el sagastino, si a él le hubiera llevado el acaso' (II, 1.7. p. 1463). Here Galdós reminds the reader that the last fifteen or so years of Spanish political life have been founded on compromise. Morentín is literally the product of a marriage which matches the nation's political unity in its pragmatism. Such a compromise was necessary to stop Spain tearing itself apart, but the *turno pacífico* is mirrored in a society of tepid compromisers. The 'cross-breeding' of social classes demanded by the shift in wealth and power was never likely to produce 'vigorous hybrids'; instead the wealth of the middle classes is diluted and squandered. Even Moretín's favourite pastime, riding his 'buen caballo inglés' has connotations of artificially engineered hybrids:

> Era hombre, en fin, muy de su época, o de sus días, informado espiritualmente de una vulgaridad sobredorada, con docena y media de ideas corrientes, de esas que parecen venir de la fábrica, en paquetitos clasificados, sujetos con un elástico. (II, 1.7. p. 1463)

The indifferent Spaniard of the 1890s is an artificial creation here described in industrial terms, again stressing the homogeneity of his generation. Like a little package produced in a factory his mental world has been manufactured and the result is a very bland product. The connection between the disappearance of social types and the role of industry is made more explicit:

> Esta tendencia a la uniformidad, que se relaciona en cierto modo con lo mucho que la Humanidad se va despabilando, con los progresos de la industria y hasta con la baja de los aranceles, que ha generalizado y abaratado la buena ropa, nos ha traído una gran confusión en materia de tipos.
>
> (II, 1.11. p. 1472)

blandness is seen to be symbolic of the contemporary middle class: 'Il (Oscar Husson) est devenu, dit Balzac, «un homme ordinaire, doux, sans prétention, modeste et se tenant, comme son gouvernement, dans un juste milieu. Il n'excite ni l'envie ni le dédain. C'est enfin le bourgeois moderne»' *Un début dans la vie*, p. 552, t. IV cited in Hélène Altszyler, *La Genèse et le plan des caractères dans l'oeuvre de Balzac* (Genève-Paris, Slatkine Reprints: 1984) Réimpression de l'édition de Paris, 1928, p. 46.

In 1884 Galdós, in what we would now view as the early stages of the globalisation of market-place, bemoans the loss of specific genres, both in terms of products and people:

> Así como la alquimia quiere suplantar a la Naturaleza alterando los productos y falsificándolos, llámense vino, azúcar, café o alcohol, también en este ramo del fumar ocurren mixtificaciones tales que dentro de poco han de producir una corrupción general del gusto. Véndense por habanos en todas partes cigarros elaborados en Hamburgo o Amsterdam, con hoja de java. Algunos de estos géneros apócrifos se decoran con capa habana o aparecen pintados para engañar la vista, ya que no pueden engañar el olfato. Se imitan las violas y aun las marcas célebres. La mala fe del comercio universal tiende al descrédito de todo lo que es calidad reconocida, y a la nivelación de todos los artículos. Ya no hay clases ni en la sociedad ni en los géneros de comercio, todo es malo, o cuando más mediano, y a nada de lo que entra por nuestra boca le preguntamos su abolengo con tal que sea barato.[29]

What is interesting is that the ever innovative Galdós sees this innovation as deceitful and corrupting. It is perhaps not difficult to see a parallel between the socially transformed Torquemada – or even, if we accept Sara Schyfter's conjecture about him, the *converso* Torquemada – and 'estos géneros apócrifos [. . .] con capa habana'. Furthermore, in the same way that mismatched marital unions are against nature's law, 'los refinamientos de la mecánica y de la química industrial están alterando la distribución natural de productos en el planeta y tergiversando la ley del comercio' (p. 65).

While discussing the importance given to Morentín's genetic and social make-up, it may be worthwhile comparing his description to that of Manuel Pez in *La de Bringas*:

> «Soy la expresión de esa España dormida, beatífica, que se goza en ser juguete de los sucesos y en nada se mete con tal que la dejen comer tranquila; que no anda, que nada espera y vive de la ilusión del presente mirando al cielo [. . .] que se somete a todo el que la quiere mandar, venga de donde viniere, y profesa el socialismo manso; que no entiende de ideas, ni de acción, ni de nada que no sea soñar y digerir.» (II, 12. p. 147)

The descriptions of the two men are set a generation apart, there being some notable parallels as well as differences in their characters. Their respective sexual appetites and political attitudes correspond to social changes. Pez is fully aware of the political situation in the summer of 1868 and is pragmatic

[29] Benito Pérez Galdós, *Cronicrón (1883–1886) Obras inéditas* (ed.) Alberto Ghiraldo (Madrid: Renacimiento, 1924), pp. 63–4.

as well as cunning enough to know when and how to change sides in the final chapter of *La de Bringas*, in the wake of *la septembrina*:

> Pero éste [Pez], con reposado lenguaje y juicioso sentido, se defendía enalteciendo la teoría de los hechos consumados, que son la clave de la Política y de la Historia. '¿Pues qué, vamos a derramar torrentes de sangre? – decía – ¿Qué ha pasado? Lo que yo venía diciendo, lo que yo venía profetizando, lo que yo venía anunciando. Hay que doblar la cabeza ante los hechos y esperar, esperar a ver qué dan de sí estos señores.' [. . .] ¡Y qué feliz casualidad! Casi todos los individuos que compusieron la Junta eran amigos suyos. Algunos tenían con él parentesco, es decir, que eran algo Peces. En el Gobierno Provisional tampoco le faltaban amistades y parentescos, y a donde quiera que volvía mi amigo sus ojos, veía caras pisciformes. Y antes que casualidad, llamemos a esto Filosofia de la Historia. (II, 50. pp. 222–3)

There is a parallel between the degree of explicitness attaching to the character's political cynicism and the overt use of biologically/evolutionary points of reference. This is entirely in keeping with the respective political atmospheres in which the two characters operate. Morentín, living in the age of the *turno pacífico*, has no reason to adapt himself to changed circumstances because he lives during relatively innocuous times and, as a consequence, does not need to be particularly cunning. Pez and his fellow Peces, on the other hand, have had to respond to environmental changes and have therefore had to give the impression that they have somehow transformed themselves into whatever is demanded. Also, Pez not only pursues a married woman, but seduces her. Circumstances, such as Rosalía Bringas's financial predicament and her husband's blindness, mean that the time is right for the likes of Pez to take advantage of the situation. So nervous is Morentín that he balks at the thought of a scandal; his generation, even more passive than Pez's, is the product of an extended process of both political and social hybridisation.

In Gamborena's opinion the process of social hybridisation has 'married' different beliefs which were once 'unadulterated'. He laments:

> – Las clases altas, o, por mejor hablar, las clases ricas, estáis profundamente dañadas en el corazón y en la inteligencia, porque habéis perdido la fe, o, por lo menos, andáis en vías de perderla. ¿Cómo? Por el continuo roce que tenéis con el filosofismo. El filosofismo, en otros tiempos, no traspasaba el lindero que os separa de las clases inferiores; el filosofismo era entonces plebeyo, ordinario y solía estar personificado en seres y tipos que os eran profundamente antipáticos: sabios barbudos y malolientes, poetas despeinados y que no sabían comer con limpieza. Pero, ¡ah!, todo ello ha cambiado. (II, 1.11. p. 1567)

Before discussing the methods the priest uses to restore faith among the aristocracy, it would be pertinent to consider several aspects of Gamborena himself. To start with, his physiognomical description poses questions as to the possibility of physical transformation, not over generations, but within an individual life span. His features are described as being largely oriental although he is a native of Avila:

> [. . .] enojado éste [Buda] de la persecución religiosa, estuvo mirándole a cara años y más, hasta dejar proyectados en ella algunos rasgos típicos de la suya. ¿Sería verdad que las personas se parecen a lo que están viendo siempre? . . . (II, 1.3. p. 1549)

Galdós tones down the suggestion that Gamborena has acquired oriental features whilst in the Far East (and certainly not directly from the Buddha) with a final question, which dilutes the impossible into a broader notion: possibly when people begin to resemble those around them, it is in terms of their behaviour rather than their physical appearance. However, as mentioned in the previous chapter, the notion that racial characteristics can be acquired through living in a given environment was credited even by such eminent intellectuals as Emilia Pardo Bazán.

So much of the action in the *Torquemada* series takes place in Madrid and so much of this particular novel, *Torquemada y San Pedro*, within the confines of the Palacio de Gravelinas that Gamborena's time spent in Africa, Polynesia and so on, relieves a little of the claustrophobia of having relatively few characters existing in such a closed environment. More importantly perhaps, it opens up the possibility of viewing the natural world from a late nineteenth-century perspective and of observing to what extent evolutionary theory has been incorporated into this viewpoint. It is also worth considering Gamborena's gift as a story-teller in conjunction with the exotic information he reveals:

> ¡Y qué bien sabía el narrador combinar lo patético con lo festivo para dar variedad al relato, que a veces duraba horas y horas! [. . .] Y como fin de fiesta, para que la ardiente curiosidad de las damas quedase en todos los órdenes satisfecha, el misionero cedía la palabra al geógrafo insigne, al eminente naturalista, que estudiaba y conocía sobre el terreno, en realidad palpable, las hermosuras del planeta y cuantas maravillas puso Dios en él. (II, 1.5. p. 1554)

Gamborena openly takes on the mantle of the scientist in whatever field necessary to give his findings authority, while of course, insisting that the natural world is the work of a single Creator. Whether he believes there was a single creation is more doubtful, as his emphasis on the 'infinite variety' is at loggerheads with the traditional teachings of the Church:

> [. . .] y después la muchedumbre de pájaros que en aquella espesa inmensidad habitaban, avecillas de varios colores, de formas infinitas, parleras, vivarachas, vestidas con las más galanas plumas que la fantasía puede soñar [. . .] la calavera indocumentable de insectos preciosísimos que agotan la paciencia del sabio y del coleccionista. (II, 1.5. p. 1554)

This ambiguity is then made more explicit by the narrator: 'Para que nada quedase, la flora espléndida, explicada y descrita con más sentido religioso que científico, haciendo ver la infinita variedad de las hechuras de Dios colmaba la admiración y el arrobamiento de las señoras' (II, 1.5. p. 1554). It could be argued that the priest has indeed borrowed his terminology from Darwinian theory, and that he has done so to express the boundless wonders of Divine Creation. However, other parts of his stories seem to suggest something more than the use of scientific vocabulary. Compare the following two passages:

> [. . .] los horrores de las guerras entre distintas tribus y las matanzas y feroces represalias, con la secuela infame de la esclavitud. (II, 1.5. p. 1554)

> [. . .] y explicar luego sus costumbres, las guerras entre las distintas familias ornitológicas, queriendo todas vivir y disputándose el esquilmo de las ingentes zonas arboladas. Pues ¿y los monos y sus aterradoras cuadrillas, sus gestos graciosos y su travesura casi humana para perseguir a las alimañas volátiles y rastreras? (II, 1.5. p. 1554)

The proximity of the passages to each other, surely makes the comparison intentional. The reference to the monkeys is quite explicit and is certainly not the sort of description a priest in the late nineteenth century ought to be providing. The main subject of the passage is tribal violence in the struggle for survival and supremacy. The language employed, particularly *guerras* brings to mind obvious human parallels, and the description of the monkeys' hunting technique suggests a social dimension to their existence.[30] The words 'las alimañas volátiles y rastreras' are far too Darwinian for a man in Gamborena's position to be using, in that animals are being classified according to their adapted methods of movement. Comparing monkeys directly with human beings suggests that the priest is an evolutionist, but far from destroying his credentials as a saver of souls, his understanding of evolution aids him in his work. His laments at the state of the modern world and *la voluntad humana*, are based on his view of them as the degenerate outcomes of a reversal of organic growth:

[30] It is worth mentioning here that throughout *The Descent of Man* Darwin draws upon the work of Alfred Edmund Brehm, a pupil of Haeckel who had studied primates, particularly baboons, in Africa. Thus Darwin relates second- and third-hand tales of baboons being involved in very human battles waged against baboons of other species and also against humans (*The Descent of Man*, pp. 103–104).

> La voluntad humana degenera visiblemente, como árbol que se hace arbusto, de arbusto planta de tiesto; no se le pueden pedir acciones grandes, como al pigmeo raquítico no se le puede mandar que se ponga la armadura de García de Paredes y ande con ella. (II, 1.11. p. 1568)

He tells the Aguila sisters that they in spiritual terms are *muy enanas* because of their social and financial position. Here too he is using language which would be more easily identified with positivism or materialism in order to combat the values which these movements represent. In similar fashion he uses information gleaned from contemporary science in order to deliver theological inspiration. As stated earlier, Gamborena's craft as a story-teller is essential to this purpose. Cruz fervently 'consumes' the priest's teachings and mixing these with her own feelings she creates 'una nueva vida'. In echoing its inspiration, the growth of Cruz's spirituality is suitably organic and can therefore be described in terms that seem almost Krausist: 'flora única, sí, pero de tanta hermosura, de fragrancia tan fina como la de las más bellas que crecen en la zona tropical' (II, 1.11. p. 1568). Science, Art and love for Gamborena are the fundamental inspiration for Cruz's 'conversion'. In this sense Gamborena is not so very far away from Zárate whose eclecticism and borrowed opinions constitute his contribution to the Aguila–Torquemada household. Furthermore, he seems, like Zárate, to be exploiting an adaptive niche in the newly-evolved social order: the principal result of his endeavours is the wealth which the Church receives from the Torquemada household. Cruz's conversion may be very real in her own mind, but it is still difficult to discern where her egoism ends and her spirituality begins.

It was almost inevitable that an author writing in the second half of the nineteenth century would have had some views on the concepts of evolution and transformation. Such ideas became prevalent in Spain at a time of major socio-economic change, and, therefore, it is perhaps unsurprising that Galdós's treatment of shifting social forces and of how individual characters respond to and shape their social environments have an evolutionary or transformational dimension to them. As with the previous chapter in this book, Galdós's interest in ideas relating to evolution and transformation can be traced back to his journalistic work of the 1860s, and thereafter it is seen to have had a significant impact on his mature works. It is striking that even in his early twenties Galdós had recognised that evolutionary process by no means equated to progress (in whatever realm of human activity), demonstrating that a sophisticated approach to this issue had been developed despite the fact that very little had so far been published on this subject in Spain. By the time *La desheredada* was published in 1881, Galdós's experimentation with evolution and transformation had become wide-ranging and was overtly alluded to in his writing. The life decisions of Isidora Rufete, reveal her contempt for a belief in gradual change as she attempts to fast-track her climb up Madrid's social ladder. Her attitude, particularly with regard to her origins,

leads to a disastrous conclusion and indeed the 'extinction' of the Rufete family line. This rejection of a 'Darwinian' – that is, a slow if not a generational scheme of social progress – is demonstrated in many ways, perhaps most succinctly in that description of the varied household goods which she has accrued, to which the narrator sarcastically refers as 'heterogenous'. In this context, Herbert Spencer's term to denote the positive result of a hard-won evolution only serves to underline that the disparate nature of goods that have been collated has not come about through their owner's hard work and thrift; on the contrary, they have reached her through others' misery in the form of repossessions. In this way, she exposes her pretensions, while simultaneously Herbert Spencer's positivistic vision is derided.

Galdós frequently allows such a scenario to be built up; scientific support is provided by characters and/or the narrator for a social evolutionary scheme, but ultimately 'the rug is pulled' from under it. For instance, as has been demonstrated with regard to *Fortunata y Jacinta*, the respective upbringings of Juanito Santa Cruz and his father demonstrate the self-conscious respect paid to social evolution, a theme taken up by the narrator which he relates to Spain's (still thwarted) economic evolution. The ironically upbeat tone of the narrator is undercut occasionally by himself, but more frequently by the everyday reality for Madrid's inhabitants. The behaviour and appearance of the children from the *Cuarto Estado* are similarly described in the terms which offered comfort to the city's middle class. However, such pseudo-scientific terminology is undermined by the scenarios depicted and, for example, by the aforementioned description of Baldomero II's own rise from relative poverty, and also by the relative descriptions of two children born in the slums: the 'savage' (and yet charming) *Pituso* and the well-behaved young lady Adoración, the latter benefiting from a middle-class proctectress. Similarly Galdós manipulates class stereotypes, and frequently presents them as separate 'subspecies', whilst ultimately exposing such imaginings as delusional. In the *Torquemada* series, even the carefully constructed Hapsburgian exterior of the Aguilas family is, like that of the Relimpio sisters in *La desheredada*, a literary device rather than an inherited genetic trait. The rise and fall of given social classes represented in the *Torquemada* series do not correspond neatly with Spencer's ideas of social evolution and his accompanying notion of heterogeneity. If anything the resultant class mixture appears quite homogenous in that many of the identifying traits of the *tipos génericos* have been lost in the *confusión de las clases*.

It has been shown that Galdós was deeply unconvinced by the supposed benefits of Spencer's social Darwinism and by the very logic of this understanding of evolution. But in his novels Galdós does demonstrate that the concepts of both transformation and evolution are to some degree inevitable and potentially desirable. Many of his characters undergo significant changes, which certainly resist being interpreted through Spencer's clear-cut principles and equations, but which can be described as 'Darwinian' or

‘Lamarckian’. However, those like León Roch and Francisco Torquemada who believe that they can engineer evolutionary forces, inevitably find that their ‘experiments’ go badly wrong. Furthermore, as has been intimated towards the end of this chapter, still further difficulties arise when the concepts of morality and spirituality have to coexist with evolutionary theory.

3

DEGENERACY, MORALITY AND SPIRITUALITY

Before assessing the impact of evolutionary theory on Galdós's understanding of Spain's perceived moral and spiritual deficit, it is pertinent to take an overview of contemporary society's preoccupation with this problem. One important source of evidence in this area stems from nineteenth-century Spain's self-examination, and in particular its reflection on a glorious past which had given way to a mediocre present. Darwin's hypothesis about Spain's decline as a nation in *The Descent of Man* could only serve to compound a pre-existing inferiority complex:

> Who can positively say why the Spanish nation, so dominant at one time, has been distanced in the race. The awakening of the nations of Europe from the dark ages is still a more perplexing problem. At this early period, as Mr Galton has remarked, almost all the men of a gentle culture, those given to meditation or culture of the mind, had no refuge except in the bosom of the Church which demanded celibacy; and this could hardly fail to have had a deteriorating influence on each successive generation. During this same period the Holy Inquisition selected with extreme care their freest and of the boldest men in order to burn or imprison them. In Spain alone some of the best men – those who doubted and questioned, and without doubting there could be no progress – were eliminated during the three centuries at the rate of a thousand a year. (*The Descent of Man*, p. 167)[1]

Darwin offers reasons for Spain's relatively poor levels of trade, empire building and cultural advancement. Of particular concern to many Spaniards was their lamentable record in the natural sciences, frequently used as the yardstick by which they could measure their perceived failure as a modern nation. In light of these preoccupations it is not difficult to see why a re-examination of the nation's past achievements would become such a pressing concern for contemporary Spain.[2]

[1] Not only does Darwin support his argument with reference to Galton's *Hereditary Genius*, but he also cites Lyell's *Principles of Geology*, in which the latter remarks upon 'the evil influence of the Holy Inquisition in having lowered, through selection, the general standard of intelligence in Europe'.

[2] On discussing the relationship between science and culture, Stephen Brush gives a further reason for belief in progress to be waning: '[. . .] the same notion may appear at

An influential voice of the era in Spain belonged to Joaquín Costa, with whom Galdós was well-acquainted. As epistolary records in the Casa-Museo Pérez Galdós confirm, by the late 1890s Galdós was reading and editing Costa's proofs prior to publication. Experimental science was central to Costa's thinking, his *Política hidráulica* being perhaps the most obvious example. But as Jacques Maurice and Carlos Serrano point out, 'Fundamentalmente [. . .] es la biología la que le da el modelo más elaborado a través de las teorías recientes del evolucionismo.'[3] Darwinism was used by Costa to 'justificar un evolucionismo social, que viene a parar en el pesimismo de los últimos años' (Maurice and Serrano, p. 120). Costa's understanding of society is based heavily on evolutionary models, he states:

> El pueblo no es una personalidad individual, no es una unidad panteísta, no tiene un cerebro para pensar, ni un corazón para sentir . . . es un conjunto orgánico, es un compuesto de elementos racionales y dotados de albedrío, y sólo mediante estos elementos puede concebir y dar vida social a sus concepciones. (Maurice and Serrano, p. 141)

At times his methodology mimics natural selection (Maurice and Serrano, p. 147) and at others, he borrows analogies from both natural and sexual selection and recapitulation:

> Tras de la variedad de la síntesis; en pos de esa rica y exuberante vegetación representada por las variantes, si ya no antes, al par de ellas, se declara un movimiento sintético de *reducción*, a beneficio del cual entran todas en concierto y alianza, refundiéndose previa una selección entre las más bellas y preciadas de la generalidad, recapitulándose en un conjunto orgánico y constituyendo una obra unitaria de carácter compuesto y armónico dentro del propio género. (Maurice and Serrano, p. 147)

Costa also demonstrates his awareness of race theory, a consequence and development of Darwinism, and applies it to Spain's racial and cultural heritage:

> Este género de literatura se armonizaba a maravilla con el genio semita, que siente más que razona, que cree, pero que no piensa, apto para el lirismo, pero poco discutidor, que ha creado las grandes religiones del

about the same time in both science and culture without any apparent causal influence one way or another. Such was the case with the principle of dissipation of energy in physics, and the corresponding theory of degeneration in biology, both of which flourished in the pessimistic atmosphere of the latter part of the nineteenth century.' Stephen G. Brush, *The Temperature of History* (New York: Burt Franklin and Co., 1978), pp. 1–2.

[3] Jacques Maurice and Carlos Serrano, *J. Costa: crisis de la restauración y populismo (1875–1911)* (Madrid: Siglo Veintiuno de España Editores, 1977), pp. 119–20.

