

THE MECHANICS OF THE PRESENTATION
OF GALDÓS'S THESIS

by

Patricia Gaede

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SIGNED: Patricia Gaede

APPROVAL BY THESIS DIRECTOR

This thesis has been approved on the date shown below:

Leo L. Barrow
LEO L. BARROW

Assistant Professor,
Department of Romance Languages

April 22, 1964
Date

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ABSTRACT

Benito Pérez Galdós, a nineteenth-century Spanish novelist, presents an attack upon certain aspects of the religious practices of his day in a series of three novels commonly called his novelas de tesis. Through his presentation of a series of character types, he seeks to turn the emotions of the reader against the false mysticism, religious intolerance and inflexibility, and clericalism which he attacks and attempts to favorably dispose the reader towards the possibility of a non-doctrinal, unifying religion of the future. The character types of primary importance in the presentation of his thesis are the religious fanatic, the mystic, the martyred girl, the solitary hero, the priest, the hypocrite, the pedant, and the Catholic ideal. In addition, the group characterization of environmental personalities plays a role of definite importance in the directing of the reader's emotions. In his portrayal of these different character types, Galdós uses a series of devices to enable him to accomplish his goal. These characterization techniques include the use of a strong contrast between the surface excellence and the inner qualities of a personage, the emphasis of good qualities to harm a character's image, the presentation of both positive and negative characterization, and careful timing in presenting certain qualities of the characters.

INTRODUCTION

Benito Pérez Galdós, who lived from 1843 to 1920, was a Spanish novelist who, in some of his writings, dealt with historical and contemporary situations and with the problems of his country. Early in his career, he wrote a series of three novels in which he sought to analyze the religious situation of nineteenth-century Spain. The first of these books, Doña Perfecta, appeared in 1876, the second, Gloria, in 1876 and 1877, and the third, La familia de León Roch, in 1878.

Through these three books, Galdós presents his own attitudes towards nineteenth-century Spanish Catholicism. The doctrines proposed may be divided into two main divisions. The most noticeable element in the thesis is its negative aspect, an attack on false mysticism, religious intolerance and inflexibility, and clerical intervention in non-religious matters. With a more positive attitude, Galdós advances his alternative of a non-doctrinal religion based on love, acceptance, and tolerance.

The primary focus of this study will be upon the possibility that Galdós presents his thesis through the personalities which he creates. In order to analyze this problem, a series of character types, which appear to reflect the

author's attitudes or to help other character types reflect them, will be considered. Those which will be treated in this paper are the fanatic controlled by blind dedication and determination, the mystic, the martyred girl, the solitary hero, the priest, the hypocrite, the pedant, and the Catholic ideal. In addition, consideration will be given to the role of secondary or background personalities which appear to contribute to the presentation of the author's attitudes through a form of group characterization.

The manner in which Galdós presents the individual personalities will be discussed. In particular, there will be an attempt to study the contrast between the initially favorable impression which many of them make and the later appearance of the various undesirable qualities which the author gives them.

In the consideration of the individual personalities, the possibility that various good qualities, such as sincerity or religious devotion, could actually harm the personage in the reader's eyes and contribute to the author's criticism of this individual and what he represents will be treated.

Consideration will be given to the importance of both positive and negative characterization. In particular, the role of each as a factor in the presentation of Galdós's attitudes will be evaluated. The possibility that a

protagonist, and therefore the ideology which he represents, may gain the support of the reader as much by the negative qualities of those people who oppose him as by his own personal attributes will be discussed.

This study will also include a consideration of the possible importance of the author's timing in the portrayal of the various attributes of the personalities which he describes. In particular, it will attempt to discover any role which timing may play in the presentation of the author's personal attitudes and in gaining the support of the reader for them.

Repeated discussions of the reaction of the reader to the characteristics of various personalities which Galdós presents will attempt to discover the technique by which he manages to gain support for his ideas and attitudes. Throughout the study, a primary object of concern will be the direction of the reader's sympathies and the manner in which the author attempts to manipulate his reaction and personal favor. The various other points to be considered, such as the surface impression in contrast to the inner reality of a personage, the possibility of good qualities harming a character's image, the importance of positive and negative characterization, and the author's timing will be examined in an attempt to discover any possible role which they play in the directing of the reader's emotional reaction.

THE FANATIC

One important character type which Galdós presents is that of the woman who is controlled by blind determination and dedication to her religious faith as she understands it. The two personages of this type are Doña Perfecta, in the novel of that name, and Ester Morton, the mother of Daniel, the Jewish hero of the novel Gloria.