> espíritu, pero no los grandes sistemas filosóficos, hijos de la duda y de la controversia. [. . .] Nosotros, descendientes de los arios, la raza de la filosofía y de la epopeya [. . .] no podíamos aprender cosa alguna de los moralistas de la India.[4]

The powers of intellect, spirituality and morality are fused with ethnicity, and hence Spain's racial make-up, seen through the eyes of the late nineteenth-century Spaniard, has consequences for the nation's struggle to explain its history and its present:

> [. . .] gracias al influjo poderoso que ejercieron mudéjares y judíos en la corte de Castilla a partir de la conquista de Toledo y a la gran autoridad de Fernando III, Alfonso X y de Sancho IV, que cultivaron la ciencia política en el sentido oriental, arraigó aquí profundamente aquel género embrionario y elementalísimo de ciencia, esterilizando para tres siglos el ingenio español. (Maurice and Serrano, p. 157)

This is further developed in *Juan Corazón*:

> [. . .] desde aquel que fue nuestro Siglo de Oro, la decadencia de España ha corrido uniforme, continua y omnilateral. [. . .] En esa exploración del alma española se me ha descubierto un espíritu hecho dogma, inerte, rígido, sin elasticidad, incapaz de evolución y hasta de enmienda, aferrado a lo antiguo como el molusco a la roca, que retrocede cuando todos lo acrecientan, que se deja invadir y colonizar el solar propio.
>
> (Maurice and Serrano, p. 160)

According to Costa, the Spanish have had their development stunted and are stubbornly refusing to evolve. His use of the simile 'como el molusco a la roca' not only describes Spain's unwillingness to let go of the past, but also has connotations regarding Spain's relatively low level of development. It highlights the Spanish intellectuals' concern that their country was 'primitive' in comparison to its European neighbours. In 1871, Edgar Quinet, using very similar imagery to Costa, had attempted to scotch the myth of linear history, by commenting:

> Hay épocas de retroceso y de arcaismo en la naturaleza, la cual parece entonces como que vuelve atrás. Las hermosas armonites [sic] son reemplazadas por moluscos que parecen ser su decadencia: también en la historia hay tiempos de barbarie en que ciertas formas sociales acabadas desaparecen para ceder el puesto a otras formas mas groseras.
>
> (Quinet, pp. 253–4)

[4] *Joaquín Costa: Oligarquía y caciquismo: Colectivismo agrario y otros esritos (Antología)*, (ed.) Rafael Pérez de la Dehesa (Madrid: Alianza, 1967), pp. 156–7.

Costa, in the wake of the 1898 national disaster, asks the question *why?* Why has Spain declined where other nations, principally Britain, France and Prussia, have prospered?

> En su famosa obra sobre el *Origen del hombre*, el glorioso naturalista Carlos R. Darwin, apoyándose en Galton y enlazando con su teoría de la selección, hallaba la razón de la decadencia española en el celibato eclesiástico y la intolerancia religiosa, en los autos da fe y los calabozos de la Inquisición, que habían privado de su parte más escogida a la nación.
>
> (Maurice 1977, p. 163)

The implications of viewing Spain's degeneration in this light are manifold. First, it is important to note that the nation's decline as a whole is tied to an intellectual degeneration as well as a moral and spiritual degeneration. These, in turn, are bound both to elements of culture and to race-concepts – two lines of explanation which are themselves frequently confused with one another. Costa goes on to quote from the French philosopher and sociologist Alfred Fouillée who, in the first instance, blames Spanish decadence since the sixteenth century on 'la falta de una *élite* intelectual y moral, de una aristocracia natural' (Maurice 1977, p. 164). Costa then goes on to dismiss Buckle's, Galton's, Fouillée's and other interpreters' reasoning as simply being 'una petición de principio'. Although Costa frequently finds his own reasoning in opposition to Darwin's, he is notably careful not to be dismissive of the latter's work and he clearly lends some credence to Darwin's assessment of the reasons for Spanish decadence. His respect for Darwin is evident from the description quoted above, and this is further supported by Costa's assertion that 'Yo me inclino a pensar que la causa de nuestra inferioridad y de nuestra decadencia es étnica y tiene su raíz en los más hondos estratos de la corteza del cerebro' (Maurice 1977, p. 165). Costa, however, does not see Spain's 'racial inferiority' as immutable. Improvement, he believes, can be achieved through education:

> [. . .] si el *homo mediterraneus* puede descender en la escala de la mentalidad al grado de *homo europaeus*, si esa causa de nuestra inferioridad, no obstante su condición de natural, puede ser removida, y removida por iniciativa y acción propia [. . .] tomando como base en nuestro subsuelo étnico la porción del *homo europaeus* que parece hay en la Península, mezclada con la mayoría de los restantes tipos occidentales, ora por puro influjo exterior, afinando y forzando la pedagogía tradicional, en la manera que acaban de acreditar tan brillantemente los nipones [. . .] condensando la evolución, renovando y reedificando al español por arte casi de teurgia, haciéndole dar un salto gigantesco desde el siglo XV al siglo XX. (Maurice 1977, pp. 165–6)

Costa talks of the need eventually to create a *neurocultura*, whereby the inferior *homo mediterraneus* (exemplified by the Spaniard) can transform

himself into the superior *homo europaeus*. The suggested methods for achieving this end were a eugenically based breeding programme and a return to rigorous educational techniques which would cultivate neurones and the cerebral cortex as if they were plants. I would suggest that the theories of his compatriot neurohistologists Luis Simarro (1851–1921) and Santiago Ramón y Cajal (1852–1934) had some bearing on Costa's thinking. In these two scientists, Spain, for once, had a pair of trail-blazers. Ramón y Cajal in particular saw the potential of applying evolutionary theories, including ontogenetic recapitulation, to histology. Glick comments:

> The crux of his [Cajal's] methodology was, simply, to apply to the study of the histology of the nervous system the idea that what is morphologically less differentiated is ontogenetically prior to the more differentiated. Or, in his own colourful characterization: 'Since the adult jungle – the jungle of the cerebral cortex – is impenetrable and indefinable, why not recur to the study of the young grove?' (Glick 1972, p. 317)

Tracing the development of the spinal cord and the cerebral cortex from lower to higher animals and from embryonic to adult forms had clear implications for the comparison of the intellectual, and by extension, the moral and spiritual capacities of animals and human beings. But, as the analogy just cited strongly implies, Ramón y Cajal was keen to see the nervous system as having the potential for tree-like organic growth. There remains therefore a potential for the further development of humanity's cerebral powers, and Costa, (in this, as in much else, following the Krausists), saw that this potential could be fulfilled through the power of education, albeit in tandem with genetic selection.

One might have expected such ideas of Spain's decline and possible regeneration which sought their scientific confirmation in Darwinian theory to be in evidence by the very end of the nineteenth century. But as early as 1872, the year after the *Descent*'s publication in Britain, Cánovas de Castillo, speaking at the Ateneo de Madrid on 'Problemas religiosos y políticos', shows signs of annoyance that 'Latin' nations were perceived as decadent.[5] He is further irked by the fact that the development of evolutionary theory itself has been held up as a sign of northern European supremacy:

> Häckel ha proclamado, poco ha, en las últimas páginas de su *Historia natural de la Creación*, la decadencia de la raza greco-ítalo-céltica (por nosotros apellidada latina), que predominó en las edades clásica y media, de una parte, y de la otra, el definitivo exaltamiento de la raza teutónica o

[5] From this perspective, questions should be asked regarding just how cataclysmic the *desastre nacional* actually was to the Spanish mindset. It appears that navel-gazing and self-accusations of national decadence had been confirmed 'scientifically' well before the event.

> anglogérmanica; fundando el hecho principalmente en haber descubierto y desarrollado la última, esta teoría de la evolución, comienzo, en su concepto, de un nuevo período de altísima cultura intelectual.[6]

However, other sectors of Spanish society found evolutionary theory very much to their liking. In *Racionalismo pragmático: El pensamiento de Francisco Giner de los Ríos*, Juan López-Morillas examines the import of Krausism in relation to Spain in the last third of the nineteenth century. Evolutionary theories were of great importance to the Krausists, not only because the natural sciences, and biological science in particular, already had a place within Krause's doctrines before these gained prominence in Spain, but also because Krausism viewed scientific processes as analogous to social processes. López-Morillas comments:

> Según el ejemplo de la biología contemporánea – que, dicho sea de paso, encajaba sin grave quebranto en la filosofía krausista de la historia –, Giner concluye que la vida histórica, mediante un proceso de crecimiento, desarrollo y diferenciación, engendra en el cuerpo social aquellas estructuras a cuyo conjunto orgánico se da el nombre de cultura. (p. 19)

Giner de los Ríos's organic vision of historical process was by extension applied to the development of state institutions and indeed to the Spanish character. Of natural concern to the Krausists, among others, was Spain's inability to govern itself effectively:

> [. . .] según Giner, hace quiebra [. . .] la sociedad en todas las estructuras, y hace quiebra porque ha fallado el hombre mismo, la subspecie *homo hispanicus*, víctima histórica de la indigencia material y la penuria espiritual. Y es precisamente a elaborar un nuevo individuo humano a donde habrá de enderezarse todo empeño de genuina redención. (p. 22)

Giner presented the Spanish nation as 'empobrecida, despoblada e incivilizada por el fanatismo', insisting that 'la debilidad nacional es de raíz' (p. 22). He identified the Spanish penchant for myth-creation, particularly where related to Spain's standing as a nation. As stated above, Spain's failure to produce scientists of any note fuelled the national inferiority complex and was the source of tension and debate particularly with regard to foreign influences:

> Giner es, pues, europeizante, pero no por preferencia sentimental, sino por «principio» o si se quiere, por convicción cimentada en la historia y la filosofía. La historia le prueba que fue vigorosa la cultura indígena cuando

[6] Antonio Cánovas de Castillo, *Obras completas* (ed.) Manuel Fraga Iribarne (Madrid: Fundación Cánovas de Castillo, 1981), I, p. 120.

> se mostró hospitalaria a las culturas extrañas. La filosofía le persuade de que toda cultura, cualquiera que sea el grado de su evolución, ha de llenar el doble cometido de *ser en sí* y ser *con las demás*. (pp. 23–24)

National pride was also a factor in the interpretation of Spain's degeneration and possible regeneration. The Krausists were not alone in attempting to understand the *problema de España*, nor did they speak with one voice on the subject:

> Algunos de sus tempranos dictámenes coinciden con los de Revilla, Azcárate y Perojo, esto es, con los que provocan la hostilidad erudita del joven Menéndez y Pelayo, a saber *a*) que la Inquisición ahoga en España la actividad filosófica y científica, y *b*) que la pragmática de 1559, por la que se prohíbe a los españoles salir a estudiar al extranjero, aísla al país e impide su desenvolvimiento físico y espiritual en concierto con la Europa de Occidente. (p. 24)

Furthermore, Costa proposes that if Spain had not been such a quixotic nation in the nineteenth century in particular, the world would have been saved from the *crímenes internacionales* committed in the name of progress by the colonial powers of Britain, France and Prussia (p. 167). If Spain's evolution had not been paralysed, he claims, 'los progresos [. . .] se habrían realizado en las prácticas internacionales, arbitraje, desarme; la historia moderna no sería lo que es, una historia sin corazón, presidida por Darwin' (pp. 167–8). The pessimism clearly stems from the *desastre nacional*; self-pity and over-ambitious hypotheses have resulted in just the kind of quixotic speculation which Costa himself has specified as being the root of the problem. The passage does, however, show the importance Costa attaches to Darwin at this time – it was clear to him that Darwinism had been the single most important idea of the nineteenth century. He regards Spain's decline as a nation state as tied to its intellectual and spiritual decline. Costa sees this decline in Darwinian terms, identifying Spain's racial degeneration while also proposing to resolve this by means of education. He freely mixes Darwinian and Lamarckian models of evolutionary theory, and on occasions his philosophical conclusions almost go as far as Nietzsche's (or what have come to be understood as Nietzsche's), but eventually stopping short of this, despite a belief in Spain's underlying 'racial superiority'. The belief that education can allow Spain to evolve into a world power once again is rooted in Costa's Krausist beliefs, which themselves naturally dovetail with an evolutionary perspective on regeneration. The Krausists could find support from the Lamarckians for their faith in education as the means for Spaniards to 'stop the rot':

> Lamarckians in general repudiated Spencer's laissez-faire approach to regulating human behaviour. They too hoped for future progress in the

> human race but believed that this could best be promoted by a co-operative political system in which the best ideals of civilised man were implanted in each generation by state-controlled education. Man should take charge of his own future development, instead of following blindly.
>
> (Bowler 1984, p. 227)

Darwin himself never really decided whether moral improvement is simply a matter of educating every generation or whether, once educated, moral propensities can be passed on genetically to one's offspring. Bowler comments:

> He (Darwin) simultaneously argued that by appropriate marriage man 'might by selection do something not only for the bodily constitution and frame of his offspring, but for their intellectual and moral qualities', and that 'the moral qualities are advanced, either directly or indirectly, much more through the effects of habit, the reasoning powers, instruction, religion, etc., than through natural selection . . .'

For Darwin and for many others, on the decadence and regeneration of morality and spirituality, the jury was still out.

As discussed in the previous chapter, Galdós's attitude towards the Spaniards as a 'backward' European nation or as a 'nation of dreamers' is ambivalent. For instance, in *El Doctor Centeno* we are told that Federico Ruiz is afflicted by the *demencia española*:

> [. . .] su espíritu fluctuaba entre el Arte y la Ciencia, víctima de esa perplejidad puramente española, cuyo origen hay que buscar en las condiciones indecisas de nuestro organismo social, que es un organismo vacilante y como interino. El escaso sueldo, la inseguridad, el poco estímulo, entibiaban al ardor científico. [. . .] España es un país de romance. Todo sale conforme a la savia versificante que corre por las venas del cuerpo social. Se pone un hombre a cualquier trabajo duro y prosaico, y, sin saber cómo, le sale una comedia. (I, 1. iv. p. 1322)

This is a largely negative statement in that it highlights the Spanish lack of practical efficiency, but at the same time is positive in that the nation is inescapably imaginative. By use of the organic analogy Galdós suggests that this quality is a collective condition common to all Spaniards, not as a result of a shared genetic disorder, but through some social malady. However, Galdós adds a further dimension later when Ruiz, frustrated by a lack of recognition from his countrymen, complains:

> ¡Qué país éste! . . . ¡Desgracia grande vivir aquí! ¡Si yo hubiera nacido en Inglaterra o en Francia . . .!» Muchos, ¡ay!, que dicen eso, revelan grande ingratitud hacia el suelo en que viven, pues si en realidad hubieran nacido

> en otros países, estarían quizá haciendo zapatos o barriendo las calles.
> (I, 3. i. pp. 1358–9)

The narrator shifts the focus of blame from the organism that is Spanish society onto the lack of talent of individuals; blaming the decadence of the nation is an all too easy excuse for the unsuccessful. However, we are told that Ruiz 'era español puro en la inconsistencia, en los afectos repentinos y en el deseo de renombre' (I, 3.i. p. 1358), so by the same token it could be taken that there are traits particular to the Spanish character.

Although Ruiz has obvious shortcomings as a scientist, he is not quite as worthless as many other characters in Galdós's fiction. As discussed in the chapter 'Social Species' (p. 36), some of Madrid's *zánganos* are deemed incapable of fulfilling any worthwhile role at all. In *La desheredada* José de Relimpio y Sastre is described as 'el hombre mejor del mundo. Era un hombre que no servía para nada' (I, 1.8.i. p. 1034). We are then given a full inventory of Relimpio's uselessness. Like Ruiz he has tried his hand at more than one career and has failed miserably at everything bar accountancy, but unfortunately he has no money of his own to account for. There are 'hangers-on' in every social class Galdós covers, whose degeneracy can be a result of their idleness, their ignorance or their egoism. Galdós's Madrid is heavily populated with types who serve no useful function and are representative of a nation bereft of purpose. However, the phenomenon is perhaps most succinctly crystallised in a member of a particularly degenerate social species, Manuel Pez:

> Soy la expresión de esa España dormida, beatífica, [. . .]; que no anda, que nada espera y vive de la ilusión del presente mirando al cielo, con una vara florecida en la mano. (II, 12. p. 147)

There is little doubt that Galdós recognised a degeneracy of spirit (exemplified in the negative religious imagery in the above quotation) and intellect in his contemporary countrymen, and like Darwin and the Krausists he looked back in time for explanations. In echoing ideas widely shared by Spain's intelligentsia, Galdós's novels assume pre-Inquisition Spain, and specifically Toledo, to be the nation's intellectual and spiritual cradle. It is from this standpoint that one has to approach the question 'what does Toledo hold for Galdós and members of his generation?' To understand their present and to attempt to solve existing social problems, there was, unsurprisingly, a desire to look back on a more distinguished era and to discover why Spain enjoyed such a buoyant period of its history at that time and in that place. There is a racial element to this scheme which I believe Galdós uses to reinforce his views of Spain's identity, although whether such practice can be successfully considered in terms of nineteenth-century race theory is another matter. More

important (and in some tension with such theories) is the coming together of different cultural and spiritual traditions, namely the Christians/Latins, the Jews, and the Muslims/Arabs. In Toledo, Spain can find the roots of its present and the elements of its contemporary make-up. Darwinian theory demands that Spain re-examine its history to see clearly the cornerstones of its culture and society. In this sense Toledo offered the Spaniards a point in their past, long before their 'degeneration', where the sciences, arts and the great Spanish mystics had flourished.[7] José Castillejo echoes some of the rather confused late nineteenth-century responses to this when he describes the city before the seventeenth century thus:

> The small town of Toledo, perched on the rock surrounded by the rust-red Tagus, was thus the forge where old doctrines were prepared for the spiritual struggle which has shaped modern history. But Spain, the occidental cradle of rationalism, was ultimately destined to be rid of it, and to submit to a rigid common faith. When it returned in the XIX century it was not a light so much as a banner.[8]

The city was a racial, cultural and religious melting-pot, drawing on many sources from around the known world, but it was, precisely, the mixed population of Moorish, Jewish and Christian scholars who were the driving force behind the advances in scientific and religious thinking (Castillejo, pp. 39–41). However, simply because all of the elements discussed above are indeed present in Galdós's work, it would be dangerous to assume blindly that Galdós is in full or even partial agreement with contemporary theorists. A cautionary episode occurs in *Lo prohibido* where we are presented with a character who has produced a 'moral map' of Spain. The absurdity of this idea works as part of the scheme of lampooning the wilder excesses of Darwinism throughout the novel. As Alfred and Luz María Rodríguez have shown, the racial history of the protagonist's family and the 'inevitable' family traits that are borne by the family members are meant to seen as a parody:

> La inestabilidad síquico-social de la familia Bueno de Guzmán se nos ofrece repetidísimas veces en *Lo prohibido*: invariablemente exteriorizándose, además, con visos cómicos, como rarezas risibles o padecimientos ridículos: la lacrimosa 'suspensión aérea' de un tío carnal Rafael), la cleptomanía de otro (Serafín), el 'reblandecimiento' cerebral del primo hermano (Raimundo), la pluma que se le atraganta a la prima Eloísa, la figurada trituración del trapo de la prima María Juana, etc. Una tal

[7] Admittedly, perhaps the most outstanding figures are St Teresa and St John, who are 'post-Inquisition'.

[8] José Castillejo, *Wars of Ideas in Spain* (intro.) Sir Michael Sadler (London: John Murray, 1937), p. 43.

> acumulativa e invariablemente cómica presentación de la problemática central del Naturalismo de escuela no puede menos que sugerir, nos parece, una intención paródica.[9]

In this context it is clear that Galdós does not intend that his forays into Spain's racial and cultural make-up should be always read in a literal sense; they should be seen, rather, as representing for immediate fictional purposes aspects of Spain's development, or more frequently, her relative lack of it.

Angel Guerra wishes to re-invent Christianity in Toledo. In an attempt to reverse the decadence which Spain has suffered since the Inquisition and to regenerate the nation's spiritual and moral values, he finds himself drawn to return geographically to the cradle of Spanish civilisation. It might also be remembered that in 'Una visita al cuarto estado' Jacinta and Guillermina's 'descent' into the primitivity of the slums is preceded by a walk down the calle de Toledo, where the *castizo* colour serves as a foil to Jacinta's '*pardessus* color de pasa'. That is not say that Galdós's description of the calle de Toledo is anything less than authentic, but given the starting and finishing points of Jacinta and Guillermina's outing, from civilisation to untamed savagery, the street also functions as a connecting channel between these two extremes, offering at the same time, a paradoxically positive image of Spanish life reminiscent of that presented at the bullring in *La familia de León Roch* (I, 2.i. pp. 843–7). It is not only in the realms of spiritual and moral regeneration that Galdós sees Toledo's past as a guiding light for the future, but also, for example, in the field of architecture. He praises new architects for rejecting the fashion of imitating French architecture and to return to their spiritual roots:

> La arquitectura de patrón va desapareciendo, y aunque nos queda todavía el apego a las formas francesas, algo peores quizás que aquellos mamotretos greco-romanos de la pasada generación, cada día cunde más entre la juventud el afán de buscar en lo castizo el modelo o guión de lo moderno.
>
> El mudéjar puro con ladrillo y mampostería concertada es un estilo español neto, que felizmente se empieza a usar en muchas construcciones civiles, como hospitales, cuarteles.
>
> En la nueva generación de arquitectos los hay decididos a romper con las rutinas chavacanas del galicanismo y a restaurar las formas castizas del arte español, que atesoran dentro de sus muros las ciudades monumentales, Toledo, Sevilla y Salamanca. A esto ayudan las campañas de restauración de monumentos emprendidas por todos los gobiernos de cuarenta años acá, restauraciones que son como escuelas o aprendizajes en que la generación nueva se ejercita en el manejo de las formas góticas y mudéjares adaptadas por los siglos pasados a nuestro temperamento. Las catedrales de León,

[9] Alfred and Luz María Rodríguez, '*Lo prohibido,* ¿una parodia galdosiana?', *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*, 60:1 (1983), 53.

> Sevilla, San Juan de los Reyes, el Tránsito, y Puerta del Sol en Toledo, sirven al ser restablecidos a su primitivo esplendor para marcar el buen camino.[10]

The development of Spanish culture, in this case architecture, has taken centuries to be adapted *a nuestro temperamento*. Galdós is claiming that an almost symbiotic relationship has developed between the Spanish character and artefacts of culture, and that this very distinct cultural identity ought not to be infected by foreign influences. In particular *su primitivo esplendor* hints at a perceived sanctity at the heart of Spanish culture, which should not be sacrificed on the high altar of fashion.

Although they head off west towards the River Perales, it is via the Puerta de Toledo (III, 2.6. p. 515) that Nazarín and his followers escape Madrid, leaving behind the corrupt, materialistic world of the city. Once free of Mammon, the environment of the countryside is shown to have a direct effect on Nazarín's physical appearance:

> Y con el sol y el aire campesino, su tez iba tomando un color bronceado, caliente, hermoso. La fisonomía clerical habíase desvanecido por completo, y el tipo arábigo, libre ya de aquella máscara, resaltaba en toda su gallarda pureza. (III, 3.5. p. 529)

The bronzing of Nazarín's features is symbolic of a spirituality untainted by the dogma and restrictions of the Church. An Arabic appearance presents him as a more earthy and authentic religious leader, whose spontaneous spirituality is contrasted with the 'materialistic' clerics of Madrid and civilised Spain. This direct effect of the environment on physiognomy smacks of Pardo Bazán's contention that Spaniards who had lived out in the colonies came to look like the natives.[11] Whereas Doña Emilia did believe that the effects of ethnicity could be changed within the lifetime of an individual, it appears that Galdós is manipulating a quasi-Lamarckian scheme to portray a change of mind and spirit. Within a scheme of recapitulation, a spiritual advance has taken place, but, as in his search for a more wholesome set of spiritual values Nazarín is in fact re-tracing his nation's steps towards a less materialistic past, his transformation is simultaneously a reversal. Don Pedro de Belmonte, who has served as a diplomat and consul in the Middle East, mistakes Nazarín for an Armenian bishop, but initially at least recognises him as an Arab:

> – Cristiano de religión . . . ¡Y a saber . . .! Pero eso no quita que seas de pura raza arábiga. ¡Ah!, conozco yo bien a mi gente. Eres árabe, y de Oriente, del poético, del sublime oriente. (III, 3.6. p. 531)

[10] William H. Shoemaker, *Las cartas desconocidas de Galdós en 'La Prensa' de Buenos Aires* (Madrid: Ediciones Cultura Hispánica, 1973), pp. 434–5.

[11] See pp. 47–8.

This 'change of ethnicity' is a device which Galdós uses to establish a rapid connection between Nazarín's values and those of pre-Inquisition Spain, but Belmonte's misidentification also represents the pilgrim as embodying an even more primitive form of religion. Nazarín and his companions go in search of a brand of spirituality which perhaps has its origins in the Middle East, the birthplace of the three religions of mediaeval Spain.

Jo Labanyi has observed that Nazarín's primitive doctrine is considered a madness by many of those he comes across, and that this 'madness' is difficult to categorise because later in the novel he suffers from typhoid. She also suggests that he may well have been characterised under the influence of the theories of Cesare Lombroso:[12]

> Basing himself on Herbert Spencer, who had applied Darwin's theory of the evolution of the species to the study of society, [. . .] [Lombroso] argued that the various types of abnormality – criminality, anarchism, madness, and genius (the latter including the artist and the mystic) – were products of a related congenital malformation, manifested in physiognomical features such as the shape of the skull and facial expression.[13]

Ricardo Gullón concludes that the function of Galdosian characters' visions can be neatly summed up as follows: 'Las alucinaciones sirven para enfrentar a los personajes con su conciencia.'[14] As I have delineated above, Galdós emphasises the degeneracy of Restoration Madrid in his portrayal of characters who suffer from various mental afflictions, abnormalities or simply delusions. However, as suggested in connection with the cases of Federico Ruiz and perhaps Isidora Rufete, there is a more positive dimension to Galdós's more quixotic characters; degenerate traits open gateways to spiritual possibilities. This is an area still under the microscope: prior to a debate between Richard Dawkins and Steven Pinker, 'Is Science Killing the Soul?', The *Guardian* ran an article which asserted that 'Sufferers of grand mal (temporal lobe epilepsy) often report profound spiritual experiences; some are convinced that they have heard the voice of God.'[15] Some of Galdós's characters who believe that they have come into contact with the divine share a level of mental instability.

Before examining the spiritual import of epilepsy in Galdós's characters it

[12] Lombroso (1835–1909) was an Italian criminologist who held the chair of forensic medicine and hygiene at the University of Turin, before becoming the professor of criminal anthropology. His major works, for instance *L'uomo deliquente* (1875) and *L'uomo di genio* (1888), were firmly rooted in Darwinian theory, and were translated into Spanish in the early 1890s.

[13] Benito Pérez Galdós, *Nazarín* (ed.), (trans.) Jo Labanyi (Oxford: OUP, 1993), pp. xiii–xiv.

[14] Ricardo Gullón, *Galdós: novelista moderno* (Madrid: Taurus, 1960), p. 206.

[15] *Guardian*, Saturday Review, 6 February, 1999, 1–2.

should be noted that many characters suffer from *manías* and seizures which do not pertain to religious experiences. For instance, José Ido del Sagrario's meat-induced mania serves a quite different function in *Fortunata y Jacinta*. More intriguing is Mariano Rufete's bout of epilepsy prior to his attempted assassination of the King. Despite Mariano's education in violence and harsh working conditions coupled with the ideological input of Juan Bou, it is the effect of sunlight passing through one of the fountains in the Plaza Mayor and the growing noise of the royal procession which decisively tip *Pecado*'s mind towards regicide:

> En la movible costra líquida hace el sol caprichosos iris y se retratan convexas imágenes del jardín y de los transeúntes. [. . .] La aberración de su pensamiento le llevaba a las generalizaciones, como en otros muchos casos en que la demencia parece tener por pariente el talento. El mismo criminal instinto le ayudaba a personalizar [. . .] no veía más que una masa movible y desvaída, semejante a los cambiantes y contorsiones del globo de agua que había estado mirando momentos antes. Se le nublaron los ojos, y, apoyándose en un farol, dijo para sí: «Que me da, que me da.» Era el ataque epiléptico que se anunciaba. (I, 2.16. pp. 1166–7)

Clearly Mariano is not suffering from an epileptic seizure, at least not as is normally understood these days. But his sensory perception is shown to cause a mental imbalance which leads him to attempt murder. We are told that 'Idea y propósito eran como una llaga estimulante en el cerebro'; that ideas have been entering his consciousness 'en sueños, y también alguna vez despierto, cediendo como a una fuerza automática y fatal que no era su propia fuerza' (I, 2.16. p. 1167). This is the language of determinism, as is the use of 'instinto criminal', an expression which appears to have been borrowed directly from ideas popularised by Herbert Spencer; it is probably too early to have been sourced from the works of Cesare Lombroso.[16] However, what does not belong to an orthodox deterministic scenario is that Mariano's consciousness (or rather his class consciousness), is ignited by the distortion and flickering of light, itself a cause of epilepsy, and the intoxication of the music. In his febrile state Mariano undergoes an enlightenment. His mind may be 'distorted' and his action terribly misguided, but in the unreal state of mind described as 'epileptic' his subconscious gives him a purpose. At this moment he touches on another reality, something his sister and father have spent a large part of their lives doing.

[16] In 1889 Lombroso will write *El hombre de genio*, which maintains that most geniuses are what he terms *mattoides* (from the Italian *matto* meaning 'mad') who are not genuine artists or revolutionaries, and what is normally taken to be genius is 'una psicosis degenerativa del grupo epiléptico'. Luis Maristany, *El gabinete del doctor Lombroso (Delincuencia y fin de siglo en España)* (Barcelona: Editorial Anagrama, 1973), pp. 50–2.

Bernard Hollander, writing in the early twentieth century in his 'brief but comprehensive history' on the workings of the human mind, states:

> Hallucinations of sight occur in *acute mania*: horrible scenes are witnessed in the hallucinations of *melancholia*; repugnant objects in motion in acute alcoholism; fear-inspiring visions occur in *inanition delirium*, and frightful hallucinations in *puerperal mania*. *Insane epileptics*, too, are sometimes subject to terrifying hallucinations, and ecstatic visions are sometime seen by *hysterical women*.[17] [His italics]

Under the effects of alcohol Mauricia la Dura in *Fortunata y Jacinta* displays many of the symptoms listed above, including the visions which she claims to see of the Virgin Mary. Yet despite the portrayal of Mauricia as a mentally unstable drunkard there is often a lucidity in her way of thinking which is not to be found in the mainstream of her society. Her perception of the 'divine', like Fortunata's, is deeply ambiguous:

> Estaba sentada a lo moro, con los brazos caídos, la cabeza derecha, más napoleónica que nunca, la vista fija enfrente de sí con dispersión vaga, más bien de persona soñadora que meditabunda. Parecía lela, o quizás tenía semejanza con esos penitentes del Indostán, que se están tantísimos días seguidos mirando al cielo sin pestañear, en un estado medio entre la modorra y el éxtasis. (II, 2.6.ix. p. 686)

Grand mal, albeit induced by alcohol in this case, becomes a device which opens up the possibility of a spirituality which appears far removed from orthodox Catholicism. And yet Galdós allows us to read Mauricia's behaviour in a different way, affirming that it is in fact representative of Catholic orthodoxy. In the past, visionaries, particularly those who were visited by an image of the Virgin, were revered as saints; in the age of reason and logic, such individuals can be shown up to be drunken lunatics.[18] Luis Villaamil's visions of 'God' are born of his troubled subconscious, and they are a projection of the boy's attempts to make sense out of his own and his grandfather's problems. There is no suggestion here that the 'visionary' is in any way epileptic or mentally abnormal. In *Angel Guerra*, however, Leré's deeply held religious sentiments can be attributed to her physical heredity, and that kind of possibility is manifested in her flickering pupils, a condition Galdós may have observed in sufferers from epilepsy. By contrast, Angel's own visionary episodes are given an implicit causality in terms of his immediately formative

[17] Bernard Hollander, *In Search of the Soul: and the Mechanism of Thought, Emotion and Conduct*, II (London, New York: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co.: Dutton & Co., 1920), p. 48.

[18] In a similar manner, her likeness to Napoleon cuts a 'great' historical figure down to size.

experiences. These can involve a physiological element (fasting or fatigue), but hereditary factors are not invoked as explanations. In Nazarín's case the source of his visions, as Labanyi observes (see p. 125), could be related to innate abnormalities and/or to the symptoms of typhoid; further association is with the change of the priest's physiognomy to a bronzed, Arabic appearance. The ambiguity of religious visions in Galdós's novels poses problems for the reader, but also for the characters. In *Nazarín*, one of Beatriz's 'spiritual' experiences is described thus:

> La presión torácica la molestaba un poco; pero compensaba esta molestia los efluvios que corrían por toda su epidermis, vibraciones erráticas que iban a parar al cerebro, donde se convertían en imágenes hermosas, antes soñadas que percibidas. (III, 4.1. p. 542)

This experience is a pleasant one but appears to be physiological (brought on by her illness) and perhaps psychological (immediately prior to this she feels 'como una satisfacción de sentirse mal'), rather than spiritual. Beatriz is justifiably hesitant about relating her visions to Nazarín because he has forewarned them that visions or *fenómenos* are 'sólo existentes en la imaginación y en los nervios de personas de dudosa salud' (III, 4.1. p. 543). However, in his prison cell, Nazarín is confronted by religious visions and likewise has to examine his perception of reality,

> «¿Lo que veía y oía era la realidad, o una proyección externa de los delirios de su fiebre ardentísima? Lo verdadero ¿dónde estaba? ¿Dentro o fuera de un pensamiento? ¿Los sentidos percibían las cosas, o las creaban?» Doloroso era su esfuerzo mental por resolver esta duda, y ya pedía medios de conocimiento a la lógica vulgar, ya los buscaba por la vía de la observación. ¡Pero si ni aun la observación era posible en aquella vaga penumbra, que desleía los contornos de cosas y personas y todo lo hacía fantástico! Vió la cárcel como una anchurosa cueva. (III, 5.5. p. 573)

The expressions of spirituality experienced by Nazarín and other similar characters appear to have something inauthentic about them; their visions are clearly not meant to be read as literal visitations from God or the Virgin. Furthermore, there is little evidence of the traditional image of God, that of a figure external to the human imagination who is the Creator of the universe, but who can also intervene in worldly matters. Eoff points out that the wider implications of Darwinian theory were part and parcel of a more personal relationship with God where mediation through organised religion was becoming unnecessary:

> In very broad terms, perhaps the two most outstanding developments of nineteenth-century thought were the concept of flow and growth as being a fundamental feature of the universe, and a reintegration of rationalism with

> ancient mysticism, underlying which is the belief that one comes closest to God within one's own true self. (Eoff 1954, pp. 150–1)

Whether the reader should, however, view traditional forms of religious experience as constructs of the degenerative imagination is another matter. There is clearly a tension in Galdós's understanding of spirituality: he is both keen to embrace the conclusions of modern science, while at the same time he feels obliged to rescue the once-unequivocal evidences of an autonomous spirituality which nineteenth-century science appeared to be washing away.

In *Doña Perfecta*, Pepe Rey asserts that contemporary science has destroyed the world of myth and miracles, and that ancient religions long since debunked as mythology are parallel to aspects of Christianity which science has now reduced to a collection of fairy tales. This argument is at the centre of the 'debate' between *neos* and liberals:

> Ya no hay falsos cómputos de la edad del mundo, porque la paleontología y la prehistoria han contado los dientes de esta calavera en que vivimos y averiguado su verdadera edad. La fábula, llámase paganismo o idealismo cristiano, ya no existe. (I, 6. p. 431)

Pepe Rey poses a problem which Galdós tries to solve throughout the *novelas contemporáneas*; if humanity no longer lives in the age of miracles, saints and supernatural occurrences which demonstrate the presence and power of an almighty deity, how does God manifest his presence in the age of reason and logic? And what should be the reaction to mankind's great modern achievements, brought about by humanity's own labour to which Pepe Rey also draws attention? In another exchange typical of Galdós's *novelas de tesis*, María Egipcíaca attacks León Roch's scientific rationalism as evidence of his supposed atheism:

> [. . .] ¿qué quieres? ¡Ah! ¿Quieres que yo reniegue de Dios y de su Iglesia, que me haga racionalista como tú; que lea en tus perversos libros llenos de mentiras; que crea en eso de los monos, en eso de la materia, en eso de la Naturaleza-Dios, en eso de la Nada-Dios, en esas tus herejías horribles?
> (I, 14. p. 819)

María Egipcíaca lumps together Darwinian theory with materialist philosophies, although of course she is unable to specify exactly what these ideas imply. For her that is an irrelevance; they are all heretical. But to the bald question, 'is Darwinian theory atheistic?', there were (and still are) a range of possible answers. Even within a given denomination of Christianity there was no clear agreement, and what is more, these positions were prone to shift. Darwin, once a trainee theologian himself of course, was almost certainly an atheist, although he chose to be discreet about his beliefs for the peace of his

family.[19] He came to see the Christian God as nothing more than a more advanced version of primitive societies' deities and of naturally existing qualities found further down the evolutionary tract:

> For Darwin, the moralistic God of the civilised world was simply the personification of habitual convictions with origins in the social instincts of lower animals. There can be little doubt that Darwin was speaking of his own private morality when he wrote that the fully conscientious person was one who could say, 'I am the supreme judge of my own conduct, and in the words of Kant, I will not in my own person violate the dignity of humanity'. (Howard 1982, p. 74)

It might be thought that the major battleground between Darwin's adversaries and detractors would be the garden of Eden, but as Fray Ceferino González made plain, the Genesis version of creation and other such symbolism were not under threat from Darwinian theory because such things were not taken literally anyway:

> [. . .] algunas ideas o puntos de vista de la concepción desarrollada por Darwin en su libro *Del origen de las especies*, no se compadecen fácilmente con el sentido literal y obvio de los textos bíblicos que contienen la historia de la creación del mundo escrita por Moisés. Pero ya hemos visto antes que el sentido literal y obvio de esos textos bíblicos no forma parte de la verdad dogmática.[20]

Fray Ceferino González rails not against *el naturalista inglés* or against evolutionary theory, but against Haeckel and Strauss's *monismo materialista*. He takes the Germans to task for their application of evolution to the entire cosmos and in particular for their assertion that life spontaneously originated through natural causes, when they have failed to explain how matter itself was created (pp. 182–3). In the immediate aftermath of the *Gloriosa* of 1868, Francisco Tubino, a self-trained naturalist, made clear that in his opinion the realms of science and religion need not interfere with one another.[21] However, it appears that Galdós could not separate science from religion so easily. Before he embarked in earnest on his 'Spiritual Naturalist' *manera*, his most

[19] See Himmelfarb 1968, pp. 381–400.

[20] Núñez 1969, p. 180 reprinted from *La Biblia y la ciencia*, 2nd edn, I (Sevilla: Imp. de Izquierdo, 1892), pp. 537–9 and pp. 552–5.

[21] See Francisco Pelayo, *Ciencia y creencia en España durante el siglo XIX: la paleontología en el debate sobre el darwinismo* (Madrid: Cuadernos Galileo de Historia de la Ciencia: Departamento de Historia de la Ciencia, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1999), pp. 142–4. Asa Gray similarly saw no reason to pronounce Darwinian theory to be atheistic: 'Gray argued that Darwin's theory was no more atheistic than Newton's physics: it merely showed how the universe worked and was neutral on the question of whether or not it had been set up in that way by design' (Bowler 1984, p. 223).

heavily Darwinian, most pessimistic and most 'Godless' portrayal of Madrid life, *Miau*, reflected Galdós's deep unease about a world dominated by Darwinian and Materialist laws.

The novel is not entirely 'Godless' of course, as 'God' makes several appearances to Luisito Villaamil. But this 'traditional' God seen through the boy's subconscious, the 'kindly old man with a white beard' image of the Almighty, is rather like Luis's grandfather (on whom he is partly based in the imagination of Luis), that is, he is something of a *cesante* in the social Darwinian hell depicted in the novel. This 'God' has lost His place in His world; in one instance He complains that the naughty little boys in heaven have found His globe and messed it up. This rather hapless figure is unable to control his mischievous wards who treat the world as if it is their toy – providing an obvious parallel to the earthly adults in the novel. This God is portrayed as the Creator: 'levantaba un dedo . . . y salían los leones, los cocodrilos, las culebras enroscadas y el ligero ratón', but His creations are clearly not behaving as they should. Galdós was grappling with a thorny issue that many could not resolve; in order to marry Christianity with Darwinian theory it was suggested that the evolution of organisms culminating in Man, was put in motion by God (who may also have intervened along the way), but for others this was not a sustainable position. Pedro Estasen supported Haeckel's argument that evolution could not have followed a preconceived plan, citing atrophied organs and other apparent 'failures' of nature (see Pelayo 1999, p. 294). Haeckel, not unsurprisingly, favoured a God born out of the German philosophical tradition:

> Para Haeckel, la idea de creación orgánica "como producto artístico de un Dios antropomorfo, de un creador divino", se había ido perpetuando desde antiguo hasta mediados del mismo siglo XIX, a pesar de que muchos autores habían demostrado lo insostenible de tal creencia [. . .] En este sentido, decía, estaba cada día más clara la necesidad de considerar a Dios no como un ser extremo opuesto al mundo material sino como una "fuerza divina" o "espíritu impulsor" que existía en el Cosmos.
>
> (Pelayo 1999, p. 287)

Haeckel may have found some room for God in creation, but his is hardly a benevolent God, and divine intervention and divine providence are out in the cold. However, as can be seen above in the reasoning of Fray Ceferino González, by the 1890s even some Spanish clerics did not view Darwinism as being necessarily atheistic. Having said that, the problem of trying to make faith and Darwinian theory compatible was never going to be a simple one. Even if one area of the scriptures and evolutionary theory could be reconciled, Darwinian theory pervaded so many aspects of nineteenth-century Man's understanding of his world that there was always another 'can of worms' waiting to be opened. As suggested above, one of the major bones of

contention between traditional Christian doctrine and Darwinism was the problem of design:

> Darwin himself was finding it difficult to reconcile natural selection with design, and most people found the mechanism too harsh and too selfish to be portrayed as the means chosen by a benevolent God to achieve His ends. Evolution could be accepted as the mechanism of creation only if selection could be replaced by a process showing clearer evidence of its Designer's intentions. (Bowler 1984, p. 220)

As already stated, there was a range of approaches that could be adopted if one wanted to maintain faith in God as Creator and in the principles of evolution. Nature could be seen as being created by God and at the same time invested with the ability to improve itself through time towards His ultimate creation, Man:

> Liberal Christians, instead of insisting that moral values must have a transcendental source, assumed that the progressive nature of the material world was a deliberate part of God's plan, intended to teach us how to behave. They might disagree with the character of Spencer's ethics, but they to wanted the reassurance of seeing their own values reinforced by nature. (Bowler 1984, p. 221)

But as Howard points out (see p. 130) if 'the moralistic God of the civilised world was simply the personification of habitual convictions with origins in the social instincts of lower animals', then Nature's model was no 'reassurance', but a repudiation of religious belief systems. These might be preserved, for example, by accepting that Christianity had evolved from natural instinct and that this was also part of God's plan. Yet such a standpoint required more and more difficult questions to be asked, such as whether lower animals have at least the potential to have moral and spiritual capacities and/or be possessors of souls. For less liberal Christians the conflation of the Bible with *The Origin of Species* and *The Descent of Man* was an easy target to ridicule. In *Nazarín*, the balance between praying for divine intervention and humanity taking it upon itself to amend matters is a delicate one, and Nazarín is keen to promote both methods, when on attending a desperately sick young girl he comments:

> Si Dios tiene dispuesto que muera la niña, es porque la muerte le conviene, como os conviene a vosotras el consiguiente dolor. Aceptad con ánimo sereno la voluntad celestial. (III, 3.iii. p. 523)[22]

[22] There is a parallel to be drawn between this scene and that in the chapter 'El mayor monstruo, el «crup»' in *La familia de León Roch*, where the reader has no way of determining from the text whether Monina begins to recover through Pepa and León's prayers

It appears that God can still intervene in human affairs, but nature and humanity's developments of nature through science are shown to play their roles simultaneously, as if almost in competition with each other. Nazarín is quite willing to accept the benefits of scientific advance:

> –Pues eso– dijo Nazarín –no es brujería ni nada de demonios; es una enfermedad muy común y muy bien estudiada que se llama histerismo.
>
> (III, 3.iv. p. 525)

Nazarín's willingness to make a medical diagnosis to dispel fanciful notions of witchcraft rather flies in the face of his opinion that innate, instinctive ideas coupled with some knowledge gained through experience will be sufficient for survival (III, 1.iv. p. 496).

In his speech on 'Problemas religiosos y políticos' to the Ateneo de Marid in 1872, Cánovas de Castillo attacked Darwin's assertion that morality had evolved through selection, and quoting from the *Descent* he attempted to find ambiguities in the latter's reasoning,

> «Que la moral es un sentimiento altamente complicado, el cual, arrancado de los instintos sociales, ha sido luego regido imperiosamente por la aprobación de nuestros semejantes y ordenado a la larga por la razón y por el interés, y aun en tiempos más recientes, por las ideas religiosas, la instrucción y las costumbres». Por donde se ve que el célebre naturalista inglés admite al fin, como una de tantas causas de moralidad, las ideas religiosas; pero sin señalar el grado de su influjo ni darlas por indispensables. (Cánovas, p. 97)

As with many of Darwin's detractors, Cánovas argues his case somewhat disingenuously; it surely could not have escaped his attention that although Darwin acknowledges that formal religions have played a role in the evolution of morality, clearly in Darwin's scheme these religions are a development of natural instincts, and humanity's sense of morality has been developed in tandem with them, as with other aspects of human society. Darwin observed that superstitions are common to societies all over the globe, and in his opinion they appear to be a remnant of humanity's early attempts to make use of its spiritual faculties:

> The same high mental faculties which first led man to believe in unseen spiritual agencies, then in fetishism, polytheism, and ultimately in monotheism, would infallibly lead him, as long as his reasoning powers remained

or, through medical intervention, or whether the girl would have recovered of her own accord.