In Doña Perfecta, religious fanaticism and blind dedication and determination combine to produce the intense drive which motivates her. Angel del Río considers her to be one of the group of characters which he calls "personajes sintéticos" because everything in her personality operates towards one end.¹ Ricardo Gullón notes the intensity and rigidity of her personality.² Antonio Espina considers her to be a person "de armadura espiritual."³ Jaime Torres Bodet states that Galdós does not censure her because of religion, but because of an "actitud antinatural."⁴

1. Angel del Río, Estudios galdosianos (Zaragoza, 1953), p. 110.

2. Ricardo Gullón, Galdós, novelista moderno (Madrid, 1960), p. 62.

3. Antonio Espina, "Libros de otro tiempo," Revista de occidente (Madrid, 1923), i, 116.

4. Jaime Torres Bodet, Tres inventores de realidad (Mexico City, 1955), p. 270.

Doña Perfecta's action and activity crystalize into her determined drive to prevent a marriage between her daughter, Rosario, and her nephew, Pepe Rey, whom she believes to be an atheist. Sherman H. Eoff maintains that the major change in her character is an increase in rigidity.⁵ David T. Sisto expresses the opinion that her hatred of Pepe is a form of vengeance for the dissipation of her dead husband; he states that she fears that if Rosario marries Pepe, she will suffer as her mother did.⁶

Galdós's thesis is given strong force by the very excellence of many of Perfecta's personal qualities. If she were immoral, negligent of her religion, and hard or unscrupulous in her dealings with the townspeople, her attitude towards Pepe would appear consistent with her character. However, her praises resound throughout the book. Even Las Troyas, the orphan girls who are almost social outcasts, praise her, and say that she is the only person of whom no evil is ever spoken in Orabajosa.⁷ Within the walls of her own home, where any defects in her character would be certain to appear, she commands strong loyalty and respect; the author tells us that if Librada, the servant, had known that

5. Sherman H. Eoff, The Novels of Pérez Galdós (Saint Louis, 1954), p. 53.

6. David T. Sisto, "Doña Perfecta and Doña Bárbara," Hispania (Stanford, 1954), xxxvii, 169.

7. Federico Carlos Sainz de Robles, ed., Obras completas de Benito Pérez Galdós (Madrid, 1949), iv, 439.

the letters she was carrying to Rosario had come from Pepe, and not from the soldier Pinzon, she would never have consented to deliver them, for she would not have betrayed Perfecta for anything.⁸ The latter's determination in preventing the marriage, and the unscrupulosity of her methods, stand in sharp contrast to her piety and her reputation. If she were an insincere Catholic, or generally underhanded in her dealings, such deviousness might be expected, and the author's message would have less force. However, she is the model of external piety and moral righteousness. The Catholic excellence of her character implies that her conduct with Pepe would be acceptable to, or even condoned by, the Church. Perhaps the single quality which does the most to dramatize Galdós's thesis is her personal sincerity in the matter. As W. D. Howells points out, her bigotry springs from her conscience; she is devoted to Rosario's eternal welfare.⁹ She chooses her course of action and carries it out with resolute determination. The methods by which she manipulates people into helping her are either shown or implied at various points in the book. She is appalled to learn that the judge Periquito is being replaced; she praises him for being very honorable and doing everything she asks.¹⁰ In the twenty-

8. Obras, iv, 46.

9. W. D. Howells in an introduction to Doña Perfecta, by Benito Pérez Galdós (New York, 1896), p. xi.

10. Obras, iv, 462.

first chapter, appropriately entitled " Desperta, Ferro!" she manipulates her devotee Caballuco and prods him into a wild frenzy of determination until he declares himself ready to obey her in anything. However, even in this situation, she maintains her careful external perfection and morality; she declares that the idea of killing anyone horrifies her, and Galdós enforces her statement with the ironic descriptive note "cerrando los dulces ojos."¹¹ When confronted by Pepe's angry accusation, her first reaction is one of pious shock over the idea of having done such things. However, she then freely admits her actions, and declares them to be morally good, because her intentions were good.¹² In the entire book, there is no indication that she felt guilty of any moral wrong. Before Rosario's delirious confession of her intentions to flee with Pepe, Perfecta is in her room meditating and writing in a scene of perfect inward and outward tranquility. The author tells us that it was in this room that she conferred at length with Don Inocencio and directed the lawsuits with which she surrounded Pepe. However, even though in this room she has originated her various plots against her nephew, all is now perfect serenity.¹³ After Rosario's breakdown and Pepe's death, she retreats into