> poorly developed, to various strange superstitions and customs. (*The Descent of Man*, p. 119)

In *El Doctor Centeno*, Galdós draws an unfavourable parallel between Catholic rites and obsessive behaviour:

> Doña Isabel Godoy era supersticiosa en grado extremo; fenómeno que, si se examinaba bien, no es incompatible con la devoción maniática, ni con los rezos de papagayo. (I, 1.3.vi. p. 1373)

In this case Doña Isabel's mental tic is the cause of her superstition, whereas in other characters it represents a more primitive belief system. In Galdós's novels, superstition is largely the religion of the underclass; those lower down the social scale tend to fall outside the realm of Catholic orthodoxy. As stated above, Mauricia's religious experience is alcohol-induced, but Fortunata is quite sober when she willingly believes that button-holes signify changes in fortune. In *Nazarín*, the *amazonas* Beatriz and Andara are representative of a class which does not distinguish between science, faith and superstition:

> [. . .] demonstrando una curiosidad hasta cierto punto científica, que el buen eclesiástico satisfacía en unos casos y en otros no. [Andara] Anhelaba saber cómo es esto de *nacer una*, y cómo salen los pollos de un huevo igualitos al gallo y a la gallina . . . En qué consiste que el número trece es muy malo. (III, 2.iii. p. 507)

Galdós takes due note of the women's socio-economic background, their consequent 'ethnicity', and perhaps even their 'ape status':

> Por cierto que la visita a la que llamaré *casa de las Amazonas* iba resultando de grande utilidad para un estudio etnográfico, por la diversidad de castas humanas que allí se reunían: los gitanos, los mieleros, las mujeronas, que sin duda venían de alguna ignorada rama jimiosa.
>
> (I, 2. p. 14)

In *Misericordia*, Madrid's underclass is represented by Benina and Almudena. The former's superstitious beliefs are reinforced by a factor closely allied to her class status – her lowly financial position:

> Siempre fue Benina supersticiosa, y solía dar crédito a cuantas historias sobrenaturales oía contar; además, la miseria despertaba en ella el respeto de las cosas inverosímiles y maravillosas, y aunque no había visto ningún milagro, esperaba verlo el mejor día. (III, 12. p. 716)

Almudena's religious sentiments are more of a throwback to Spain's Golden Age. Their primary determinant is his racial and religious background; from the information given to us by the narrator and Almudena himself, he does

not belong to one faith or one ethnic group, but has been at some time of his life a Jew, a Muslim and a Christian and retains vestiges of all of these.[23] Significantly, an old friend of his family is called Rubén Toledano – a name which evokes both the world of Spanish Jewry and the whole Galdosian complex of associations with Toledo – and Almudena's living quarters are to be found 'No lejos del punto en que Mesón de Paredes desemboca en la Ronda de Toledo' (III, 5. p. 696). When Benina visits him, she descends into his squalor in much the same way that Jacinta and Gullermina Pacheco do in 'Una visita al cuarto estado'. As we have seen already (see p. 123) these two first must pass through the calle de Toledo to travel back down what is represented as an anthropological, evolutionary tract into the slums. Almudena himself retains 'memories' that hark back, in their origins, to the fifteenth century:

> Aún prosiguió recitando oraciones hebraicas en castellano del siglo XV, que en la memoria desde la infancia conservaba, y Benina le oía con respeto, aguardando que terminase para traerle a la realidad y sujetarle a la vida común [. . .] Trató de explicar la atracción que, en el estado de su espíritu, sobre él ejercían los áridos peñascales y escombreras en que a la sazón se encontraba. Realmente, ni él sabía explicárselo, ni Benina entenderlo; pero el observador atento bien puede entrever en aquella singular querencia un caso de atavismo o de retroacción instintiva hacia la antigüedad, buscando la semejanza geográfica con las soledades pedregosas en que se inició la vida de la raza . . . ¿Es esto un desatino? Quizás no. (III, 28. p. 761)

Almudena's infancy, that is, his Jewish upbringing, recalls his, and by extension Spain's, Sephardic heritage. The narrator quite clearly spells out that this is a 'throw back' religious experience which works within a broad scheme of recapitulation. In fact, there are two interconnected schemes of recapitulation at work in this instance, the first being the developmental analogy whereby through his childhood memories, Almudena recalls Spain's 'infancy'. However, the second half of the above quotation is quite explicit in its suggestion that religious sentiment, once learnt, can be passed on to future generations who can recall it through an atavistic regression.[24] This is going further

[23] Sara E. Cohen, 'Almudena and the Jewish Theme in *Misericordia*', *Anales Galdosianos*, 8 (1973), 51–61. Cohen examines Almudena from a purely Jewish perspective, but makes little attempt to evaluate the Muslim or Christian aspects of his characterisation. Vernon A. Chamberlin, in 'The Significance of the Name Almudena in Galdós' *Misericordia*, *Hispania*, 47 (1964), 491–6 (492), clearly delineates Almudena's transition from Jew to Muslim to Christian, although the character still considers himself to be Jewish. Robert Ricard, in 'Sur le personnage d'Almudena dans *Misericordia*', *Bulletin Hispanique*, 61 (1959), 12–25, observes that Almudena is invested with aspects of the three religious/ethnic groups on which Spanish civilisation was built.

[24] Although one should be careful not to mix Hegel's understanding of *Geist* with the

than saying that humanity has an innate sense of spirituality, but it is in keeping with Darwin, who in his autobiography seems to be leaning towards Lamarck when he states:

> [. . .] the probability that the constant inculcation in a belief in God on the minds of children has produced so strong and perhaps inherited effect on their brains, that it may now be as difficult for them to throw off their belief in God as for a monkey to throw off its instinctive fear of a snake.[25]

Any inclination to take Galdós literally on this issue is tempered by his comment that Benina waits for Almudena to finish before attempting to bring him back to reality. Nazarín is mocked with a crown of thorns, not for any supernatural claim he might have made, but for being a parasite, not working, and furthermore, 'que a lo bóbilis bóblis resucita la Edad de Oro, propiamente la Edad de Oro' (III, 1.5. p. 499). By such means Galdós never lets it be settled whether Nazarín's quest is a journey that needs to be taken, or a wholly deluded enterprise.

It would be difficult to label Nazarín's religious experiences as 'atavistic', but, as symbolised in his 'reversion' to an Arabic appearance, there is plenty of room to view his spirituality as a form of recapitulation:

> Lo tocante a la Fe lo tengo bien remachado en mi espíritu, y ni comentarios ni paráfrasis de la doctrina me enseñan nada. Lo demás, ¿para qué sirve? Cuando uno ha podido añadir al saber innato unas cuantas ideas, aprendidas en el conocimiento de los hombres, y en la observación de la sociedad y de la Naturaleza, no hay que pedir a los libros ni mejor enseñanza ni nuevas ideas que confundan y enmarañen las que no tiene ya. Nada quiero con libros ni con periódicos. Todo lo que sé bien sabido lo tengo, y en mis convicciones hay una firmeza inquebrantable; como que son sentimientos que tienen su raíz en la conciencia, y en la razón la flor, y el fruto en la conducta. (III, 1.4. p. 496)

Some ideas of spirituality and morality are innate whereas others can be learned from observing nature and society. Again, there is little in the way of

normal understanding of 'spirit', it is worth noting that the German philosopher preceded Darwin in identifying a recapitulation of the spirit. In this form the idea could have arrived in Spain through a quite different channel: 'This is Hegel's ontogenetic principle and his answer to the question whether he is concerned with the spirit of the individual or with the *Weltgeist*: even as the embryo has to recapitulate in abbreviated form the stages of organic evolution, the individual spirit must recapitulate in condensed form the *Bildung* of the human spirit.' Quoted from, *Hegel: Texts and Commentary. Hegel's Preface to His System in a New Translation with Commentary on Facing Pages, and "Who Thinks Abstractly?"* (trans.), (ed.) Walter Kaufman (Notre Dame, Indiana, University of Notre Dame Press, 1977), p. 45.

[25] Charles Darwin, *The Autobiography of Charles Darwin 1809–1882* (ed.) Norma Barlow, his grand-daughter (London: Collins, 1958), p. 93.

the divine communicating with the individual in the traditional manner. The organic metaphor with its three stage development in the final sentence hints at the influence of the Krausists. In exploring their 'Filosofía de la historia', Juan López-Morillas comments:

> La genuina Filosofía de la historia tiene como fin privativo el de estudiar *la idea de Dios* en etapas sucesivas de la evolución de la humanidad, sin perder de vista el hecho de que la realización de tal idea en el tiempo es, atisbada desde otro punto de mira, la crónica del desarrollo de las facultades intelectuales y morales del hombre. [. . .] Tanto en la vertiente analítica como en la sintética el conocimiento arranca de una simple unidad, atraviesa una etapa de diferenciación y concluye con la armonización de los contrarios en una unidad superior. Estos tres períodos del movimiento dialéctico corresponden a las tres edades que se disciernen en la existencia de todo ente finito: infancia, juventud, madurez, o si se prefiere, indiferenciación, oposición, armonía.[26]

There are differences between the metaphor used by Nazarín and the parallel drawn between mankind's historical and developmental progression from child (primitive man) to youth (civilised but polytheistic societies like the Greeks and Romans) to adulthood (monotheistic civilisation like contemporary Spain). But there is also a common ideological structure in that Nazarín sees his faith as the accumulation of inherited knowledge coupled with characteristics which have allowed him to develop these innate traits further. For Nazarín, good Christian practice requires that individuals must build on their innately moral qualities in what is a recapitulation of humanity's development of consciousness and reasoning, increasing their intellectual prowess and leading ultimately to the formation of a pure and practical Christian devotion.

In keeping with Nazarín's doctrine, direct observation of nature coupled with innate ideas should provide enough guidance for humanity to develop a religious conscience, but Nazarín faces questions, some which are easy for him to deal with (those, for example, relating to various superstitions), whereas there are others which contemporary science has made even trickier:

> ¿Por qué tienen tanto talento los ratones, siendo tan chicos, y a un toro, que es tan grande, se le engaña con un pedazo de trapo? . . . Y las pulgas y otros bichos pequeños, ¿tienen su alma a su modo?[27] (III, 1.3. p. 508)

[26] Juan López-Morillas, *El krausismo español*, 2nd edn (México, Madrid & Buenos Aires: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1980), p. 41.

[27] Francisco Giner deals at length with the question of whether animals have souls, albeit rather inconclusively, in his study 'Psicología comparada' in *Obras completas*, III, 1922, pp. 31–60.

Evolutionary theory cannot adequately provide answers to questions about the soul; it has only served to further muddy the waters:

> –Y cuando se muere una, ¿sigue una sabiendo que se ha muerto, y acordándose de que vivía? ¿Y en qué parte del cuerpo tiene una el alma? ¿En la cabeza o en el pecho? Cuando una se pelea con otra, digo yo, ¿el alma se sale a la boca y a las manos? (III, 2.3. p. 507)

The simplistic questions posed by Nazarín's companions over the nature of the soul, and the soul in relation to animals, evoke some of the same problems raised by Darwin's anthropomorphic understanding of higher mammalian senses of altruism, morality and even spirituality. Not uncharacteristically, Galdós keeps his distance, and these ideas are left to 'blow around' in the novel, with Nazarín (and, one suspects, Galdós), not always capable of providing satisfactory answers:

> Yo no sé curar; yo no sé hacer milagros, ni jamás me ha pasado por la cabeza la idea de que por mediación mía los haga el Señor, único que sabe alterar, cuando le plazca, las leyes que ha dado a la Naturaleza.
>
> (III, 3.3. p. 523)

Science has provided something of a 'get-out clause' for Nazarín's religious teaching. Just as Galileo's physics and Copernican astronomy had brought consternation to the Church before being accepted and somehow assimilated, Darwinian theory, if accepted as a set of laws, can appear as giving Nature an overall divine purpose, bringing God's order to what seems like amoral chaos.

In making comparisons between humanity and the rest of the animal kingdom, there was a natural tendency to emphasise the brutality and amorality of the lower animals. Thus *laissez-faire* social Darwinists were able to justify the harshness inherent in their models of society. However, through the same process of paralleling mankind's behaviour with that of other organisms, a quite different set of social values could be justified. As Bowler notes, evolutionary works such as John Fiske's *Outline of Cosmic Philosophy* (1874) and Henry Drummond's *Ascent of Man* (1894), saw altruism as the driving force behind evolutionary success:

> The emergence of genuine altruism in man thus was not a violation of nature's laws but a direct consequence of the fact that our species has been shaped by laws intended to promote that very factor in all living things. Peter Kropotkin's series of articles later collected under the title *Mutual Aid* (1902) relied on the author's own observations of wildlife to confirm that there is little sign of a struggle for existence in nature.
>
> (Bowler 1984, p. 228)

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, figures such as Kropotkin were making the case for co-operation rather than competition. It is not surprising that anarchists and socialists would identify quite different models in nature from those singled out by *laissez-faire* capitalists who had been much quicker to find scientific confirmation of their policies in the natural world. Clearly, however, co-operation and competition exist side by side in nature as they do in human society. Edgar Quinet, for example, accepts Malthusian law as an absolute in the natural world:

> [. . .] pero añado que el hombre, por medio de su trabajo, puede cambiar el mundo, aumentar las cosas, crear, por decirlo así, un órden nuevo: esto es lo que le distingue de las poblaciones vegetales o animales. (p. 275)

Quinet does not ostensibly make this a moral issue, but rather, cites humanity's superior qualities as a reason not to have to behave like lower animals. Darwin himself recognised the inherent contradiction in a natural world that is both competitive and co-operative; he identified selfless behaviour as a naturally occurring phenomenon. However, he was always perhaps a little too keen to project human characteristics onto animals:

> Darwin emphasized the willingness of parents in many species to sacrifice themselves for their offspring. A dog defending its master at risk of its own life showed that such instincts can be generalized even among animals. But Darwin's opponents naturally felt that such purely instinctive behaviour fell far short of the human capacity for altruism and the recognition of universally binding moral laws. (Bowler 1984, p. 234)

Darwin was faced with the problem that altruistic behaviour did not appear to be advantageous in the struggle to survive, so he tried to square the apparent circle by identifying parental devotion and bonding within social groups as important faculties for the survival of a given species (Bowler 1984, p. 235). T. H. Huxley provided another interpretation of human intelligence and morality which supported Darwin and countered Spencer, refusing to see them as part of an evolutionary process, whether this had been guided by God or not:

> Spencer advocated a policy of laissez-faire on the grounds that it would improve the race, but, Huxley argued, if the same principle gives no progress in nature, his claim that human progress will be inevitable is unjustified. Why should we violate our deepest sense of moral responsibility to others, to follow the dictates of a natural system that is without meaning?
> (Bowler 1984, p. 244)

Herbert Spencer's evolutionary ethics also approached the question of human altruism from this perspective. Spencer sees even in single-cell creatures a

'physical altruism' when in asexual reproduction the 'parent infusorium' ceases to exist as an individual, although 'the old individual continues to exist in each of the new individuals'. He also outlines the development of this 'parental altruism' in birds and mammals, concluding that 'self-sacrifice, then, is no less primordial than self preservation' (*Ethics* (1966), vol. I, pp. 202–203). Spencer acknowledges the importance of unselfish behaviour in evolution, but in his model the balance of power must always remain with selfishness:

> That egoism precedes altruism in order of imperativeness, is thus clearly shown. The acts which make continued life possible, must, on the average, be more peremptory than all those other acts which life makes possible; including the acts which benefit others. (*Ethics* (1966), vol. I, p. 198)

Furthermore, Spencer sees egoism and altruism as interdependent forces:

> From the dawn of life, then, egoism has been dependent upon altruism as altruism has been dependent upon egoism; and in the course of evolution the reciprocal services of the two have been increasing.
>
> (*Ethics* (1966), vol. I, p. 216)

He makes the point that giving and receiving pleasure can be both altruistic and egoistic simultaneously, and in this light he develops a comprehensive set of values with regard to charity. Returning once again to Cánovas's speech to the Ateneo de Madrid in 1872, it can be seen that Spencer's ideas could be turned into convenient political rhetoric:

> [. . .] en el tercer capítulo del Génesis la dura sentencia de que «con el sudor de su rostro comería el pan hasta que volviese a la tierra» no significa otra cosa sino que el trabajo puede bastar al sustento, por Providencia divina, mas ha de ser con la condición precisa de que la sociedad humana esté organizada con sujeción a la ley y a la justicia de Dios. La ley y la justicia evangélica lo prevén y contienen todo, hasta los remedios aconsejados por Malthus y los economistas prudentes, para impedir el crecimiento del pauperismo. Y harto sabido es también, señores, que en aquella ley santa uno de los primeros artículos hace la limosna obligatoria, y que, en aquella perfecta justicia, la caridad ejerce soberana jurisdicción. (p. 94)

Rather alarmingly recommending 'los remedios aconsejados por Malthus', which included culling the poor to control the size of the population, and at the same time endorsing the benefits of giving alms, Cánovas neatly encapsulates an establishment attitude toward the poor who were for the most part inconvenient, but useful for demonstrating the moneyed classes' 'munificence'.

Before examining charity in Galdós's work, it is pertinent to look at the egoistic and altruistic instincts displayed by Felipe Centeno when he first meets his master's circle of friends. I say 'master' because in the following passage the boy behaves not so much like Miquis's servant, as like his dog:

> ¡En la mesa hablaban de él! Lo observó sin saber cómo, *por la vibración de una palabra en el aire, por milagrosa adivinación de su amor propio.* Estremecióse todo, al ver que el señor de Morales, desde su asiento presidencial, le miraba de una manera afectuosa. Después . . . ¡visión celeste! En el luminoso cuadro que la puerta formaba apareció, saliendo de uno de los lados, una cara de mujer que más bien parecía serafín. Era que una de las señoritas sentadas a la mesa alargaba el cuello y se inclinaba para poder verle. *El murmullo de compasión que del aposento venía embriagó el espíritu del héroe, y hasta se turbó su cerebro como al influjo de fuerte y desusado aroma.* [. . .] Bastaba mirarle una vez para ver cómo a la superficie de aquella constitución sanguínea salía *la conciencia fisiológica, el yo animal* (I, 1.3. pp. 1320–1) [My italics]

This is a curious reversal of Darwin's aforementioned anthropomorphism, particularly when Felipe is alerted by his name being mentioned at the table. The stimulus of noise (of their compassion) provokes a physiological if not chemical reaction in the boy mediated through the metaphor which sees the physical acting upon the spiritual. Felipe's innocent brand of egoism and his instinctive response to altruism is, however, something of an exception in Galdós's novels. In both *An Aspect of Spiritualistic Naturalism in the Novels of B. P. Galdós: Charity* by Gilberto Paolini (1969), and *Charity in the Novels of Galdós* by Arnold M. Penuel (1972), there is an attempt to judge Galdós's portrayal of benevolence from a Darwinian perspective, particularly by Paolini who draws a parallel between Herbert Spencer's approach to charity and that of Galdós. Penuel makes no mention of Spencer, but he nevertheless identifies the paradox that altruism can be a far from selfless activity. With regard to the acts of benevolence carried out by Tomás Orozco in *La incógnita* and *Realidad*, Penuel asks us to consider Orozco's motivation:

> (1) a vague feeling of guilt arises from the fact that the wealth he enjoys is derived from the profits his father and Joaquín Viera, the father of Federico, realized when their insurance company, La Humanitaria, apparently went bankrupt, swallowing thus the savings of hundreds of people and (2) the charity of Orozco becomes progressively an instrument of his own perfection rather than a means of helping others.[28]

Penuel recognises that charity, like many other aspects of human behaviour,

[28] Arnold M. Penuel, *Charity in the Novels of Galdós* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1972), p. 72.

can become an end in itself. On the second aspect of Orozco's charity Penuel begins to unearth the psychological motivations behind charitable acts, in particular citing Orozco's mental instability (pp. 73–6). Augusta raises the possibility that her husband's apparent altruism is in fact far from this: 'la virtud ha llegado a ser en él una manía, un tic' (II, 10. p. 1260). Thus virtue has been reduced to an involuntary mental compulsion. Alejandro Miquis's beneficence toward Felipe in *El Doctor Centeno* is at one point likened to a 'demencia filantrópica' (I, 2.4. p. 1389). However, it should not be understood that Miquis is being anything less than genuinely altruistic, despite the fact that his mental deterioration can be associated in some ways with those of Orozco and Maxi Rubín with which Penuel draws parallels (p. 75). There exists in Galdós's work a sense of the human propensity to be altruistic which is not connected to the Divine or even to orthodox religious practice; it is rather an innate instinct which can be cultivated. Social preoccupations as well as various forms of mental instability can lead to a 'distortion' of these natural instincts into nervous conditions, rather than their being acts of generosity where the individual is carrying out acts of charity for the sole benefit of another human being. Orozco strives to perfect himself *morally*. Such a notion finds clear resonances in the doctrines of both Krausists and Haeckelists. Orozco does not become Nietzsche's *Übermensch*, but he strives to become a version of this, driven by ideals of spiritual and moral perfection; however, in doing so, he believes himself superior to others. As Penuel comments, his actions demonstrate 'the massive, but subtle egoism of Orozco, not his charitableness' (p. 76).

Orozco's mental state, which holds him at a distance from the reality of the other characters in the novel, could be paralleled by that of many other figures whom Galdós created in the Cervantine tradition. But Máximo Manso's high-mindedness and moral superiority do bear more tangible fruit than Orozco's. When Manso 'enters the fray' his interventions are of real service to people who are in need and to some extent worthy of his beneficence. Although for much of the novel Manso does not appear to share the reality which the other characters 'enjoy' – most clearly stated by his pupil Manolito Peña ('Usted no vive en el mundo, maestro') – it is Manso, most notably in the chapter '¡Dichoso corazón humanitario!', who is prepared to deal with the more unsavoury aspects of reality for the needs of his family, although his altruism is defined by himself to a significant degree within his own bourgeois values.

In one instance, Penuel establishes that evolutionary theory is very clearly in evidence in Galdós's account of charitable behaviour. From *La Loca de la casa* he cites Pepet Cruz's approach to giving, or rather not giving alms, in which the latter 'goes on to paint a picture of charity which would fit a Darwinian or Nietzschean view of economics' (p. 31). Cruz's underlying argument against giving alms is that it does not do the recipient any long-term favours and that compassion itself is a weakness, if not a human failing:

> Digo que la compasión, según yo lo he visto, aquí principalmente desmoraliza a la Humanidad, y le quita el vigor para las grandes luchas con la Naturaleza. [. . .] Claro, ustedes habituados ya a esta relajación, hechos a lloriquear por el prójimo, no ven las verdaderas causas del acabamiento de la raza, y todo lo resuelven con limosnas, aumentando cada día el número de mendigos, de vagos y de trapisondistas. (I, 1.vii. p. 433)

Cruz's assertion that indiscriminate charity is damaging to society, indeed to the *raza*, squares with the views of Spencer. The latter, however, managed to get round this problem by claiming that although such acts were 'damaging' to the recipient, such charity held a benefit for the donors in that it helped to develop their altruistic instincts. Spencer, like Galdós, had grave misgivings as to the benefits of institutionalised charity. For both men, the act of giving alms under such conditions becomes nothing more than a showcase in which the moneyed classes display their wealth and 'Christian virtue'. Nevertheless, Paolini establishes that there is a clear difference between Spencer's and Galdós's fundamental approach to charity:

> [. . .] beginning with *Angel Guerra*, the religious spirit which directs the charity of Galdós increasingly separates the Spanish novelist [. . .] from the evolutionary philosopher.[29]

As has already been noted, the lower strata, who should benefit most from acts of charity, are shown by Galdós as the group most likely to be detached from orthodox religious practice. In the opening scene of *Misericordia*, for instance, the beggars are both literally and metaphorically outside the church. It is from this group of beggars, however, that Galdós most clearly develops his ideas on moral and altruistic behaviour:

> Por de pronto, observémosle el ejército en su rudo luchar por la pícara existencia, y en el terrible campo de batalla, en el cual no hemos de encontrar charcos de sangre ni militares despojos, sino pulgas y otras feroces alimañas. (III, 1. p. 686)

On one tier the beggars are struggling for survival, but this is within the hierarchy of their group; they are not 'taking on the world' but battling amongst each other for the alms from wealthy parishioners, although room for manoeuvre is limited:

> Como en toda región del mundo hay clases, sin que se exceptúen de esta división capital las más ínfimas jerarquías, allí no eran todos los pobres lo

[29] Gilberto Paolini, *An Aspect of Spiritualistic Naturalism in the Novels of B. P. Galdós: Charity* (New York: Las Americas Publishing Company, 1969), p. 131.