11. Obras, iv, 466.

12. Obras, iv, 457-458.

13. Obras, iv, 489-490.

intense religiosity.¹⁴ David T. Sisto feels that her misrepresentation of the circumstances of her nephew's death to Don Cayetano, her brother-in-law, shows that she has no remorse, and that her retreat into religion shows her perfect sincerity.¹⁵

By force of her personality, Doña Perfecta occupies a position of great importance in the book and in the presentation of Galdós's thesis. Francisco Blanco García maintains that the figure of Doña Perfecta was not chosen by chance, but as the result of the author's specific purpose.¹⁶ Emilio Gamero y de Laiglesia writes that she is made "de una pieza extraída de la cantera nacional del fanatismo religioso."¹⁷ John T. Reid notes that, in Doña Perfecta, there is the reaction against the new ideas which he feels Pepe embodies; she fears that science will destroy faith and religion.¹⁸ Gustavo Correa writes that she represents the distortion of religious feeling.¹⁹ Joaquín Casaldueiro

14. Obras, iv, 495.

15. Sisto, p. 167.

16. Francisco Blanco García, La literatura española en el siglo XIX (Madrid, 1903), ii, 501.

17. Emilio G. Gamero y de Laiglesia, Galdós y su obra (Madrid, 1934), ii, 25.

18. John T. Reid, Modern Spain and Liberalism (Stanford, 1937), p. 39.

19. Gustavo Correa, "El arquetipo de Orbajosa en Doña Perfecta de Pérez Galdós," La Torre (San Juan, 1959), vii, 125.

maintains that she represents intransigence and fanaticism which is controlling "la España actual," as represented by Rosario.²⁰

Doña Perfecta appears as an intense, strong-willed woman of illiberal background. Stephen Scatori feels that she represents the fanaticism of a woman raised in intolerance and superstition. He considers her a victim of ecclesiastical formulas.²¹ Sherman Eoff says that previous conditioning is what leads her to oppose her nephew.²² He also sees her as the product of enslavement to the dictates of society.²³

An element of great importance in the motivation of Doña Perfecta's action is her dependence upon the guidance of the priest. Stephen Scatori states that, in her character, there is complete clerical domination; Don Inocencio's influence extends to everything that happens in the house.²⁴ Emilio Gamero y de Laiglesia maintains it is quite plain that, throughout the novel, she is merely the instrument of the priest. Finding that the two most important women in the

20. Joaquín Casaldueiro, Vida y obra de Galdós (Madrid, 1951), p. 65.

21. Stephen Scatori, La idea religiosa en la obra de Benito Pérez Galdós (Paris, 1927), p. 52.

22. Eoff, p. 7.

23. Eoff, p. 116.

24. Scatori, p. 51.

novel are Doña Perfecta and María Remedios, he states that the trouble which the latter causes stems from the natural human motive of love for a son, whereas Doña Perfecta acts from "conveniencias ajenas" which arise from her long-standing habit of accepting Don Inocencio's will and having him direct her actions, decisions, and conscience.²⁵ Dorothy H. Park and Hilario Saenz state that

The character of Doña Perfecta is typical of the effects of a narrow education upon a strong but religious nature. As she followed slavishly the slightest suggestion of her father confessor, the Penitenciario, her moral vision became warped till she felt justified in sacrificing the happiness of her own daughter and in bringing about the murder of her nephew.²⁶

Her habitual dependence upon the priest, with her automatic acceptance of his attitudes, reaches such an extreme that, at the first indication of disagreement between Pepe and Don Inocencio, she automatically sides with the priest. When he first begins indicating that Pepe will not think highly of the cathedral of Orbajosa, since he is widely traveled and well-educated, Doña Perfecta says, although in a friendly manner, that if Pepe should speak badly of this church, their friendship will suffer.²⁷ When Pepe, in response to Don Inocencio's prodding, attacks mythology and

25. Eoff, p. 116.

26. Dorothy G. Park and Hilario Saenz, "Galdós's Ideas on Education," Hispania (Stanford, 1944), xxvii, 143.

27. Obras, iv, 415.

declares himself a partisan of science rather than of fable, Doña Perfecta's immediate reaction is to turn pale, direct her eyes toward the priest, and show that she is depending upon him to refute her nephew.²⁸ Don Inocencio himself appears to be quite aware of the influence which he has over her. In discussing with his niece, María Remedios, the possibility of marrying Jacinto, her son, and Rosario, he says that Doña Perfecta has not been enthusiastic about the idea, probably because of their low social origin, but that she has, nevertheless, been somewhat favorable, "a causa de lo mucho que me estima y venera como a confesor y amigo."²⁹

It should be noted that her dependence upon Don Inocencio is primarily upon him as a cleric. Her habit of passively accepting clerical guidance is not confined to her relationship with him; when she hears from the bishop that Pepe has been guilty of irreverent behavior in the cathedral, she unquestioningly accepts this judgment in spite of Pepe's defense.³⁰

In considering the figure of Doña Perfecta, it is necessary to mention the extent to which she is instrumental in the directing of the reader's sympathies. Emilio Gamero y de Laiglesia lists four elements which excite the reader

28. Obras, iv, 417.

29. Obras, iv, 480.

30. Obras, iv, 424-425.

and direct his emotions. He names the manner in which the priest irritates Pepe with Doña Perfecta's smooth support; the influence which the priest has over her; the mortification to which they both subject her nephew, finding in him beliefs which he has no interest in displaying; and the plot against him which is directed by Doña Perfecta at the priest's instigation.³¹ César Barja maintains that Pepe is idealized, whereas Doña Perfecta is caricaturized; he states that a novelist of different ideas and attitudes could make her appear as a holy woman.³² George Portnoff writes that "the reader becomes indignant at the God of Doña Perfecta."³³

The intensity of her attack on Pepe has the primary effect of alienating the reader from her and from the orthodoxy which she represents and directing his favor toward the modernism of Pepe. Pepe himself has few outstanding qualities to earn admiration, but, in the role of victim, he receives our sympathies.

In Gloria, his next novel, Galdós presents the parallel figure of Ester Morton. Rafael Cansinos Assens calls her

31. Gamero y de Laiglesia, ii, 24.

32. César Barja, Libros y autores modernos (New York, 1924), p. 612.

33. George Portnoff, "The Beginning of the new idealism in the works of Tolstoy and Galdós," Romantic Review (New York, 1932), xxiii, 35.

the Doña Perfecta of Judaism.³⁴ Ricardo Gullón maintains that her presence helps Galdós illustrate that intolerance is not of ideological origin.³⁵ José Balseiro states that Ester is the most inflexible person in the book. Through her presence, he says, Galdós attacks intolerance of any variety, rather than just Catholic intolerance.³⁶ Both Doña Perfecta and Ester resort to unethical means to attain the end which they are convinced is morally right; Perfecta, as has already been noted, admits her actions to Pepe and justifies them on the basis that her intentions were good, and Ester, after slandering her son, says that her actions were inspired by God.³⁷ Their positions are not completely parallel; as Menéndez y Pelayo says, the latter's intolerance is "más de raza y de sangre que de sinagoga."³⁸ However, in the entire novel, there is nothing that attempts to challenge the statement of Galdós's heroine, Gloria, who observes that there is no real difference between social and religious intolerance.³⁹

Ester appears as an extremely cultured woman with

34. Rafael Cansinos Assens, Los judíos en la literatura española (Buenos Aires, 1937), p. 78.

35. Gullón, p. 64.

36. José A. Balseiro, Novelistas españoles modernos (New York, 1963), p. 184.

37. Obras, iv, 664.

38. Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo, Estudios y discursos de crítica histórica y literaria, in Obras Completas (Santander, 1940), x, 95.

39. Obras, iv, 672.

perfect social poise and polish. Her conversation with Teresita la Monja and the latter's friends is the model of courtesy and politeness.⁴⁰ In addition to possessing these qualities, she is, as Galdós directly states, extremely wealthy.⁴¹ Her wealth, combined with her cultured poise, gains her acceptance not only in Ficóbriga, as shown in the reaction of the leading women of the town,⁴² but also, as the author says, throughout the world.⁴³

Just as with Doña Perfecta, her Christian counterpart, Ester's outward excellence throws her intolerance into sharp relief. When trying to dissuade Daniel from accepting baptism, she declares that if she, when she was pregnant with him, had known that he would become a Christian and be baptized by a Spanish priest, she would have killed him.⁴⁴ However, in spite of her intolerance, she receives more sympathy from the reader than does Doña Perfecta or Serafinita, Gloria's aunt. In reading Doña Perfecta, the reader finds himself repelled by the personage of Perfecta and supporting Pepe and his intentions to marry Rosario. In Gloria, the reader sympathizes above all else with the girl who is being slowly martyred by her aunt and by her own conflicting emotions. Emilio Gamero y de Laiglesia states that Daniel's

40. Obras, iv, 649-650.

41. Obras, iv, 653.

42. Obras, iv, 650.

43. Obras, iv, 653.

44. Obras, iv, 655.

simulated conversion harms him in the eyes of the reader.⁴⁵ In any case, the reader realizes that such a step is unlikely to offer a permanent solution, and will probably only postpone the problem. He instantly recognizes such an action as morally wrong from the viewpoint of either of the two religions. In the desperate action which she takes to prevent the baptism, Ester is only preventing what the reader does not wish to occur. Also, it should be noted that Ester herself does nothing to cause Gloria's emotional martyrdom and only seeks to remove her son from the situation into which he has been placed. The reader has already seen the emotional strain which his simulated conversion brings upon Daniel; his mother can hardly be blamed for seeking to prevent it.