> mismo. Las viejas, principalmente, no permitían que se alterase el principio de distinción capital. (III, 2. p. 689)

To the casual observer there would not appear to be a 'struggle' amongst the beggars themselves, who passively receive the alms given to them. Galdós mentions the parasites which live on the beggars' bodies not only to remind the reader of the indignities of poverty, but also because the insects appear to have a parallel existence to that of their hosts. However, it would be wrong to say that Galdós equates receiving charity to parasitism. For instance, when describing Doña Paca's total inability to manage money, mention is made of other social parasites:

> Administradora y dueña del caudal activo y pasivo, Francisca no tardó en demostrar su ineptitud para el manejo de aquellas enredosas materias, y a su lado surgieron, como los gusanos en cuerpo corrupto, infinitas personas que se la comían por dentro y por fuera, devorándola sin compasión.
>
> (III, 7. p. 701)

Carlos Moreno Trujillo is a donor of charity, but (according to Doña Paca) he has made his money from smuggling, and he also takes advantage of her penury by buying her furniture at a knock-down price, so it is surely he who is the *gusano* here. Moreover, those of Moreno Trujillo's ilk need the poor in order to demonstrate their 'altruism' because, as Penuel notes, through giving alms Don Carlos, like Francisco Torquemada before him, believes he can buy his way into heaven (p. 83). As stated above the beggars are literally outside the church; although they exist in that parish, they are not 'parishioners'. Their social role is to suffer, to provide an outlet for the moneyed classes to display their 'altruism'. There would appear to be, then, a symbiosis between egoism and altruism as suggested by Herbert Spencer, but Trujillo's method of charity is a parody even of the type of charity Spencer supports:

> According to the evolutionary philosopher (Spencer), this type of beneficence (direct charity) is the only acceptable one. However, this does not mean that he favors indiscriminate charity; rather, it is necessary to ascertain the true need of the poor man before giving him alms. (Paolini, p. 74)

Spontaneous acts of charity are ruled out by Spencer and it is aptly ironic that Trujillo and those of a similar disposition happen to be referred to as *ingleses*; it was all too easy to dress up greed as an evolutionary philosophical approach to charity, just as it was to excuse the harshness of *laissez-faire* economics by claiming it was in the interests of progress.

In *Nazarín*, the 'priest errant' invites mockery when he receives alms in order to carry out works of charity:

> –¿Y no cree usted que la dignidad de un sacerdote es incompatible con la humillación de recibir limosna?

> –No, señor; la limosna no envilece al que la recibe ni en nada vulnera su dignidad. (III, 1.iv. p. 498)

As stated earlier Nazarín's willingness to receive alms is derided, and he is labelled 'un fanático, un vicioso del parasitismo', but there are further charges to answer from *el reportero*:

> La sociedad, a fuer de tutora y enfermera, debe considerar estos tipos como corruptores de la Humanidad, en buena ley económico-política, y encerrarlos en un asilo benéfico. Y yo pregunto: ¿ese hombre, con su *altruismo* desenfrenado, hace algún bien a sus semejantes? Respondo: no. Comprendo las instituciones religiosas que ayudan a la Beneficencia en su obra grandiosa. La misericordia, virtud privada, es el mejor auxiliar de la Beneficencia, virtud pública. ¿Por ventura, estos misericordiosos sueltos, individuales, medievales, acaso contribuyen a labrar la vida del estado? No. Lo que ellos cultivan es su propia viña, y de la limosna, cosa tan santa, dada con método y repartida con criterio, hacen una granjería indecente. La ley social, y si se quiere cristiana, es que todo el mundo trabaje, cada cual en su esfera. (II, 1.5. p. 499)

This is a highly cynical view of Nazarín's methods and intentions, but it reveals an attitude towards charity which is revealing; that giving alms is outside the realms of spirituality. Nazarín does not comply with the socio-economic 'laws' that the rest of society are expected to obey. The reactionary view of Nazarín's methodology cannot come to terms with a different kind of reciprocation, where altruism is not immediately rewarded by social prestige and/or making a similar impression on the Almighty.

Nazarín is also convinced that the natural world is at peace with itself, that away from humanity's corruption, there is harmony. The antimaterialism offered by nature gives Nazarín and his followers a feeling of liberty: 'Creíanse en mayor familiaridad con la Naturaleza, en libertad absoluta, y como águilas lo dominaban todo sin que nadie les dominase' (III, 4.2. p. 546). This seems quite illusory given that in the villages outside Madrid they are confronted by a great deal of suffering, but then Nazarín believes that suffering is an essential part of Christian life:

> Contesto que Cristo nos enseñó a padecer, y que la mejor prueba de aplicación de los que aspiran a ser sus discípulos es aceptar con calma y hasta con gozo el sufrimiento que por los varios caminos de la maldad humana nos viniere. (III, 2.6. p. 513)

It might be thought that Nazarín would welcome the system that delivers so much suffering, but instead he rails against it:

> No sé más sino que a medida que avanza lo que ustedes entienden por cultura, y cunde el llamado progreso, y se aumenta la maquinaria, y se

> acumulan riquezas, es mayor el número de pobres y la pobreza es más negra, más triste, más displicente. Eso es lo que yo quisiera evitar: que los pobres, es decir, los míos, se hallen tan tocados de la maldita misantropía. (III, 1.4. p. 497)

Suffering and struggle are necessary for Nazarín to carry out his work, to get closer to God. In the same way that Spencer or Cánovas view suffering as a necessary part of existence because it will result in material progress, so Nazarín sees it as necessary for humanity to make spiritual progress. Nazarín would have us believe that there is virtue in the material struggle for survival, whereas in *Misericordia*, Benina gives a more humble perspective of her daily struggle. When Doña Paca puts it to her that she has no dignity, she replies:

> – Yo no sé si tengo eso; pero tengo boca y estómago natural, y sé también que Dios me ha puesto en el mundo para que viva, y no para que me deje morir de hambre. Los gorriones, un suponer, ¿tienen vergüenza? ¡Quiá! . . . lo que tienen es pico . . . (III, 6. p. 700)

But Nazarín's suffering is patently meant to parallel Christ's. This highlights one of the great dichotomies at the heart of Christianity: it required evil on the part of those who condemned Christ, for Him to be sacrificed. Nazarín is reminded of this when he is told that he too has been falsely accused:

> El mundo es muy malo, la Humanidad, inicua, traidora, y no hace más que pedir eternamente que le suelten a Barrabás y que crucifiquen a Jesús . . . Y otra cosa que decirle: también quieren complicarle en el incendio. (III, 2.5. p. 513)

Just as altruism is dependent on egoism, redemption is dependent upon some wrongdoing as well as sacrifice for its existence.[30] It takes Federico Viera's suicide and an embrace from beyond the grave with Tomás Orozco to resolve the matrix of guilt, altruism and egoism. Similarly, as Jacinta muses over her relationship with Fortunata, and the manner in which her 'son' has come into her possession, the narrator comments:

> Con la muerte de por medio, la una en la vida visible y la otra en la invisible, bien podría ser que las dos mujeres se miraran de orilla a orilla, con intención y deseos de darse un abrazo. (II, 4.6.xv. p. 976)

[30] Dickens had grappled with this problem earlier in that century: 'half the misery and hypocrisy of the Christian world arises [. . .] from a stubborn determination to refuse the New Testament as a sufficient guide in itself, and to force the Old Testament into alliance with it.' Pope, *Dickens and Charity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978), p. 38.

Given that such reconciliations require one party to be dead, it would appear that Galdós fails to offer any practical solutions to the selfishness exhibited by many of his characters; it would seem that the harmony envisaged by the Krausists and religious idealists such as Nazarín is well beyond us. Nevertheless, in defence of Nazarín's case it is worth returning to Spencer, who asserts that if egoism is left unchecked by altruism, even within his scheme of social Darwinism the individual and society at large will inevitably suffer:

> The man who, expending his energies wholly on private affairs, refuses to take trouble about public affairs, pluming himself on his wisdom in minding his own business, is blind to the fact that his own business is made possible only by the maintenance of a healthy social state, and that he loses all round by defective governmental arrangements. Where there are many like-minded with himself – where, as a consequence, offices come to be filled by political adventurers and opinion is swayed by demagogues – where bribery vitiates the administration of the law and makes fraudulent State-transactions habitual; heavy penalties fall on the community at large, and, among others, on those who have thus done everything for self and nothing for society. (*Ethics*, vol. I p. 208)

It is not difficult to see Galdós's Madrid in the above quotation, particularly the corrupt stagnation of *Miau*. There, Villaamil demands a job in the administration purely out of self-interest, but at the same time professes that his appointment would be of benefit to the nation. Although he pays lip service to the creation of an efficient and just administration, he is in fact a man who 'expends his energies wholly on private affairs', although ironically in his case these are 'public affairs'. His egoism is so overwhelming that although he recognises it in others, he genuinely believes his own soliciting to be selfless. By contrast the egoism of Víctor and others is distinct in that they are very conscious of their selfishness; self-interest rules from the schoolyard to the grave, and any innate altruism has to be suppressed for the individual to prosper: the meek are unlikely to inherit Madrid. There are alternative methods of administering the country proffered by Pantoja and by Villaamil. Yet even if these are taken seriously, the people within the system are so corrupt that a change of system alone is never going to solve the central problem. Nazarín's quest for a way of life based on selflessness and antimaterialistic values is an antidote to the social Darwinian nightmare exposed in *Miau*.

In this chapter I have attempted to locate Galdós and his novels within Spain's nagging preoccupation with its status as a 'second-class' European nation, together with how evolutionary science might explain and offer 'cures' to the national malaise. As discussed, evolutionary theory was a convenient model for those concerned with Spain's perceived degeneration and with its possible regeneration. Galdós, of course, did not sign up to any

one particular school of thought in this regard (nor, one suspects, in any other), and his understandings and manipulations of both the natural sciences and emergent social sciences are intricate and far-reaching. At one level degeneration and regeneration are political and socio-economic concerns, but Galdós's texts also demand that they be examined from the points of view of morality and spirituality. On the subject of morality, Darwinian theorists had a good deal to say on the nature of human beings' responsibilities to one another, and coming as they did from all shades of the political spectrum, this inevitably created a complex mesh of argumentation. So, although we can safely claim that Galdós saw little benefit in the 'dog-eat-dog' model of social Darwinism, this does not dictate that other ideas associated with Herbert Spencer and his supporters would necessarily have been met with his disapproval. The genuine compassion displayed by Benina and the bogus charity of other characters in *Misericordia* initially appear to be very much outside the realm of social Darwinian theory, but if anything they were right at the heart of the contemporary debate and the novel becomes a yet richer text when this is considered.

With regard to matters spiritual, the image in *Miau* of a 'God' who has lost control of His creation and who has attained *cesante* status in world governed by Darwinian law, must surely rank as one of the most potent in the nineteenth-century European novel. It is, therefore, perhaps all the more remarkable that evolutionary theory, in schemes of regeneration and recapitulation, are proffered in Galdós's subsequent works as means of spiritual renewal. Again, it is not being claimed that this is not a simple case of one ideology versus another; on the contrary, it further highlights how evolutionary theory was deeply enmeshed in the complex ideological milieu in which Galdós was writing.

4

DARWINIAN PERCEPTION AND EVOLUTIONARY AESTHETICS

In this chapter I focus on how evolutionary theory challenged the pre-existing ideas of perception and aesthetics, and how Galdós's writing charts this upheaval in aesthetic ideology, centring predominantly on the apparent clash between Platonic and Darwinian principles. Furthermore, Galdós's choice of metaphor, particularly in relation to the body, is explored, as are his attempts to understand his own creativity within evolutionary and transformational terms. However, when considering how a sense of aesthetics may have been developed, it is necessary to note that in this case (that is when dealing with the natural sciences in the late nineteenth century), the very means of perception of beauty and of Art was itself under fresh examination. I therefore start with an analysis of that area of the Darwinian debate related to humanity's most obvious means of perception, the human eye, and how this debate had both immediate and less direct influences on Galdós's fiction.

In the second half of the nineteenth century the human eye became part of the battleground between Darwin's supporters and his detractors. The eye represented a level of perfection in humanity and, unlike the brain or the soul, it could be readily dissected and its components examined. Whether this organ was the work of God or the product of natural processes, however, could not be investigated in the laboratory and was open to much speculation. With regard to this contentious area, Darwin finds himself having to bring God into the equation, or at least the 'Creator'. In 'Difficulties of the Theory' in *The Origin of Species*, discussion of 'Organs of Extreme Perfection and Complication' is limited exclusively to the eye, and Darwin finds himself pleading for understanding on the development of the eye lens and compares it to humanity's invention of the telescope:

> In living bodies, variation will cause the slight alterations, generation will multiply them almost infinitely, and natural selection will pick out with unerring skill each improvement. Let this process go on for millions of years; and during each year on millions of individuals of many kinds; and may we not believe that a living optical instrument might thus be formed as superior to one of glass, as the work of the Creator are to those of man?
>
> (*The Origin of Species*, p. 154)

Darwin starts the above section by making a telling comparison when he asks the reader to accept that even an organ as complex as the human eye has evolved through natural selection:[1]

> When it was first said that the sun stood still and the world turned round, the common sense of mankind declared the doctrine false; but the old saying of *Vox populi*, *vox Dei*, as every philosopher knows, cannot be trusted in science. (*The Origin of Species*, p. 178)

The Copernican revolution in European thought serves as the perfect analogy, for if that displaced mankind from being at the centre of the universe,[2] Darwinian theory further undercuts humanity's sense of its own importance in a number of ways. But the argument that mankind's very means of perception, the human eye, was a product of a process was highly provocative. In his explication of the workings of the eye, Darwin reasoned that very simple 'eyes' exist in minute organisms, and even, (citing Jourdain's work) that 'pigment-cells' have eye-like qualities, in that they are stimulated by light (*The Origin of Species*, p. 179). Whereas the eye was once Man's God-given instrument to survey a world created for his comfort, in the light of Darwinian theory Man's relation to the external world has changed to such a degree that he does not even survey it in the same sense he thought he did. There was, of course, a great deal of opposition to such a view. For example, Antonio Eleizegui y López (1875) argues that the eye is clearly the work of God; it is such a sophisticated organ, that it could not have been created solely by natural processes:

> [. . .] en la maravillosa conformación de los ojos en el hombre y en los animales ¿puede sostenerse que la fuerza que los ha formado es una fuerza ciega e ignorante, juguete de la materia y estraña a toda inteligencia? El sentido comun nos enseña que para construir el anteojo astronómico fue necesario el trabajo y la inteligencia de un óptico ¿cómo el ojo humano,

[1] In his chapter 'The Forty-fold Path to Enlightenment', Richard Dawkins successfully expands upon Darwin's 'Organs of Extreme Perfection and Complication'. He demonstrates that by small steps, natural selection has created many different versions of the eye and that the processes undergone to construct these organs took, in geological terms, very little time to complete: Richard Dawkins, *Climbing Mount Improbable* (New York and London: Penguin, 1996), pp. 126–79.

[2] Manuel de la Revilla also makes this comparison: 'Para encontrar una doctrina que tal y tan profunda revolución presuponga en el orden entero del saber y en la concepción total de la vida, fuerza sería remontarse al siglo XVI para buscar el término de comparación en los portentosos descubrimientos de Copérnico y sus discípulos; porque si aquellos, al destruir la concepción geocéntrica, trastornaron por completo toda la ciencia, y aun toda la vida, no es menor, sino mucho más profunda la transformación iniciada por los que destruyen la concepción antropocéntrica.' 'Revista Crítica', *Revista Contemporánea*, 117–22, (118).

> infinitamente mas perfecto que los mejores aparatos del arte, pudo ser la obra del acaso o de la materia?[3]

Darwin had already specifically answered the above point by asking, somewhat disingenuously as he almost certainly did not believe in the Creator, 'Have we any right to assume that the Creator works by intellectual powers like those of man?' (*The Origin of Species*, p. 181). Defenders of Darwin also countered such arguments, and they too could still find room for God in the equation. In 1880 Eduardo de Echegaray penned an article where he argues that religion has nothing to fear from Darwinian theory, and he uses the workings of the human eye to state his case:

> ¿Qué le importa al deista que el sabio le describa cómo vibra el cuerpo luminoso, cómo esta vibración se transmite a la atmósfera etérea que envuelve al universo, y cuyas ondas transversales corren con velocidad casi infinita hasta chocar con el ojo humano; cómo la luz atraviesa la córnea transparente, el humor vítreo y hiere con fuerza la retina, donde numerosas ramificaciones del nervio óptico reciben la sensación?[4]

Echegaray's emphasis is clear in his expression: 'hasta chocar con el ojo humano'; 'hiere con fuerza la retina'; 'reciben la sensación'. Light takes on the more active role, whereas the eye is described as a passive receptacle. For the well-educated man of the late nineteenth century, the means of perception come under a new scrutiny and, as a natural consequence, what was perceived as 'beautiful' – indeed, the very meaning of that term – demanded fresh examination.

John W. Kronik has indicated how Máximo Manso 'aestheticises' Irene; she is 'projected not as creature of flesh, but as a phenomenon of esthetic, linguistic expression'. The passage cited by Kronik reveals Manso's self-critical visual perception and points towards further possible ambiguities that could be implied:

> Pero la tristeza que despendían, como cualidad intrínseca y propia, sus bonitos ojos, aquella tristeza que a veces me parecía un efecto estético, producido por la luz y color de la pupila, a veces un resultado de los fenómenos de la expresión, por donde se nos transparentan los misterios del mundo moral, quizá revelaba uno de esos engaños cardinales en que vivimos mucho tiempo, o quizá toda la vida, sin darnos cuenta de ello.
>
> (I, 6. p. 1200)

[3] Antonio Eleizegui y López, *El materialismo ante la ciencia* (Santiago de Chile: n.pub., 1875), p. 6.

[4] Eduardo de Echegaray, *Revista de España*, LXXVII (1880), 500. Reproduced in Núñez 1969, pp. 169–70.

Manso breaks down the information supplied by his eyes so that it reads like a scientific analysis: 'un efecto', 'producido por', 'un resultado de'. His inability to respond instinctively or intuitively, blinds him to Irene's character and the problems she is suffering. The unreliability of vision to which this leads can also be seen in his idealisation of her as his *mujer del norte*.[5] Idealisation abetted by scientific appraisal ought, however, to be a contradiction in terms, yet as we shall see this is a recurring feature in Galdós's characterisation.

During the chapter 'Viaje de novios' in *Fortunata y Jacinta*, the young couple's train journey takes them down Spain's Mediterranean coast and as they approach Sagunto the description of the countryside reads as follows:

> El paisaje era cada vez más bonito, y el campo, convirtiéndose en *jardín*, revelaba los refinamientos de la *civilización agrícola*. [. . .] Las tierras *labradas* encantan la vista con la corrección atildada de sus líneas. Las hortalizas bordan los surcos y *dibujan* el suelo, que en algunas partes semeja un *cañamazo.* Los variados verdes, más parece que los ha hecho *el arte con una brocha*, que no la Naturaleza con su labor invisible. [My italics] (II, 1.5.iv. p. 490)

The patchwork of arable countryside is presented as a landscape under Man´s control, *la civilización agrícola* summing up the sense that humanity has the vegetable kingdom at least under the yoke. Ostensibly humanity dominates the panorama, which is beautified to the extent that it appears to be domesticated. Such a stance is undercut, however, by the phrase 'que no la Naturaleza con su labor invisible'. Despite humanity's pretensions, it is the external world which is clearly still pulling the strings, emphasised in the last sentence of the passage which reads, 'A ratos se veía el mar, tan azul, tan azul, que la retina padecía el engaño de ver verde el cielo' (II, 1.5.iv. p. 490). The limitations of the human eye demonstrate that nineteenth-century man's better self-understanding has upset the perceived balance of power between himself

[5] Manso's scientific approach to understanding his own means of perception is also exemplified when he compares his discovery of 'un cuerpo desconocido' causing problems for Irene, with Leverrier´s discovery of Neptune purely by mathematical calculations, 'porque las desviaciones de la órbita de Urano le anunciaban la existencia de un cuerpo celeste hasta entonces no visto por humanos ojos'. (I, 29. p. 1256) Manso's observation appears to be a literal example of the tendency Levine delineates in his chapter 'The Perils of Observation': 'Biological, physiological, and medical science sought ways to reconcile empirical observation with scientific generality; indeed, this was part of Darwin's project. To do that, however, he had to transform his peculiar subject, organic life, including – especially – human life, into material for scientific observation and investigation. The power science exercised over nature, by virtue of its extension of knowledge, was to extend over human beings themselves. In the great democracy of disinterested empirical investigation, the human subject becomes equivalent to the planetary or the geological.' (Levine 1988, p. 211)

and nature. He is now firmly part of the latter; his very perception of it is more of a negotiation than was previously thought. Although humanity is by far the weaker partner, it can easily dupe itself into superimposing an idealised version of the world, drawn from a misconstrued internal reality. As Juanito Santa Cruz casts his eye over the Valencian countryside from a first-class carriage, he no doubt feels himself to be at the apex of Nature's hierarchy as well as at that of Spanish society. By the end of the novel the reader is in no doubt as to how misplaced the arrogance of his mindset was.