Galdós is thus criticizing two forms of intolerance. Actually, it may be said that both the Jewish and the Catholic intolerance are of the same variety; in attacking both of them, Galdós is attacking Spanish intolerance rather than that of a religion or religions. Although Ester declares her hatred of Spain,⁴⁶ she herself is of Spanish blood, and she possesses certain Spanish qualities, as the author directly says.⁴⁷ Her attitudes, her methods, and her justification for her actions are different only in the focal points of

45. Gamero y de Laiglesia, ii, 41.

46. Obras, iv, 655.

47. Obras, iv, 653.

loyalty. However, as has been mentioned above, Ester receives somewhat more sympathy from the reader than does Doña Perfecta. For this reason, the criticism of Catholic intolerance is slightly more effective than that of Jewish intolerance.

Finally, through his presentation of Ester, Galdós is able to exonerate himself from a possible charge of blindly attacking Catholicism, instead of opposing intolerance or inflexibility. If all the intolerant actions came from Catholics, he could easily be accused of a fanatical or narrow-minded presentation. However, due to the presence of Ester, he is able to avoid this criticism at least partially.

THE MYSTIC

A second figure of importance in the presentation of Galdós's thesis is the mystic. It should be noted that, although critics in general feel that he is condemning false mysticism, Galdós himself makes no attempt to distinguish between the real and the invalid form. Instead, he simply presents a character whose personality has been affected by religious exaltation and emotion. In this group, there are the figures of Serafina de Lantigua, María Egipcíaca, her twin brother Luis Gonzaga, and, to a lesser extent, Teresita la Monja. It should also be noted that none of the women in this group are mothers, although all three are married, or were in the past.

Serafina de Lantigua, the aunt of Gloria, the heroine in the novel by that name, serves a dual purpose in the story. First, through her presentation, Galdós is able to criticize mysticism and religious emotion. Second, through her attempts to separate Gloria from her child and to persuade her to enter the convent, she precipitates the latter's death as a result of emotional strain.

Serafina's character is a mixture of tenderness and cruelty, both of which seem to be related to her mysticism. Rafael Cansinos Assens notes that it is not the Church, as

represented by the bishop Don Angel, Gloria's uncle, but mysticism, as represented by Serafina, that opposes the possibility of a marriage between Gloria and Daniel.⁴⁸ Walter T. Pattison states that, through her, Galdós criticizes physical mortification, puritanism, and monasticism. He maintains that she fulfills the letter of dogma, but misses the spirit of religion.⁴⁹ Ricardo Gullón observes that she is tender while tormenting,⁵⁰ and José Balseiro notes the cruelty in her pious actions.⁵¹ She had suffered a terrible marriage, but had constantly returned good for evil, and kindness for the mistreatment which she received from her husband. During his final illness, she converted him, and he died reconciled with God as a result of the constant kindness and virtue which, the author tells us, had previously done nothing but infuriate him. After his death, she prepared to enter the convent, but she postponed these plans and went to Ficóbriga to aid and assist in the crisis which had overtaken the family.⁵² She now treats Gloria with the same kindness and solicitude with which, it may be assumed, she previously treated her husband. Her concern for Gloria's welfare extends to the most minute details. For example, on

48. Cansinos Assens, p. 76.

49. Walter T. Pattison, Benito Pérez Galdós and the Creative Process (Minneapolis, 1954), p. 186.

50. Gullón, p. 64.

51. Balseiro, p. 186.

52. Obras, iv, 584.

Holy Thursday, she arranges an altar at the breakfast table, but instead of using the conventional flowers, which she fears might bother Gloria with their scent, she uses pine branches, which have no smell.⁵³ Her constant concern is for Gloria's welfare. However, she sees only one solution to the problem with which the family is confronted, and she employs one method after another to persuade Gloria to enter the convent. In a conversation with Don Buenaventura, her brother and Gloria's uncle, she shows herself to be unable to consider the possibility of marriage.⁵⁴ The core of her religious doctrine is martyrdom and suffering. The pious torments which she inflicts upon Gloria are shown in their conversations. For example, after worshipers have left the church services because Gloria entered, she says to her niece