When Isidora Rufete, accompanied by Encarnación, goes to visit her brother in the rope factory, Galdós again chooses to emphasise the clash between retina and external reality:

> Como había pasado algún tiempo desde su llegada al término de la caverna, los ojos de entrambas comenzaron a distinguir confusamente la silueta del gran disco de madera, que trazaba figura semejante a las extrañas aberraciones ópticas de la retina cuando cerramos los ojos deslumbrados por una luz muy viva.
>
> –¿Ves aquellas dos centellitas que brillan junto a la rueda? . . . Son los ojos de *Pecado* . . . (1, 3. p. 1002)

There is here a possible reference to Plato's notion of perception, which will be dealt with later in this chapter, but the principal point is clear: external reality, as received through the act of 'looking', is subjective not only in terms of the active point of view of the 'looker'. The actual means of perception and hence to some degree the passivity of the neutral viewer also need to be taken into account. The degree to which we are in control of our actions is of course a particularly pertinent concern with regard to Mariano Rufete, who, as discussed in my previous chapter, attempts to assassinate the king only after he is thrown into mental confusion by the noise of the approaching procession and the effect of the light passing through the fountains in the Plaza Mayor. Galdós's allusion to the distortion of reality in the above passage is immediately followed by the image of Mariano's eyes shining in the darkness, and hence evokes the question: 'what effect does the darkness, and indeed noise, of this environment have on *Pecado*'s understanding of the world?' With regard to the direct perception of reality at least, it appears that Galdós is prepared to accept some degree of determinism in human actions, given that the mechanics of perception are not fully under human control.

The human form has been central to Western aesthetics at least since the Renaissance, and humanity's perception of beauty could hardly have escaped the impact of Darwinian theory. But the new pressures affecting the interpretation of human beauty did not stem solely from the different emphasis which was now being placed on perception. León Roch's intent to mould the character of his wife, has for him a philosophical and scientific sanction. How-

ever, in his case the combination of Neo-platonic Idealism and the laws of Natural Science is shown to be unsustainable:

> La belleza de María Egipcíaca tomó desarrollo admirable después de la boda, y en este aumento de hermosura vio el esposo como un gallardo homenaje tributado por la Naturaleza a la idea de matrimonio, tan sabia y filosóficamente llevada de la teoría a la práctica. (I, 1.8. p. 798)

María's external beauty is classical, archetypal; she is physically the embodiment of an ideal:

> La mujer de León Roch era de gallarda estatura y de acabada gentileza en su talle y cuerpo, cuyas partes aparecían tan concertadas entre sí y con tan buena proporción hechas, que ningún escultor la soñara mejor. [. . .] No tenía tipo español, y su perfil parecía raro en nuestras tierras, pues era el perfil de aquella Minerva ateniense que rara vez hallamos en personas vivas, si bien suele verse en España y en Madrid mismo, donde hallará el curioso un ejemplar, único, pero perfecto. (I, 1.8. p. 798)

León Roch sees her statuesque beauty as the realisation of an abstract ideal, which Galdós refers to directly, albeit with obvious double meanings:

> Con esta belleza tan acabada, que parecía sobrehumana; con esta mujer divina, en cuya cara y cuerpo se reproducían, como en cifra estética, los primores de la estatuaria antigua, se casó León Roch después de diez meses de relaciones platónicas. (I, 1.8. p. 798)

León's selection of a wife is an overly analytical form of sexual selection and is thus doomed to failure. The pressure which a Darwinian mode of selection puts on the notion of beauty is confusing for the selectors and also for those to be selected. In *Darwin's Plots*, Gillian Beer comments:

> In the light of such emphasis on 'fundamental typical beauty, the beauty which consists in the full realisation of the normal specific type', one begins more fully to understand the intensity of Hardy's apparently drab praise of Tess of the d'Urbevilles as 'an almost standard woman', and to feel the urgency of the opening words of *Daniel Deronda*: 'Was she beautiful or not beautiful?' (Beer 1983, p. 212)

Much the same could be said of María Egipcíaca's rival in *La familia de León Roch*, Pepa:

> Ya sabe el lector que no era guapa; ¿para qué hemos de repetir esto, que por lo desagradable cae dentro de los dominios del silencio? (. . .) Además, Pepa no carecía de encantos, y para algunos teníalos en grado eminente; sus ojos eran de buen efecto, resultando éste de la pequeñez combinada con la viveza y con cierta expresión sentimental y cariñosa. (I, 2. 2. p. 848)

She lacks the classic beauty which León Roch believes his 'ideal' woman ought to possess. Beauty of course plays an important role in sexual selection, but it can be seen as a 'flaw' in the evolutionary process. Nature demands respect for the beautiful and yet there is no practical advancement to be gained. In evolutionary terms the only genealogical benefit is that future offspring will possibly be beautiful, and so on. Beauty will attract the more vigorous individuals, and would appear to be an advantageous quality, but beauty can be a mask which confuses human relations. Later in the novel Pepa remarks:

> Comprendo tu preferencia por otra, que, además, era guapa; yo nunca he sido bonita . . . ¡Y ahora vienes a mí, después de tanto tiempo, por los caminos más raros; y ahora! (I, 2.10. p. 881)

León's 'path' to Pepa was diverted by María's beauty. His confidence that he could mould his wife into a perfect woman, took her perfect appearance as a starting-point. In this way, María's beauty is the tragic flaw in the lives of León, Pepa and María. Likewise in *Miau*, for Abelarda and her late sister, Víctor Cadalso's good looks are their undoing. The 'cruel Nature's law' of *Tess of the d'Urbevilles* (Beer 1983, p. 214) is exercised on Abelarda and she becomes a slave to an 'accident' of Nature. Víctor Cadalso's beauty is itself described in terms of the battlefield between idealist concept and evolutionary process:

> Era Víctor acabado tipo de hermosura varonil, un ejemplar de los que parecen destinados a conservar y transmitir la elegancia de formas en la raza humana, desfigurada por los cruzamientos, y que por los cruzamientos, reflujo incesante, viene de vez en cuando a reproducir el gallardo modelo, como para mirarse y recrearse en el espejo de sí misma, y convencerse de la permanencia de los arquetipos de hermosura, a pesar de las infinitas derivaciones de la fealdad. (II, 10, p. 1012)

Reference has already been made (see pp. 12–15, 64–5) to Galdós's propensity to conflate evolutionary theory and Platonic Idealism. The passage just cited is a clear crystallisation of this tendency; the archetypal beauty displayed by Víctor appears to have been created 'under the influence of the ideal form'. It also suggests that originally such examples of human beauty were the norm, and that it was only the process of reproduction, the *cruzamientos*,[6] which have contaminated the archetypal form. The result of thousands of years of breeding has been to make the *gallardo modelo* an anomaly and to produce 'las infinitas derivaciones de la fealdad'. However,

6 As seen earlier (pp. 140–1), Galdós described the beautiful 'tipo aristocrático' to be of 'pura sangre, sin cruzamientos'.

these contradictions will not square entirely with either Platonism or Darwinism; for the former there is only representation of the ideal form, which is not something that has an 'origin' in the evolutionary sense, whereas Darwinism cannot accommodate *arquetipos de hermosura*.

There also appears to be a racial element displayed by the *gallardos modelos*: María Egipcíaca 'no tenía tipo español, y su perfil parecía raro en nuestras tierras, pues era el perfil de aquella Minerva'; she can be securely categorised as an example of Greek pre-Renaissance beauty. José Izquierdo, Pedro Polo and Víctor Cadalso, however, are described as looking more Italian than Spanish; one might think that they therefore fit with the models of the Renaissance. Yet they are in some sense meant to be seen as archetypes, José Izquierdo literally becoming an artist's model. For Galdós is fully aware that the 'non-prototype' images he so admires in the Renaissance have themselves become the models of perfection in the Western psyche.

The matrix of examples and derivations in relation to the ideal form, ranged against the Darwinian notion of species and type, is something Galdós wrestled with throughout his literary career. Mention has already been made (see p. 12) of the early article 'Imperfecciones' (Hoar, pp. 227–31) in which Galdós examines three portraits of beautiful women: *La Gioconda*, *Lucrecia Fede* and *The Duchess of Oxford*. While admiring their beauty he notes:

> [. . .] ninguna de las tres es bella en el sentido clásico de esta palabra. Lejos de ser correctas, algunas de sus facciones se desvian señaladamente del prototipo tradicional (Hoar 1968, p. 227).

Their *defectillos* are what differentiate them from the Greek notion of classical beauty and in doing so, give them their soul; furthermore, the Ancients' abstract notion of beauty is not sustainable:

> En la mujer que ha pintado un florentino, vereis siempre una mujer; en la que esculpe Fidias no hallareis más que una estatuta. [. . .] Cuando el arte pasa de la estatuaria a la pintura y de panteista pasa a cristiano, se individualiza y se anima. Ya no produce abstracciones esculturales, prototipos de una raza entera: produce ejemplares del hombre; es vario y múltiple en sus creaciones; se muestra siempre particular y verdadero.
>
> (Hoar, p. 228)

The central example of female beauty in the *novelas contemporáneas* is of course Fortunata. When Stephen Gilman comments on the 'emergence of Eros from the unfertilised egg' he fails to substantiate his theory.[7] However, perhaps Gilman was not so far away from an understanding of Fortunata's

[7] Stephen Gilman, 'The Birth of Fortunata', *Anales Galdosianos*, 1 (1966), 71–83.

'mythical status'. In 1870 Gladstone remarked that 'In the members of the Olympian court itself we discern every kind of heterogeneity'; Aphrodite would in this sense be the model which represented a desirable woman. Fortunata, like the goddess, is associated with birds, specifically pigeons, and the connotations that accompany them.[8] Yet, as was noted above, Galdós rejects the Ancients' idea of perfect beauty, because it is 'soul-less', affirming by contrast, that 'En la mujer que ha pintado un florentino, vereis siempre una mujer'. In *Primavera* and *Birth of Venus* by Botticelli one finds precisely that. Michael Levey comments that Venus in *Primavera* 'appears as goddess of love not just in the conventional sense but as Lucretius apostrophised her: goddess of all generative powers',[9] a description which matches Fortunata's 'pro-generative role'. Levey adds that the two paintings are 'probably the first mythological paintings to breathe an intensity previously reserved for Christian subjects' (Levey, p. 42). While the Romano-Greek images of mythological beauty were 'prototipos de una raza entera' (Hoar, p. 228), since Botticelli, idiosyncrasies, *defectillos*, have made the women represented in art individual and 'soul-bearing'. It is also worthwhile considering at this point the aesthetics of the generation that preceded Galdós, specifically the Romantic poet Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer. In the latter's 'La mujer de piedra' he states that 'Hay una belleza típica y uniforme hacia la que, así en lo bueno como en lo malo, se nota la tendencia: el placer y el dolor, la risa y el llanto tienen expresiones especiales, consignadas por las reglas.' But idiosyncratic qualities form part of his idealist vision, and again a woman's smile is the example of variation: 'Cada mujer tiene su sonrisa propia y esa suave dilatación de los labios toma formas infinitas, perceptibles apenas, pero que les sirve de sello.'[10] There is something of Bécquer in Galdós's own 'throwback Romantic' of the 1860s, Alejandro Miquis.[11] For Miquis 'defects' of nature do not hinder him from seeing the ideal in everything. Notably defending his attitude to 'Aristóteles' (Felipe Centeno) he declares:

> No: los defectos no existen en la Naturaleza; son una hechura convencional de las costumbres, y errores de estos instrumentos de óptica que llamamos ojos. El que ve las cosas como aparecen, tiene más de cristal azogado que

8 For example see Robert Graves, *The Greek Myths*, I (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd, 1955), pp. 49–50.

9 Michael Levey, *From Giotto to Cézanne: A Concise History of Painting* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1968), p. 40.

10 Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer, *Rimas* (ed.) José Carlos de Torres (Madrid: Editorial Castalia, 1982), p. 92.

11 Augusto Miquis's scientific appraisal of Isidora Rufete's smile would be anathema to his brother's (Alejandro Miquis) Romanticism: 'Esos dos hoyuelos que te abrió Natura entre el músculo maseter y el orbicular me tienen fuera de mí . . . No te pongas seria, porque desaparecen los hoyuelos.' (I, 1.4. ii. p. 1009)

> de hombre, y es el propagandista natural de todo lo ruin, pedestre y brutal que hay en las sombras de la vida [. . .] Otros buscan siempre la imperfección; yo, lo perfecto y lo acabado; para otros, todo es malo; para mí, todo es bueno, y mis esfuerzos tienden a pulir, engalanar y purificar lo que se aleja un tanto del excelso y bien concertado organismo de las ideas. Yo voy siempre tras de lo absoluto. Los seres, las acciones, las formas todas, las cojo y a la fuerza las llevo hacia aquella meta gloriosa donde está la idea, y las acomodo al canon de la idea misma . . . (I, 2.3.viii. p. 1449)

Here the means of perception, though considered in the new light which derives from the Darwinian viewpoint, can be married with Plato's cave allegory because of the artist's commitment to maintain his ideals, despite the fact that his external reality appears to be a panorama of imperfections. Furthermore, Miquis warns *Aristóteles* that if he does not follow his advice he will be nothing more than 'un espejo con sentidos'. It is the perennial reproach of Platonists – and we might note that Miquis dies with his creativity unfulfilled, while *Aristóteles*/Felipe Centeno survives.

Fortunata's appearance in the Cava de San Miguel is reminiscent of the work of the Florentine artists whom Galdós so admires. It is not difficult to see something of Botticelli's Venus sprung from her shell in the iconoclastic image of Fortunata supping on the contents of an eggshell. She is a hispanicised Venus, and one humanised to a much greater degree, being located in the squalor of Madrid's *cuarto estado.* But she shares the qualities of the representations of women described in 'Imperfecciones' quoted above. In fact, we later learn that Fortunata, while admiring herself in the mirror, shares one of their qualities, or rather *defectillos*, which make her all the more attractive – her mouth is slightly too large, 'la boca, un poco grande, pero fresca y tan mona en la risa como el enojo' (II, 2.2.vii. p. 620). This, as seen above, is a feature in Galdós's opinion shared with the *Mona Lisa*: 'Ahora bien: ¿de dónde proviene tanta belleza? No lo dudeis: de aquellos milímetros más de boca.' (Hoar, p. 229)

Fortunata's mouth cannot be 'too large' unless of course there is a standard proportion which the mouth ought to bear to other facial features. Therefore the notion of perfection or prototype is used by the author albeit in this instance simply as a yardstick against which mouth size can be measured. Also – again, the point has already been made – pictorial representations since the Renaissance are recognised by Galdós as archetypes; prototypes who are humanised and are therefore less than perfect. There is a clear contradiction in the notion of an 'imperfect prototype', but it is a persistent theme in Galdós's thought. As has been stated earlier, he sees in the representations of Francisco de Goya's 'essential' Spanish types, the images of an 'authentic' Spain. Such ideas are culturally based and do not stand up to any scientific examination, but they sustain a firm image of national identity. Representations of this sort are used as if they were 'timeless', as if they will

never evolve into anything else and *have* not evolved *from* anything else. Within the sense of national identity therefore the idea of humanised archetypes comes to appear a sustainable one. And such a sense is, in its turn, subsumed in the novelist's imaginative apprehension of a world. Referring to the influence of Darwin on Dickens, Levine comments:

> Essentialism and nominalism were [. . .] not merely abstract metaphysical problems. On the whole, common sense and tradition required a world in which the ultimate realities remained outside time, and in which an ideal essence (as opposed to biological inheritance) defined the self. The concept of "character" itself implies such an essence. (Levine 1988, p. 145)

In other words the novelist, like anybody else, needs to hang his coat somewhere, even if the pegs keep shifting.

Gillian Beer, in discussing the divergence and variability in the structure of *Middlemarch*, comments:

> [. . .] The distances between people are different. Lydgate, here at one with the project of the book, 'longed to demonstrate the more intimate relations of living structure'. In this double emphasis on conformity and variability George Eliot intensifies older literary organisations by means of recent scientific theory. In Darwinian theory, variability is the creative principle, but the type makes it possible for us to track common ancestry and common kinship. It makes it possible also for us to assess the degree to which common environment bends creatures unlike each other to look alike. (Beer 1983, p. 154)

Variation demands a concept of essence so that the differential which is the key element in the process of evolution can be seen and its impact measured. Variation is not only vital to reproduction in the natural world, but also to representation in the artist's. Furthermore, Galdós's frequent references to works of art in one sense serve as a 'catalogue of images' which exist in the mind's eye of his readership against which his own representations can be compared and measured. Nature, and importantly the 'accidents', the slight 'defects' that it throws up, are what the artist has to work with:

> Es que el alma se simboliza en un determinado accidente corporal, y el secreto de la pintura es encarnar en la desviacion de una linea, en una protuberancia, en una depresion, los rasgos y movimientos de la gran fisonomía del espíritu. (Hoar, p. 228)

Darwin's attitude towards variability in nature and Galdós's in art are very similar; in *The Descent of Man* the former comments:

> As the great anatomist Bichat long ago said, if every one were cast in the same mould, there would be no such thing as beauty. If all our women were

> to become as beautiful as the Venus de [sic] Medici, we should for a time be charmed; but we should soon wish for variety; and as soon as we had obtained variety, we should wish to see certain characters a little exaggerated beyond the then existing common standard.
>
> (*The Descent of Man*, p. 652)

Variation in female beauty is judged by both men to be fundamental to the process of sexual selection, but as the last quotation demonstrates, the idea of perfection had not been thrown away all together.

Aspects of Platonism in Galdós's work have been recognised by several critics. *Marianela* has come under the spotlight for its overt references to Plato's thought, for example in Mario Ruiz's identification of Plato's allegory of the cave where Humanity is blinded to rational thought until man steps into the light:

> Una de las interpretaciones de esta alegoría demuestra la incapacidad humana de corregir la ignorancia relativa de las cosas saliendo directamente de la cueva oscura al llano brillante; el resultado de tal proceder inmoderado sería la destrucción total de la "retina" – sensibilidad espiritual – y de la posible armonía del saber humano. Para ver el sol es necesario encaminarse por un largo corredor mientras los ojos se aclimatan a la luz cada vez más intensa del sol racional.[12]

There are further implications for those who wish to gain deeper insight, Ruiz comments:

> Con este principio metafórico como base, Galdós amplifica su versión de la alegoría platónica de la cueva por medio de las palabras de Teodoro Golfín – especialista de los ojos no sólo como órganos sensoriales sino también como recintos o cuevas del espíritu: "No se pasa de la ceguera a la luz, no se entra en los soberanos dominios del sol como quien entra en un teatro. Es éste un nacimiento en el que hay también dolor". (Ruiz, p. 874)

Brian J. Dendle contradicts Ruiz, in that Pablo Penáguilas's ability to see is not a Platonic emergence from the cave into the light:

> Pablo's progress in the novel represents a downfall, from the light of the sun (recognition of spiritual values, capacity for abstract reasoning) to the darkness of the cave (the blindness inherent in limitation to a world of appearance).[13]

[12] Mario E. Ruiz, 'El idealismo platónico en 'Marianela' de Galdós', *Hispania*, 53 (1970), 874.

[13] Brian J. Dendle, 'Galdós, Ayguals de Izco, and the Hellenic Inspiration of *Marianela*', *Galdós Studies*, II (London: Tamesis, 1974), p. 11.

Jo Labanyi identifies a further reference to the cave when Nazarín finds himself hallucinating in his cell. She states this is 'an implied reference to Plato's cave, where reality is seen only obliquely through the shadows it casts on the inner walls of the mind.'[14]

With this observation and Dendle's comment regarding the 'inherent limitation to a world of appearance' particularly in mind, it is worth seeking to relate the same Platonic passage to the chapter 'Estupiñá' in *Fortunata y Jacinta*. It is on his way to visit Estupiñá that Juanito Santa Cruz spies his future mistress and Galdós introduces the remark:

> Y sale a relucir aquí la visita del Delfín al anciano servidor y amigo de su casa, porque si Juanito Santa Cruz no hubiera hecho aquella visita, esta historia no se habría escrito. Se hubiera escrito otra, eso sí, porque por doquiera que el hombre vaya lleva consigo su novela; pero ésta no.
>
> (II, 1.3.iii. p. 474)

Despite the history of the Santa Cruz and Arnáiz family given in the *Parte Primera*, the plot is not launched until Juanito's chance meeting with Fortunata in la Cava de San Miguel. Even prior to Fortunata's entrance, the narrator repeatedly refers to the building simply as 'la Cava' and it is at the moment when Fortunata steps out of the shadow of the doorway that she enters Juanito's reality and the story is set in motion. Juanito's 'Platonic' perception of Fortunata is extended in the analogy which he draws that she, as a member of the *pueblo,* comes from a great *cantera* of humanity and that her statuesque figure can be further beautified by the 'correct' form of presentation (II, 1.11.i. pp. 586–7). However, there is a great disparity between Juanito's perception of Fortunata and the person who is subsequently revealed; the disparity resides not least in the role she performs. Although she is given little in the way of familial history compared to the account of the Santa Cruz and Arnaiz family, we do know one important aspect of her genealogy: she comes from a line of egg-producers. The discrepancy between Fortunata's social role and the role Juanito has in mind for her is neatly encapsulated in her place of residence, later revealed to Juanito by Villalonga, ' "Es una casa que está en la acera del Norte entre la tienda de figuras de yeso y el establecimiento de burras de leche . . ., allí." ' (I, 1.11.ii. p. 588). She is both a mannequin to be toyed with and, although not a *nodriza*/*burra de leche* like the wet nurses sought for her son at the end of the novel, she is a *nodriza* to the young birds in her charge and she serves as the 'supplier' of an heir to the Santa Cruz family. Fortunata's genealogical line of egg-producers, combined with her Aphrodite-like representation, surrounded as she is in the Cava de San Miguel by doves, neatly encapsulates the discrepancy between

[14] Benito Pérez Galdós, *Nazarín* (trans.), (ed.), (intro.) Jo Labanyi (Oxford & New York: OUP, 1993), endnote 184, p. 203.

the perspective of the evolutionary selector and that of the 'selectee'. Juanito's view of her and Fortunata's subsequent 'pícara idea' (which apparently she does not reveal to Juanito) that she will supply the Santa Cruz family with an heir are necessarily bound to each other, though it could be argued that natural law wins out over Juanito's brand of Platonism.

This contrast is prefigured on more than one level in *El amigo Manso.* Máximo Manso's idealisation of Irene and his brother's attempt to 'purchase' her from Doña Cándida embody in two (closely related) persons the antithetical elements of Juanito's outlook, though the latter scenario, as already noted (see pp. 36–9) runs parallel to Máximo's own procurement of a *nodriza* in the chapter '¡Dichoso corazón humanitario!'. But there is also the profounder contrast which Manso comes to recognise between his ideal Irene, and the less than perfect woman of flesh and blood whom he desires even more keenly.