¡Cómo podía yo pensar que al entrar en ella la hija de mi hermano, la hija de aquel que fué tan justamente querido en todas partes..., de aquel que tanto enalteció con sus virtudes y con su talento el nombre de Lantigua...! ¡Cómo podría yo pensar que al entrar tú, una mujer de mi sangre y de mi nombre, en esta capilla, habían de huir escandalizados los fieles, con espanto de tu compañía!⁵⁵

The author tells us that then she takes Gloria's hands and holds them kindly. Then she adds, "Yo lo sufro con paciencia y, además, hija de mi alma, reconozco que tienen razón."⁵⁶ She states that the only solution for Gloria is to enter the

53. Obras, iv, 639.

54. Obras, iv, 586-687.

55. Obras, iv, 598.

56. Obras, iv, 598.

convent and die to the world. Gloria says that she is already suffering an inner martyrdom, but her aunt replies "Padeces, sí, padeces, pero no lo bastante. Hay en tu mismo martirio y en esa expiación de que hablas una independencia, una rebeldía, que ya es un nuevo pecado."⁵⁷ Gloria, however, will not enter the convent because of her child. She says that she will renounce everything except her son.⁵⁸ Serafina feels that Gloria does not have the rights of maternity, since the child is illegitimate.⁵⁹ Galdós, however, has kept Serafina, with the other figures of mysticism, sterile. The direction of his sympathy is clear, for Gloria now says "Usted es una santa, pero... nunca ha sido madre."⁶⁰ Even Serafina, although officially denying Gloria's right to remain with her child, wavers briefly when Gloria declares that a son should not be separated from his mother.⁶¹

Serafina's virtue is constantly before the reader's eye. In the midst of an action of hers, either she or the author is likely to mention which virtue she is now exercising. For example, when Gloria protests that she does not want to see Serafina on her knees removing the former's shoes like a maid, Serafina mentions humility.⁶² When Don Angel does not allow her to watch over the sleeping Gloria, and she first

57. Obras, iv, 599.

58. Obras, iv, 634.

59. Obras, iv, 634.

60. Obras, iv, 636.

61. Obras, iv, 631.

62. Obras, iv, 631.

insists but then accedes, the author mentions obedience.⁶³ Serafina's constant surface virtue is quite instrumental in directing the reader's sympathies. The fact that she is extremely saintly, in what is implied is a formally Catholic manner, and yet is able to cause so much damage, repels the reader in the same manner, we may assume, that her resignation and virtue antagonized her husband. In fact, her figure does more to emphasize the author's attitudes than does that of Doña Perfecta, since the latter was guilty of lying, hypocrisy, and, ultimately, murder, and it is unlikely that any reader would assume that the Church would sanction her actions. Serafina, however, commits no direct crimes. She herself explains her methods when she asks Gloria "¿Has visto en mí alguna vez crueldad, violencia, o coacción brutal? ¿Empleé otros medios que la exhortación, el ruego y el natural influjo que los mayores ejercen sobre los pequeñitos, sobre los niños?"⁶⁴ However, these methods are, in their effect, as harsh as physical brutality. Galdós himself summarizes the situation when he writes

En ella no se conoció jamás ni sombra ni hipocresía. Todo su espíritu y sus creencias y su voluntad retratábanse claramente en sus acciones; ni existió consciencia más pura, porque en ella eran imposibles las reservas y distinguos insidiosos. Y, sin embargo, el alma tan limpia de perversidad podía ser dañosa... Mas para juzgar a Serafinita y condenarla por esto, sería preciso que Dios recogiese su Decálogo y lo

63. Obras, iv, 668.

64. Obras, iv, 631.

volviese a promulgar con un artículo undécimo que dijese: «No entenderás torcidamente el amor de Mí.»⁶⁵

From the last sentence, it would appear that Galdós feels that orthodox religion is inadequate; he apparently sees no provision in the Judeo-Christian tradition for preventing the situation which has resulted. However, whatever may be the theological intention of his statement concerning the necessity of rewriting the Decalogue, it is clear that he considers Serafina's crime to be a perversion of religious love.

In the third novel of the group, Galdós presents the figure of María Egipcíaca Sudre. Whereas in Gloria the focus of attention was upon the tragedy of conflicting religious opinions between sweethearts, in La familia de León Roch the problem centers on a married couple. María, like Serafina, aids Galdós's criticism of mysticism.