Perhaps the most perceptive commentary on the Platonic element in Galdós's novels comes from Vernon A. Chamberlin, who is particularly alive to the complexities involved in Don Benito's handling of this mode of thought. He cites José Izquierdo's nickname *Platón* as part of an overall denigration of Platonism within *Fortunata y Jacinta*, seeing Izquierdo's role in life as a painter's model, designated for him by Guillermina Pacheco, as an instance of Platonism in action:

> The commentary on Platonism extends beyond the mere concept of a republic here, however, for Plato asserted that each person has but one occupation for which he is best suited and that in the ideal state (republic) he must be allowed to have only that occupation.[15]

Platón has the archetypal look associated with hackneyed religious and historical portraiture, but as already argued (see pp. 12–15), Darwinian theory 'pulls the rug' from under the notion of the archetype. José Izquierdo, however, only fulfils his ideal role because he superficially stands for something noble – we are never in doubt as to the ignobility of his character. Yet Izquierdo does find his niche in life, as if it were predestined.[16] Fortunata's 'Platonic essence' appears more ambiguous still: she performs her role as an

[15] Vernon A Chamberlin, 'Idealism Versus Reality: Galdós's Critique of Platonism in *Fortunata y Jacinta*', *Hispania*, 67 (1984), 44. James H. Hoddie takes a different perspective in 'The Genesis of *La desheredada*: Beethoven, the Picaresque and Plato,' *Anales Galdosianos*, 14 (1979), 27–50.

[16] Dendle recognises that it is not only a notion of predestined life roles which feature in Galdós's use of Platonism: 'Pablo says of Florentina: ". . . tu persona visible es para mí como un recuerdo. ¿Un recuerdo de qué? Yo no he visto nada hasta ahora . . . ¿Habré vivido antes de esta vida?" ' *Marianela*, p. 751. (See *Phaedrus*, III, p. 156 (lines 249c–250b), and also the acceptance by Pablo and Nela of the innateness of ideas (*Marianela*, pp. 708–709), Dendle, 8, n. 26.

egg-supplier, but not in the manner in which her genealogical line did before her; she appears as an icon of beauty and fertility, but she fulfils her own distinctive pro-generative role which, because her offspring is a class hybrid, is not 'true to type'. Her *pícara idea* is *pícara* because instead of staying within the constraints of a Platonic (or, indeed, Aristotelian) fixed hierarchy, she is functioning as part of a Darwinian (and potentially Marxist) dynamic. A change has been made to the *status quo* because she has chosen to diverge from her path, and diversification is shown to be *the* irresistible creative force. But again, the tension between process and system is analogous to that between the Darwinian concept of species and the pre-Darwinian hierarchy of species. In neither case can the latter element be abandoned completely.

Chamberlin establishes that when Galdós was in the early stages of his literary career the atmosphere was conducive to a neo-Platonic aesthetic:

> [. . .] The writings of Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel (the German Idealists) had created a renewal of Platonism, which in turn had generated considerable anti-Platonic reaction, and this controversy had spilled over into aesthetics, for the purpose of art is, of course, well defined in Platonic doctrine and had, by the 1870s, resulted in an aesthetic Idealist movement of great vitality. (46)

However, at the same time, Spanish periodicals were awash with discussion of evolutionary theory and its possible implications. As was noted earlier (on p. 12), in his early journalistic work Galdós contended that the idealist aesthetic of Phidias had been superseded by the artists of the Renaissance, whose neo-Classicist values demand that they ignore the precept of an absolute beauty but concentrate on those instances of beauty which exist in reality. These instances in turn lend themselves to a Darwinian aesthetic:

> Cuando el arte pasa de la estatuaria a la pintura y de panteista pasa a cristiano, se individualiza y se anima. Ya no produce abstracciones esculturales, prototipos de una raza entera: produce ejemplares del hombre; es vario y múltiple en sus creaciones; se muestra siempre particular y verdadero. (Hoar, p. 228)

Such views, however, still require to be tempered by recognising that beauty needs to be constantly redefined, or perhaps accepted once and for all as indefinable. Galdós here rejects the Platonism of Ancient Greek art in favour of the Renaissance artists' ability to imbue deities and holy figures with very human qualities. On this evidence, he would seem to have dismissed the idea of the archetype without feeling any need to refer to the influence of evolutionary theory in this area. But Galdós's views on classification are less clear-cut than that. There remain vestiges of Platonic Idealism in his thought, and these exist side by side with the use of Darwinian principle in his definition of types and classes. In many ways this is perhaps what one would expect

from a man who encountered evolutionary theory in his twenties and who had the nineteenth-century Darwinian debate as the backdrop to his literary career. Gustavo Correa offers to reconcile the fusion of elements of Platonism and natural laws in the following terms:

> Tanto la tradición platónica como la cristiana se conjugan para dar un sello característico a la concepción humana de nuestro novelista. Dicho humanismo confiere una honda densidad espiritual al realismo galdosiano. Esta visión del hombre y del mundo no entra en conflicto con las doctrinas y las prácticas del naturalismo francés que Galdós absorbió en su momento. El naturalismo, en efecto, proclamaba también una manera de humanismo que se refería al hecho de que el novelista debía ocuparse del hombre en sí y del espectáculo cambiante de la vida, dentro de un marco de leyes naturales.[17]

In its broad outline this is convincing enough, except that Galdós, like any other educated person in the Western world at that time, was far more likely to have gained an understanding of natural laws directly from current works and articles which supported evolutionary theory, than from the novels of Émile Zola. Similarly he would have been influenced far more by a prevailing Idealist philosophical tradition than by the more specialised views of neo-Platonic aesthetes.

A Krausist perspective could quite conceivably include many evolutionary and potentially even Platonic principles, though to what degree would depend upon the individual. The Krausists had very specific ideas as to the purpose of literature and the nature of its production. In particular their emphasis on organic creation and their zeal to embrace contemporary scientific schools of thought made their approach one which was highly compatible with aspects of evolutionary theory. In his seminal work on the Krausist movement in Spain, Juan López-Morillas talks of an 'influjo atmosférico' of Krausist ideas on literary creation,[18] and as this study is aiming to demonstrate, this is generally an accurate description of the state of affairs. López-Morillas, though, perhaps goes too far in describing any attempt to establish a causal link between Krausism and Spanish literature as *inútil*. As with the influence of Darwinism on literary production, the evidence from texts sometimes suggests a direct application of Krausist and/or Darwinian principles on the part of the author. Nor would it have been surprising for writers to have sought this kind of intellectual underpinning. López-Morillas, like critics old

[17] Gustavo Correa, 'Galdós y el platonismo', *Anales Galdosianos*, 7 (1972), 3–17 (13).

[18] Juan López-Morillas, *El krausismo español*, 2nd edn (Madrid: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1980), p. 121.

and new, has harsh words for the lamentable state of Spanish literature in the period between 1845 and 1874:

> [. . .] una literatura trivial, epidérmica, miope. En ella forman consorcio la retórica inane, el sentimentalismo dulzón, la filosofía de tertulia de café y la anécdota costumbrista. (López-Morillas 1980, p. 122)

With the qualification that Galdós himself adopted to some degree 'la anécdota costumbrista', in 'Observaciones sobre la novela contemporánea en España', Don Benito similarly sketches out the major weaknesses of contemporary Spanish writing:

> El gran defecto de la mayor parte de nuestros novelistas, es el haber utilizado elementos extraños, convencionales, impuestos por la moda, prescindiendo por completo de los que la sociedad nacional y coetánea les ofrece con extraordinaria abundancia. Por eso no tenemos novela.
>
> (Bonet, p. 115)

López-Morillas points out that the Krausists saw artistic endeavour as a means of making sense of the apparently multiple and disjointed 'facetas de la propia experiencia vital'. Furthermore he comments:

> No está de más apuntar, en este respecto, que la noción krausista del arte arranca, lo mismo que de la ciencia, del aserto de la "unidad de la variedad". Objetivo común a la ciencia y el arte es el "organizar" aspectos diferentes y multiformes de lo real, reduciendo a orden y armonía lo que es, aunque sólo en apariencia, desconcierto y antagonismo. Pero mientras que en la ciencia el instrumento organizador es la razón, en el arte es la fantasía. (López-Morillas 1980, pp. 123–4)

He refers to the use of imagination in the creation of literature as *intuición estética*, seen by the Krausists as the means to 'organise' reality. However, instead of doing this in an analytical and reflective manner,

> [. . .] lo hace sintética e impulsivamente, en visión instantánea e inmediata, como revelación mágica de la unidad esencial de todo lo creado. Tal unidad "la fantasía . . ., que efectúa como una segunda creación, la ve formalmente expresada, sin explicarse su naturaleza ni darse cuenta de sus fundamentos".[19]

This kind of formulation preserves a broadly Romantic notion of the 'mystery' of artistic creativity. It was, in this sense, reassuring to writers, though it

[19] López-Morillas 1980, p. 124, quoting from Francisco Giner, 'Del género de poesía más propio de nuestro siglo', en *Estudios de literatura y arte*, p. 49.

offered relatively little to their self-understanding. When combined with elements of Darwinian analysis of both mental life and social process, however, it held out the hope of much more. Galdós's understanding of his own creativity was apparently something that the man himself was reluctant to comment upon. In the 1913 Nelson edition of *Misericordia* for example, his explanation of how he set about writing the novel gives the impression that once his research was done he simply let his imagination go to work, almost independently of himself. Nicholas G. Round sees Galdós as being far more in control than he is letting on: 'Despite the deadpan self-commentary of the 1913 prologue we had better take it that Galdós knew exactly what he was doing.'[20] However, from a Darwinian and Krausist viewpoint, it may well be that Galdós is being less disingenuous than he appears. For instance, Máximo Manso stands out as the most obvious exponent of Krausist values in the work of Galdós and it is no coincidence that *El amigo Manso* is the novel where Galdós makes most direct use of metafictional devices and brings literary creation itself under the microscope.[21] The very originality of this novel, particularly its 'framing' chapters, is possibly the reason why it has failed to gain positive acclaim from critics other than *galdosistas*. Critics who see its predecessor, *La desheredada*, as the start of Galdós´s naturalistic period, have a real problem in 'placing' *El amigo Manso*, as they will have for other reasons with *La de Bringas*.[22] In the opening two chapters of *El amigo Manso* the protagonist is 'born' into the mind of his narrator, here closely identified with Pérez Galdós, his creator. This was not the first time Galdós had attempted to grapple with the workings of the imagination. At the very start of his novelistic output, in *La sombra*, the creativity of the imagination is central to the action, but what remains a mystery is how such a 'sueño de sueño y sombra de sombra' can become a 'life form':

> Es cosa inaudita [. . .] que la imaginación, sin ninguna influencia externa, pueda dar vida y cuerpo a seres como ese diablo de Paris que a usted se le presentó tan a deshora. [. . .] Lo que no puedo explicarme es cómo adquirió existencia material y corpórea esa idea; ni sé a qué clase de generaciones espontáneas se debió ese fenómeno sin precedente en la historia de las alucinaciones. (I, 2.iii. p. 213)

[20] Nicholas G. Round, '*Misericordia*: Galdosian Realism's "Last Word"', in *A Sesquicentennial Tribute to Galdós*, 1993, pp. 155–72 (p. 156).

[21] See John W. Kronik, '*El amigo Manso* and the Game of Fictive Autonomy', *Anales Galdosianos*, 12 (1977), 71–94.

[22] Luis López Jiménez provides a typically vague commentary to cover this anomaly: 'Ese año de 1882 continuó tomando fuerza el Naturalismo en España. Apareció la traducción de *La Curée*, de Zola . . . Pérez Galdós publicó *El amigo Manso* – un catedrático de Instituto, hombre cabal, al que la vida juega varias pasadas.' Luis López Jiménez, *El Naturalismo y España: Valera frente a Zola* (Madrid: Ediciones Alhambra, 1977), p. 21.

Spontaneous generation is here used to describe the transformation of an imaginary character into a character of flesh and bones, albeit fictional flesh and bones. Spontaneous generation was not a new biological concept: Lamarck had traced how since the time of the Ancient Greeks (he was presumably referring to Aristotle), it had been erroneously believed that maggots and the like were directly born out of putrefying flesh.[23] Lamarck had 'no settled opinion' as to whether genuine spontaneous generation occurred in nature, but kept an open mind, conceding that, given the right set of circumstances, very simple organisms may be created through the actions of the environment:

> Nature, by means of heat, light, electricity and moisture, forms direct or spontaneous generation at that extremity of each kingdom of living bodies, where the simplest bodies are found.[24]

Galdós, then, appears to draw a parallel between artistic creativity and the account of localised acts of creation that evolutionary science had to offer. Máximo Manso reflects on his own creation thus:

> Soy [. . .] una condensación artística, diabólica hechura del pensamiento humano (*ximia Dei*), el cual, si coge entre sus dedos algo de estilo, se pone a imitar con él las obras que con la materia ha hecho Dios en el mundo físico. (I, 1, p. 1185)

The term *ximia Dei*, is, of course, much older than Darwinian theory, but given the time of the novel's writing it could hardly fail to evoke that context of ideas. However, the term would appear to be a contradiction if a Darwinian model of creation is held to be atheistic. The creation of Máximo Manso in the opening two chapters can be seen first as the result of chemical and electrical activity in the brain of the narrator/Galdós, and therefore as having more in common with spontaneous generation *à la* Lamarck. But he can also be seen as the product of a human impulse to be creative, after the manner of the God–man relationship of Genesis, bringing the *ximia Dei* topic closer to the Biblical version of creation. At this point the text inclines towards the latter possibility. But the other terms in which Manso describes himself hark back to the marginal status of a creature bred of spontaneous generation, a *quimera*, 'sueño de sueño y sombra de sombra, sospecha de una posibilidad'.

The questions of perfection, design and creation are again brought to the

[23] Haeckel adhered to the theory of spontaneous generation (Jordanova 1984, p. 110), and it is likely that the term was made more popular in Spain by the German evolutionist rather than by Lamarck himself.

[24] J. B. Lamarck, *Zoological Philosophy: An Exposition with Regard to the Natural History of Animals* (trans. and intro.) Hugh Elliot (New York and London: Hafner Publishing Company, 1963), p. 244.

fore; José Moreno Nieto, in a diatribe against the materialism of evolutionary theory, and its implication that human beings are simply a collection of molecules, exclaimed:

> ¡Y todo esto ha de ser producto de las fuerzas físicas y químicas! ¿No os parece mucho dar a esos elementos tan pobres, privados de conciencia y de propia virtualidad, que puedan hacer verdadera obra de artistas? ¿Para no hablar de lo demás, conoceis algo de tan singular artificio y de construcción tan primorosa como los órganos del oído y de la vista? ¿Cómo ha podido formarlas la casualidad o el capricho?[25]

Although accepting evolution, Galdós would have been troubled somewhat by Moreno Nieto's accusations of atheism; Galdós refuses to leave God out of his scenarios of creation. In any event the creation of ideas, and here the production of fiction, and the creation of life must occur spontaneously. The first spark of life whether literal or fictional cannot be explained in evolutionary terms, since it is after all not actually part of the processes of evolution. Haeckel had endeavoured to locate spontaneous generation within his system of cosmic evolution and in his response to and support of this theory, Francisco Tubino comments:

> Pero a la vez que sienta esta hipótesis Haeckel, reconoce que hasta ahora los fenómenos de la autagonia y de la plasmagonia no fueron observados de una manera directa y segura, a pesar de lo que no cree demostrada la imposibilidad total o absoluta de la generación espontánea. [. . .] Este primer individuo que comienza por una simple condensación física de moléculas albuminóides centrales, diferenciándose del plasma periférico [. . .] Los de membrana, producidos por la condensación de la capa plasmática superficial, o por simple separación de una membrana periférica, llámanse *lepocítodos*. Las células primitivas, con núcleo y con membrana, provenientes de los cítodos primitivos, por la condensación en forma de núcleo del plasma central [. . .][26]

Tubino may be doing nothing more than reporting Haeckel's empirical research and guesswork, but the question of spontaneous generation is an urgent one, particularly when the implications for the role of a Creator are taken into consideration. Most notably the language employed to describe spontaneous generation resonates in Manso's declaration that he is 'una

[25] José Moreno Nieto, 'Discurso' given 3 November 1876 in the Ateneo Científico, Literario y Artístico de Madrid. Galdós had a copy of this speech in his personal library, and he also provides a sketch of Moreno Nieto in his 'Galería de figuras de cera', Shoemaker 1972, pp. 516–18.

[26] Francisco M. Tubino, 'La ciencia del hombre según las más recientes e importantes publicaciones', *Revista contemporánea*, XI (1877), 407–17 (415–16).

condensación artística'.[27] By using the traditional term 'God's ape' (hardly Linnaeus's idea of binomial nomenclature), Galdós allows the Almighty to have a role as creator (of Man) without denying the processes of evolution, while within the created order, there remains the potential for a different dimension of creativity. In a scenario which Unamuno (despite his denial of it) was to later develop in *Niebla*, Máximo Manso gains, or at least claims to gain, independence from his creator. Fortunata, in a different way, takes over her respective story and makes it her own. In her most notable dream sequence, the reader is allowed to see her *pícara idea* bubbling away in her subconscious; as Fortunata drifts through the streets of Madrid she spies inside a materials shop:

> [. . .] un enano, un monstruo, vestido con balandrán rojo y turbante, alimaña de transición que se ha quedado a la mitad del camino darwinista por donde los orangutanes vinieron a ser hombres. (II, 3.7.iv. p. 843)[28]

Fortunata's dream points towards the evolution of ideas from the confusion of various pieces of external information being imposed on the mind. The external reality within Fortunata's dream has been well documented and with varying degrees of success, but what is not in doubt is that Fortunata finds herself at a crossroads clogged up with the Madrid traffic and during this confusion appears the hideous creature which is said to be half way down the *camino darwinista*. The thought process taking place in the subconscious is here directly likened to a form of evolution, albeit an erroneous one, when the narrator suggests that there is a direct line of descent from orang-utans to men, rather than the two sharing a common progenitor.

The life-forms of his fiction were evolving in Galdós's consciousness, and as such at some level could be seen as being independent of their creator. It also follows from Haeckel's notion that by the very nature of spontaneous generation, subsequent evolution was not (and is not) pre-destined. Creativity, whether divine or authorial, appears in Galdós's terms to be premeditated (with the caveat that in the novelist's generation of ideas even this process is not fully under his control), and in both scenarios the created life-forms have some control over their destiny.

[27] In describing the conversion of inorganic matter into organic matter (the first life-form, the so-called 'monera'), Haeckel uses the term 'puntos de condensación' to describe the primitive atom. Cited in Pelayo 1999, pp. 288–9. Furthermore, Galdós was clearly familiar with this language and expected his readership to be, as is in evidence in *El Doctor Centeno*: 'Decía Alejandro que tiíta era contemporánea del protoplasma, para expresar así la más larga fecha que cabe imaginar.' (I, 1.3.4. p. 1367)

[28] Fortunata's dream continues to provoke fierce debate, as is witnessed in 'Fortuntata's Dream: Freud and the Unconscious in Galdós', *Anales Galdosianos*, 33 (1998), 13–100, and Vernon A. Chamberlin, 'The Perils of Interpreting Fortunata's Dream,' *Anales Galdosianos*, 34 (1999), 113–24.

Along with creation and spontaneous generation, the process of reproduction offers another model through which Galdós can come to terms with creativity. In *El Doctor Centeno*, the process of artistic creation is highlighted in the endeavours of Alejandro Miquis:

> ¡Desgraciado Miquis, siempre devorado del afán del arte; perseguidor con fiebre y congoja de la forma fugaz y rara vez aprehensible; atormentado por feroces apetitos mentales; ávido del goce estético, de esa inmaterial cópula con la cual verdad y belleza se reproducen y hacen familias, generaciones, razas! También las ideas son una especie inmortal que habla con briosos instintos en las entrañas del artista, diciéndole: «Propágame, auméntame.» (I, 2.1.v. p. 1394)

In the first instance here the role of the artist is seen not so much as a vocation but as a biological drive: the tormenting instinct to create is embedded more within some human beings than in others. Furthermore 'el goce estético' itself is described in terms of the reproduction process, being the coupling of aesthetics and mental appetite to produce truth and beauty.[29] Again the creation of art mirrors the creation of life in that the 'next generation' of artistic creation demands that its creator should bring a being or beings into existence. This is resonant of the opening chapter of *El amigo Manso*, where a fictional character is 'born' in the mind of his creator, but it will also find an echo in 'Un curso de filosofía práctica' where Don Evaristo Feijóo explains to Fortunata his understanding of the nature of human love:

> El amor es la reclamación de la especie que quiere perpetuarse, [. . .] Míranse un hombre y una mujer. ¿Qué es? La exigencia de la especie que pide un nuevo ser, y este nuevo ser reclama a sus probables padres que le den vida. (II, 3.4.v. p. 773)[30]

Before it is physically conceived, Fortunata's second child is first conceived in her imagination through a transformation within her consciousness. Although this book places the emphasis in this scenario on post-Darwinian evolutionary theory, there may also be dues to be paid to ideas found in Romanticism, which can be found in Bécquer's 'Introducción sinfónica' where the poet claims:

[29] Alejandro Miquis makes use of a similar analogy later in the novel when talking to Felipe Centeno on money: 'Yo creo que el dinero se ha hecho para esperarlo. La posesión, cópula breve del esperarlo y ofrecerlo, es un momento de placer fugaz que vale mucho menos que las delicias prolongadas de la esperanza y la generosidad' (I, 2.4.8. p. 1448).

[30] The reader understands, of course, that in making such statements Don Evaristo has his own sexual interest at stake, and furthermore his relationship with Fortunata is hardly based on mutual physical attraction. However, that does not nullify the truth of what he is saying when Fortunata applies it to her relationship with Juanito.

> Por los tenebrosos rincones de mi cerebro, acurrucados y desnudos, duermen los extravagantes hijos de mi fanatasía [. . .] Fecunda, como el lecho de amor de la miseria, y parecida a esos padres que engendran más hijos de los que pueden alimentar, mi musa concibe y pare en el misterioso santuario de la cabeza, poblándola de creaciones sin número. (*Rimas*, p. 81)

Conversely when Alejandro Miquis has to reduce the size of his literary creation, this is likened to the reversal of the developmental process:

> Con grandísimo dolor emprendió el manchego la refundición de su obra. A cada miembro cortado, echaba sangre su corazón de padre; pero no había remedio. ¡zas! Más que trabajo de reducción, debía serlo de compresión. Era necesario coger al gigante y comprimirlo hasta poder encerrarlo en un frasco de alcohol, como los fetos. (I, 2.1.v. p. 1395)

This laboratory imagery touches on death, and sterility, and demonstrates Galdós's occasional tendency towards the macabre; but it also again exemplifies that the body and life (the two concepts having been separated in the above image) are seen as natural metaphors for literary production.

Ideas found in Romanticism and in the evolutionary debate were not the only possible starting point for exploiting the body's potential for metaphor. The Krausist notion of universal unity was termed *Wesengliedbau*, which was exemplified in the organisation and unity of the human body.[31] Francisco Giner de los Ríos's idea of society was based on the concept of a *todo orgánico*, and therefore the *Gran Sociedad Humana* was to be viewed as the supreme organism which had been engendered by humanity (López-Morillas, 1988, p. 106). Giner's understanding of the evolutionary arguments is very well developed, although he resists agreement with certain evolutionary points of view:

> A las antiguas teorías de Platón y a las modernas de Hobbes, acusa ciertamente con razón Spencer de descender demasiado al pormenor en su comparación de la sociedad con el cuerpo humano, o con un organismo físico cualquiera; otro tanto podría decirse de las indicaciones de Rousseau o de Bluntchli. Pero, desgraciadamente, ni el filósofo inglés, ni sus inmediatos precursores y continuadores se hallan por completo exentos de censura en este punto. (López-Morillas, 1988, p. 82)

Here he implicitly states that although others have overemphasised the body metaphor as a description of society, he generally sees it as a solid concept. Less constraint is shown by Pedro Estasen in the enthusiasm with which he launches upon very direct comparisons between the human body and human society:

[31] Juan López-Morillas, *Racionalismo prágmatico: el pensamiento de Francisco Giner de los Ríos* (Madrid: Alianza, 1988), p. 105.

> Estudiando al hombre por lo que respecta a su vida de relación, encontramos *facultades* y *aplicación* de estas facultades. En sociología la aptitud o facultad y su empleo, han venido a ocupar el puesto, a representar el papel que en la esfera de la biología realizan el órgano y la función. El grupo de fenómenos a que le damos el nombre de *órgano* y *función*, en biología se complican y aparecen bajo la forma de *facultad* y de *trabajo* en sociología.[32]

The metaphor of body parts functioning harmoniously together also contained elements of the aforementioned tension between Idealism and evolutionary science. E. Inman Fox comments that Rafael Altamira, the 'discípulo predilecto de Giner de los Ríos',

> [. . .] fue atraído quizás más por la idea de que la historia debe responder a la noción filosófica de la vida (o sociedad) como *organismo* cuyas partes son esenciales para el funcionamiento de la totalidad. Influyen en él especialmente las teorías sobre la organización y función de la nación como un pueblo social, que se encuentran, por ejemplo, en *Sociology* de Spencer; el libro de Albert E. F. Schäffle, *Bau und Leben der socialen Korpers* [sic] (1878), cuyas ideas se derivan del pensamiento de Schelling y Krause; y la obra de Azcárate. Son teorías que tienden más bien a buscar un terreno común entre el positivismo crítico, entre problemas ontológicos y observación empírica.[33]

Giner himself, despite being unconvinced that social institutions and body parts could be seen as analogous to one another, certainly understood the evolutionists' perspectives on this matter. He quotes Lilienfeld whom he describes as 'discípulo de la tendencia peculiar evolucionista representada por Häckel y Oscar Schmidt':

> «La sociedad humana – dice – es un organismo de células nerviosas, semejante al sistema nervioso del cuerpo humano . . . Es un organismo, como cualquier animal; sólo que no consta de otras células que las nerviosas». [. . .] Aplica luego Lilienfeld al organismo social todas las leyes de la vida en la naturaleza y sus diversos fenómenos, como generación, nacimiento, crecimiento, desarrollo, enfermedad, muerte, renacimiento. A las funciones fisiológica, morfológica e individual corresponden, respectivamente, la económica, la jurídica y la política, y el gobierno de la sociedad, su más culminante órgano y fuerza, viene a ser como el sistema

[32] Pedro Estasen, 'Noción del derecho según la filosofía positiva, artículo II', *Revista contemporánea*, 10 (1877), 342.

[33] E. Inman Fox, 'Rafael Altamira y la historiografía de «la persona social» nacional', in *Pensamiento y literatura en España en el Siglo XIX: idealismo, positivismo, espiritualismo*, coordinated by Yvan Lissorgues and Gonzalo Sobejano, text prepared by Sylvie Baulo (Toulouse: Presses Universitaires du Mirail, 1998), pp. 311–12.

> central en toda la gran masa nerviosa: esta opinión ya ha sido mucho mejor recibida por Spencer. La sociedad, siguiendo la triple ley del desarrollo establecida por Häckel, se va desenvolviendo mediante la diferenciación progresiva de sus partes, según resalta más principalmente en los distintos grupos sociales. En su seno, la lucha por la existencia, purificada y ennoblecida, merced a una finalidad, libertad y espiritualidad superiores, engendra las costumbres, el derecho, el poder, y, por último, la ciencia, el arte, la religión y la moralidad, debiendo distinguirse (análogamente a como Ernesto Baer lo ha hecho en la zoología) entre los diversos *tipos* de civilización y los *grados* que recorren estos mismos tipos.
>
> (López-Morillas 1988, pp. 82–4)

Giner's commentary clearly shows the degree to which biological evolutionary theory was being given a social application. Not only is evolution seen as an all-encompassing reference point for human society, but the works of Darwin, Haeckel, von Baer and Spencer can be brought into a single system without fear that these men's theories might contradict each other. Even as early as 1870 this raft of interconnected ideologies was so clearly accepted that it seems second nature for Galdós to describe the process of novel writing in the following terms whose anticipation, by ten years or more, of his own mature practice would seem incredible, but for this early ideological underpinning:

> De estos cuadros de costumbres que apenas tienen acción, siendo únicamente ligeros bosquejos de una figura, nace paulatinamente el cuento, que es aquel mismo cuadro con un poco de movimiento, formando un organismo dramático pequeño, pero completo en su brevedad. Los cuentos breves y compendiosos, frecuentemente cómicos, patéticos alguna vez, representan el primer albor de la gran novela, que se forma de aquéllos, apropiándose sus elementos y fundiéndolos todos para formar un cuerpo multiforme y vario, pero completo, organizado y uno, como la misma sociedad. (Bonet 1971, p. 124)

One notes in the application of these ideas, the key evolutionist phrase 'multiforme y vario' in its familiar dialectical association with 'completo, organizado y uno'. Also apparent is the easy commutability of reference between biological organism, society and literary genre – and among the latter, between small- and large-scale works. By using the term 'un organismo dramático', Galdós again emphasises that there remains the potential for creativity and independence within a completed work of literature.

Chapters and episodes are small life forms in their own right contributing to a greater whole. Galdós's fiction offers a number of examples of the 'organic closure' of such sub-units, of which two may be highlighted here. The first is the chapter 'Insomnio' in *Fortunata y Jacinta*, which concludes with Moreno-Isla's death:

> Se desprendió de la Humanidad, cayó del gran árbol la hoja completamente seca, sólo sostenida por fibra imperceptible. El árbol no sintió nada en sus inmensas ramas. Por aquí y por allí caían en el mismo instante hojas y más hojas inútiles; pero la mañana próxima había de alumbrar innumerables pimpollos, frescos y nuevos. (II, 4.2.vi. p. 894)[34]

Death signals closure here as it does for instance at the end of *El amigo Manso* and *Miau*, but here, as at the conclusion of *Fortunata y Jacinta*, death and new life are seen as part of each other. Cruz del Aguila's spiritual re-birth, inspired by the Darwinian, yet Christian, teachings of Gamborena, likewise brings a chapter to closure – which, in its turn, is not identical with the tantalising 'closure in openness' which marks the ending of *Torquemada y San Pedro*:

> Para que nada quedase, la flora espléndida, explicada y descrita con más sentido religioso que científico, haciendo ver la infinita variedad de las hechuras de Dios [. . .] Su adoración ardiente y pura del divino amigo, del consejero, del maestro, era la única flor de una existencia que había llegado a ser árida y triste; flor única, sí, pero de tanta hermosura, de fragrancia tan fina como la de las más bellas que crecen en la zona tropical.
>
> (II, 1.5. p. 1554)

Chapters and novels as 'organisms' are, quite naturally, framed by birth and death, be they literal, spiritual or (in Máximo Manso's case) fictional. However, birth does not necessarily precede death and, as in the case of Fortunata and her second child, the two occur almost simultaneously.

Chapters as entities can also be considered from another perspective. Within *La desheredada*, for instance, the writing of the chapters has been approached from a stunning variety of styles and yet all function harmoniously within the novel. This very much falls into line with Spencer's notion of the 'body' functioning through disparate but interconnected parts, and also with his dictum that evolution predicates the development from homogeneity to heterogeneity.[35] Spencer's vision, and by implication that of other evolu-

[34] Harriet S. Turner comments that, 'The family tree, origin of the trunk of the two stories (in *Fortunata y Jacinta*), also defines their narrative shape, and stands reflected in their archetypal symbol of the tree of life that occurs toward the end of the novel.' And, citing the case of Moreno-Isla's death, she concludes that, 'Family tree and tree of life coincide'. Harriet S. Turner, *Benito Pérez Galdós: 'Fortunata y Jacinta'* (Cambridge: CUP, 1992), p. 26.

[35] For example, on social progress Spencer comments: 'Mucho tiempo después de haberse realizado progresos importantes en la división del trabajo entre las diferentes clases de obreros, existe muy poca, si alguna existe, entre los varios grupos de la comunidad: la nación prosigue siendo relativamente homogénea, bajo el concepto de que las diferentes circunscripciones realizan el mismo trabajo; pero cuando los caminos y demás medios de comunicación van siendo buenos y numerosos, empiezan a ejercer

tionists, was finding application in literature as in just about every other field of human activity. A notable feature of Spencer's emphasis in this area of his sociological theory is that, as he points out, the division of labour was first identified by political economists; he stresses the interdependence of social organs, because observation of biological organs demands it:

> When we see that in a mammal, arresting the lungs quickly brings the heart to a stand; that if the stomach fails absolutely in its office all other parts by-and-by cease to act; we cannot but admit that mutual dependence of parts is an essential characteristic.[36]

Similar sentiments were already imbedded within Galdós's thinking as early as 1868. To illustrate the effect of the cold weather on the human body he makes a sociological and semi-political connection between various body parts and their relative functions:

> Esta repentina solidificación de vapores, este horror a lo líquido que manifiesta la naturaleza en estos crudísimos días, es cosa horrible y que ha de producir un cataclismo mete(re)[or]ológico, si la alquimia trascendental no pone remedio a esta confusión de las clases. [. . .] El estómago, gran epicúreo, libre pensador, es el único que se cuida poco del desórden atmosférico. El se está allá bajo en su cómodo y holgado laboratorio, trabajando en la administración económico-nutritiva, sin molestarse por nada. En tanto, las manos dejan de perteneceros y proclaman su autonomía orgánica. (Shoemaker 1972, p. 377)

Fifteen years later, in his description of the ailing Alejandro Miquis, Galdós recycles this analogy, but gives it a much stronger political edge:

> En algunos aposentos como el cerebro, tumulto y bulla; en otros, marasmo, silencio . . . (. . .) Los órganos, desmayados, no querían funcionar más. Unos decían: «¡Que me rompo!» Otros: «¡Bastante hemos trabajado!» Pero la anarquía, el desbarajuste principal estaban en la parte de los nervios, que ya no reconocían la ley, ni se dejaban gobernar de ningún centro, ni hacían caso de nada. (. . .) Todo era allí jácara, diversión, horrible huelga. [. . .] En el cerebro, las funciones más notables, desoyendo aquel tumulto soez de la sangre y los nervios, se despedían del aposento en una larga y solemne sesión. (I, 2.4. pp. 1450–51)

The Cantonalist uprisings in Cartagena and Murcia of 1873 no doubt

diferentes funciones y a depender unas de otras.' Herbert Spencer, *Creación y Evolución* (trans.) A. Gómez Pinilla, Valencia, pp. 130–1. (Taken from the copy in Galdós's personal library, which has no date but is almost certainly early twentieth century.)

[36] *Herbert Spencer: Structure, Function and Evolution*, p. 111, reproduced from *The Principles of Sociology*, vol. I, 1876.

contributed to the politicisation of this metaphor, but the specific use of a metaphor with a Darwinian slant may be more loaded than it appears – the apparently off the cuff remark made of Augusto Miquis in *La desheredada* that 'El transformismo en ciencias naturales y el federalismo en política le ganaron por entero' (I, 1.4.ii. p. 1008) provides a clue here. Alvaro Girón Sierra has demonstrated that although Spanish anarchists had soundly rejected the bourgeoisie's version of the 'struggle for life', by the early 1880s (Girón Sierra takes the year of Darwin's death as his preferred starting point), they were manipulating evolutionary theory to their clear advantage.[37] It remains unclear as to whether separatists themselves were in the habit of using such language to describe the contemporary body politic and Galdós was simply echoing this, or, more likely given his earlier experimentation, Don Benito was applying imagery which reflected both a political reality and also the ideological use of evolutionary theory by some of those involved. What is apparent is that, as elsewhere, Darwinian theory complements pre-existing analogies – Galdós appears to be manipulating the contemporary evolutionary and Krausist allegory of the body and marrying it to the Roman fable of the hands and the stomach, whereby the ruling class, the Patricians, argued that the working class, the Plebeians, should not go on strike for better conditions because the hands (the Plebeians) needed the stomach (the Patricians) as much as the other way round. The 'brain' – presumably las Cortes – is remote and aloof to the reactions in other parts of the 'body'. Galdós appears to favour the 'Plebeians' as opposed to the Roman valuation of events, but what is most striking is a lack of harmony in the body of Spain.[38] It has already been observed that in *La desheredada*, Riquín's macrocephalia is a metaphor for the swollen bureaucratic importance of Madrid.[39] The reader first learns of Riquín's over-sized head in the chapter 'Efemérides', in conjunction with other details described in explicitly Darwinian terms (see pp. 76–8, 80–1), and, notably, with regard to civil war and *cantonalismo*, in an association which Geoffrey Ribbans calls *historia chica* and *historia grande*.

[37] 'La economía moral y la naturaleza: Darwinismo y lucha por la existencia en el anarquismo español (1882–1914)', in *El Darwinismo en España e Iberoamérica* (ed.) Thomas F. Glick, Rosaura Ruiz and Miguel Angel Puig-Samper (Madrid: Paracuellos de Jarama, 1999), pp. 249–63.

[38] As Glick notes on Pedro Estasen's social formulation: 'Todos los seres son desiguales, lo que conduce a la desigualdad de funciones, así como a la adaptación de los organismos, a través de continuos cambios de forma, a la división de trabajo que la naturaleza exige.' This was applied to human society with the most 'sophisticated' rightfully enjoying their positions, with the caveat that true aristocracy is one based on intelligence. (Glick 1982, p. 27)

[39] See Antonio Ruiz Salvador, 'La función del trasfondo histórico en *La desheredada*', *Anales Galdosianos* 1 (1966), 53–62 and Chad Wright, 'The Representational Qualities of Isidora Rufete's House and her Son Riquín in Benito Pérez Galdós's Novel *La desheredada*', *Romanische Forschungen* (Tübingen) 83 (1971), 230–45.

When Alejandro Miquis states to Felipe Centeno that 'para mí, todo es bueno, y mis esfuerzos tienden a pulir, engalanar y purificar lo que se aleja un tanto del excelso y bien concertado organismo de las ideas', the disparity between his theoretical organism and the physical body in which Miquis exists could not be greater. It is, perhaps, not wholly dissimilar to the disparity between the high-minded Krausist idealists in Madrid and the blood-stained reality in which Spain found itself. On a more general note it is an expression of Spain's shortcomings as a 'nation of dreamers'. Federico Ruiz is a clear example of this national tendency:

> [. . .] su espíritu fluctuaba entre el Arte y la Ciencia, víctima de esa perplejidad puramente española, cuyo origen hay que buscar en las condiciones indecisas de nuestro organismo social, que es un organismo vacilante y como interino. [. . .] España es un país de romance. Todo sale conforme a la savia versificante que corre por las venas del cuerpo social.
> (I, 1.1.iv. p. 1322)

This statement encapsulates much of Galdós's understanding of his country and its literary output. Spain is presented as a quixotic creature that has a limited grasp of rationality, and oscillates between poles of thinking whether they be science and art, or sordid reality and high idealism, demonstrated respectively in the attitudes of Augusto Miquis and Alejandro Miquis, and in those of José María Manso and Máximo Manso. The land of *la razón de la sinrazón* is, in Galdós's vision, a schizophrenic organism which has occasionally been home to great artists, but has difficulty in producing great scientists of its own. However, Spain can be thought of in the terms of the latter; like the output of its artists the nation is shown to function as a living entity, with the potential either to degenerate or to evolve.

In the latter half of the nineteenth century new understandings of design, creation and perception demanded, among many other things, a reappraisal of aesthetics. The 'evolutionary aesthetic', formed within Galdós at an early stage of his career, was a more consistent and more crucial factor than has hitherto been supposed in enabling him to register the realities of his time, whether these were psychological, personal, social or cultural, or took the form (as they so often did) of interaction between all of these.

CONCLUSION

It is significant that from early on in his writing career, Galdós was very consciously exploring evolutionary theory for literary purposes. This certainly does not preclude that at other times evolutionary theory finds its way into Galdós's creativity, subconsciously or indirectly; certainly at times attempting to gauge the source of an idea may be as impossible (and unnecessary) for the reader as indeed it would have been for the author. In Galdós's quest to create a Spanish novel worthy of comparison with the very best of the nineteenth-century European novel elsewhere, he made a point of working from within the Spanish tradition as he saw it. He developed the *costumbrista* social types which relied upon the biological science of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, into social species whose behaviours reflected the evolutionary theories of the second half of the nineteenth century. Evolutionary science provided Galdós with a template of mutability denied to his *costumbrista* forebears, and this aided his expansion of their original ideas into more prolonged and complex texts. The species element in Galdós's writing poses questions as to the nature not just of the individual within society, but also of individuality itself. The acceptance and imposition of labels and therefore roles implies a certain level of determinism in Galdós's social portraits. However, Galdós never allows himself to be blocked off into the 'one way street' of biological determinism. On the contrary, he might well have agreed with Stephen Jay Gould when he states, 'Our genetic makeup permits a wide range of behaviours – from Ebenezer Scrooge before to Ebenezer Scrooge after' (Gould 1979, p. 266). A refusal to accept one's place in the pecking order, accompanied by attempts to challenge it or to 'fast-track' it will usually be doomed to failure. Isidora Rufete wants to take up her 'rightful' position in Madrid's social zoo, but cannot recognise her real relationship to it, through failure to accept her origins and all that these imply. On the other hand, Fortunata's Lamarckian transformations are, in a gradual and periodic fashion, achieved – social evolution is a series of small leaps for her – a pattern which paradoxically falls into broad agreement with the social gradualism expressed by the narrator of her story. The birth of Juan Evaristo even carries us beyond Lamarck: it represents a small yet significant leap in the evolution of the social classes. It is a generational, and, to that extent, a Darwinian, advancement. Torquemada's rise is dazzling, but far from instantaneous – his financial growth and social evolution to some extent work in

tandem with each other. His Lamarckian transformation is partially successful; his expected generational advance turns out to be regressive and, in effect, sterile. His attempt at spiritual evolution – the leap of faith demanded by Gamborena – is another matter still: it cannot be achieved on Torquemada's terms, and if we opt (as perhaps we should) to take Don Francisco as the naturally 'given' reality, it cannot be achieved on Gamborena's terms either.

The great disparities between the idea of immutable species and that of mutable species, between fixed hierarchies and a state of perpetual flux, between system and process, posed challenges for the world of literature and for the world beyond literature. The vital force of variety in natural selection is reflected in the variation of Galdós's characterisation, particularly with regard to human aesthetics. Again, the need to retain the concept of 'essence' remains, as otherwise, differential and variation, by their nature, would remain unquantifiable. Despite Galdós's overall rejection of Platonism, it was the only other system available to him and so, paradoxically, idealist concepts provided an essential element in his representation of non-idealist process. That said, the respective perceptions of María Egipcíaca by León Roch, of Irene by Máximo Manso and of Fortunata by Juanito, are clearly shown to be invalid and to be at odds with the laws of Nature. Fortunata in particular uses the power of process (and her body) to demonstrate the unsustainability of the traditional, Platonic notion of fixed social hierarchies. These dichotomies provided polar opposites for Galdós both in his representations of a society itself so full of contradictions and in his approach to his own creativity. Some of the dichotomies, such as the vestiges of Platonism rubbing alongside Darwinian theory, are never fully resolved but do co-exist to real creative purpose, confirming that here as elsewhere, Galdós was never an ideologue. Likewise, the various schools of Darwinism and of *transformismo* generally, though in less than total agreement with one another, function together – and, indeed, in alliance with other ideas and beliefs – in giving effect to Galdós's exposure of Spain's moral and spiritual degeneracy. This pattern of a syncretic background of contemporary ideas and Spanish cultural precedents, working in the service of a distinctive imaginative creativity, offered valuable (if not always acknowledged) precedents for Unamuno and others in the early twentieth century.

It is not generally recognised that much of the social and literary vision of Spain's foremost nineteenth-century novelist was forged within the tensions between German Idealism and English pragmatism. A great deal of Galdós criticism has, quite rightly, made much of intertextual references in Don Benito's work, but with regard to the presence of non-fictional, and specifically scientific works, there has been a notable absence of research or even interest. Perhaps this is due in part to the fact that literary critics tend to judge scientific works to be outside their remit, rather than viewing them as cultural

artefacts, that are just as likely to have a bearing on the creativity of a writer as the work of other novelists.[1] It ought to be possible to understand Galdós as someone who concerned himself not solely with literature, but, who like any other educated man, would have been drawn to the great scientific and philosophical controversies of his day. Most critics, I believe, would be in easy agreement with this understanding of Galdós, however, despite the fact that Darwinian theory was perhaps *the* big idea of the nineteenth century in Western thought, it has been taken for granted that this had no real impact on his literary output. By contrast, it has been assumed that Émile Zola must have been a major influence, despite the paltry evidence of this in Galdós's novels and the author's own explicit denial of this influence in his 1897 Royal Academy Discourse. Perhaps French literary naturalism did give Galdós the confidence to write that *kind* of novel, but as he had been experimenting with related ideas at least since the mid-1860s, the import of non-fictional works should not be underestimated. The various schools of Darwinian thought were only some among many different ideological approaches competing for Galdós's attention, but perhaps only his liberal political outlook and his idiosyncratic form of Christianity, neither of which can be entirely divorced from the Darwinian debate, can be said to be as persistent throughout his literary career.

[1] A partial exception has been work on medical science, though even this has tended (as in the studies of Pura Fernández) to concentrate on the impact of such writings on the 'novela naturalista radical'. For example see Pura Fernández, 'Moral y *scientia sexualis* en el siglo XIX; el eros negro de la novela naturalista', in *El cortejo de Afrodita: Ensayos sobre literatura hispánica y erotismo* (ed.) Antonio Cruz Casado, *Analecta Malacitana*, Anejo XI (Málaga: Facultad de Letras, 1997), pp. 187–207; Pura Fernández, 'Moral social y sexual en el siglo XIX; la reivindicación de la sexualidad femenina en la novela naturalista radical' in *Breve historia femenista de la literatura española en lengua castellana*, vol 3; *La mujer en la literatura española: Modos de representación desde el siglo XVIII a la actualidad* (ed.) Iris M. Zavola (Puerto Rico: Universidad/Anthropos: 1996), pp. 81–113; and M. Gordon, 'The Medical Background to Galdós's *La desheredada*', *Anales galdosianos*, 7 (1972), 67–77.

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