The two strongest elements in María's character, as presented by Galdós, are her mysticism and her personal reliance upon her confessor. Sherman H. Eoff describes her as a "ferment of suppressed sex and a false mystic zeal kept alive by the priest."⁶⁶ Leota W. Elliot and F. M. Kercheville relate her mysticism with the circumstances of her childhood, which included morbid preoccupation with the sufferings of

65. Obras, iv, 640.

66. Eoff, p. 11.

the saints. They write that, now that she is an adult, she cannot reconcile her intense religiosity and her love for her husband.⁶⁷ Sherman H. Eoff notes her personality change from normal love to ascetic withdrawal to selfish egoistic hardening.⁶⁸ The result of her brand of mysticism is the disintegration of her marriage and her own physical collapse and death from emotional strain.

Both María and León, her husband, form the intention of changing the beliefs of the other. Leon says "Sí: la haré a mi imagen y semejanza; no quiero una mujer formada, sino por formar."⁶⁹ After a year of marriage, María tells León of her intention to convert him. However, the difference in their degree of determination and their methods is seen in her next action, which is to throw his book into the fire.⁷⁰ Emilio Gamero y de Laiglesia maintains that both León and María should have been able to foresee trouble, but that both were blinded by physical attraction and sexual desire.⁷¹

In the course of the novel, the reader can see María progressively withdrawing into her semi-hysterical mysticism. Galdós describes María's extreme physical beauty and the passion of the young couple's love for each other during the

67. Leota W. Elliot and F. M. Kercheville, "Galdós and abnormal psychology," Hispania (Stanford, 1940), .xxiii, 28.

68. Eoff, p. 67. 69. Obras, iv, 774.

70. Obras, iv, 778-780.

71. Gamero y de Laiglesia, ii, 55-56.

first months of their marriage.⁷² However, after the emotional extremes have passed, she withdraws into religiosity and asceticism; the author describes the exaggeratedly simple and even harsh appearance with which she disguises her beauty.⁷³ On the one occasion when, because of her mother's persuasion, she dresses with style and beauty, her sensation of guilt, from the realization that she has been thinking of her husband rather than of God, culminates in violent hysteria.⁷⁴ Her religious practices come to occupy a great deal of her time; her attitude towards them is revealed in her explanation to León. When he reproaches her for spending so much time with her devotion that she has been neglecting him and the house, she replies that it is necessary because she must save both of them, instead of just herself.⁷⁵ León's solution is to offer her a compromise; he says he will give up what she calls his atheist books if she will give up her extra devotions, go to confession only once a year, and leave Madrid. But even when he adds the extra promise that he will go to mass with her, she will not accept; she accedes only when he tells her that the alternative is separation.⁷⁶ However, the solution is only temporary, for soon her twin brother, Luis Gonzaga Sudre, returns home from

72. Obras, iv, 776-777.

73. Obras, iv, 828.

74. Obras, iv, 885.

75. Obras, iv, 796-797.

76. Obras, iv, 800-801.

the seminary in his final illness. Convinced of his impending death, he gives his sister some final advice, which includes such counsels as resignation, suffering, inward separation from her husband, and constant prayer for his conversion, which will be followed, according to Luis's plan, by physical separation in which León will enter a monastery and María a convent.⁷⁷ León realizes the strong influence which Luis has over his wife; in his solitary agony, he accuses the absent Luis of coming to rob his last hope from him, and asks "¿Quién te ha llamado a gobernar el hogar ajeno?" and "¿Quién te autoriza a quitarme lo que me pertenece?"⁷⁸

After the moment of Luis's death, María hysterically screams at her husband "¡Malvado! No le toques! No le toques!"⁷⁹ From this point on, there is no understanding between her and her husband. Alienated from her, León's affections turn in other directions. In his prayers, he declares that Monina, the daughter of Pepa Fúcar, his childhood friend, is the only thing in the world that he loves.⁸⁰ His own wife has given him no child to love, for she has remained sterile. Joaquín Casaldüero notes that her sterility shows that she was condemned in the world which Galdós

77. Obras, iv, 815-816.

78. Obras, iv, 818.

79. Obras, iv, 820.

80. Obras, iv, 837.

created.⁸¹ Her twin brother explains that her lack of children is a curse of God upon her marriage, but adds that it is a sign that God wants her to consecrate herself to him.⁸² Here, Luis betrays Galdós's feelings concerning motherhood and mysticism. As has already been noted, none of the mystics in these books had children. Those who consecrate themselves to God in such a manner remain childless. As has been noted, Gloria is favored over her aunt because she has had a child, even though an illegitimate one, whereas Serafina is sterile. A further indication of Galdós's attitude appears in Gloria's explanation that she is relinquishing her love for Daniel and deciding to go into the convent because she prefers to die rather than bring disagreement between a mother and a son.⁸³ Through the unwitting words of Luis Gonzaga, Galdós shows that he cannot reconcile the orthodox concept of dedication to God and what to him is one of the highest possible forms of love. For although misguided love of God is often condemned by him, the love of a parent for a child is presented as hateful or dangerous for those who love or are loved only when a misdirected attitude toward religion is present, as in the cases of Ester and Doña Perfecta, or when this love is warped by ambition, as in the

81. Casaldüero, Vida y Obra, p. 77.

82. Obras, iv, 816.

83. Obras, iv, 666.

case of the love of María Remedios, Don Inocencio's niece, for her son, Jacinto.

María withdraws from León and dedicates herself to extra devotions and religious practices. Her intense mysticism begins at this point. In speaking of her desire to follow in the path of her brother, she says

¡Cómo se encendió entonces mi alma en un fuego celestial puro, muy distinto, por cierto, de estos nuestros amores! ¡Qué placeres sentí, qué músicas del Cielo oí, qué cosas imaginé, que apariciones vi, que ansiedades sufrí, que afanes de ser miserable en la Tierra para ser dichosa en el Cielo!⁸⁴

She speaks of having seen visions of her dead brother, and of her intention to convert her husband, who, she says, will throw himself at her feet, and will live as she does, in perpetual scruples and torments of conscience.⁸⁵ Her attempts to impose her religiosity upon other people are not confined to her husband; she insists that the servants go to confession regularly, and dismisses one who refuses.⁸⁶ The full extent of the spiritual divorce between her and her husband is revealed when, in response to his asking if she still loves him, she replies "Desgraciado ateo, mi Dios me manda contestarte que no."⁸⁷

Throughout the period of her emotional withdrawal from her husband, María comes increasingly under the control

84. Obras, iv, 831.

85. Obras, iv, 831.

86. Obras, iv, 842-843.

87. Obras, iv, 845.

of her confessor. The first indications are seen before the death of her brother. When she explains to León that she feels it is necessary to spend a great deal of time in devotions because she has to be the salvation of both of them, she uses verbal imagery that León realizes is not of her invention, but she refuses to tell him its origin. She declares that she will accept from him none of his ideas, and nothing that might be contaminated with his diabolical philosophy, but again refuses to tell him the source of this idea and adds that she does not feel obliged to tell an atheist the secrets of her religious conscience.⁸⁸ However, the extent of the priest's control over her is not revealed until María's deathbed, when Padre Paoletti is calming her conscience and preparing her for death. Then he speaks of having arranged her life, having been the recipient of the most intimate secrets of her heart, and of having constantly refuted the arguments with which León had confronted her. Here, it is revealed that María is not the stone wall of piety that she has previously appeared; the reader now learns that the priest has constantly had to strengthen her resolve and answer León's accusation that he, as her confessor, has drawn her affections away from him in order to give them to God and has made her into her husband's concubine.⁸⁹ With knowledge that the priest, rather than María, has been the

88. Obras, iv, 797.

89. Obras, iv, 924-925.

cause of the emotional and, later, physical separation between María and León, the dislike and antagonism which the reader has previously felt for María are now transferred almost instantly to the priest. From this point until her death, the reader feels only sympathy and pity for her, as she is here revealed to be the victim of conflicting emotions and loyalties. She dies as did Gloria in the previous book; she is sacrificed by emotional and spiritual conflicts which are too strong for her weak and, as is now seen, quite feminine spirit.

Galdós himself analyzes Serafina's guilt when he writes, as has been mentioned, of the necessity of rewriting the Decalogue in order to condemn her, but in María's case it is more difficult to make a judgment. Francisco Blanco García declares that Galdós, in describing her, should have added pure love for her husband. He accuses Galdós of distorting the picture of the true Christian wife by omitting such an essential precept.⁹⁰ It would appear that his analysis specifies the part of the guilt which can be demonstrated as belonging to María. Her early passionate love for León appears to have been based primarily upon physical attraction. Once the initial emotion had passed, there was little left on which to base their marriage, especially since Galdós had denied them children.

90. Blanco García, ii, 504.

The sympathies of the reader in the beginning of the book are not too strongly marked; he realizes that trouble may arise from León's plan to model María's character, but since the author gives little attention to the actual attempts there is no pronounced reaction in the reader. However, the author soon begins constantly to emphasize María's devotions along with her externally hardening personality, her fanaticism, and her growing intolerance. Simply by fixing the reader's attention on these matters as causes of the matrimonial failure, he is able to arouse a reaction of dislike and disgust. However, as has already been noted, at the moment in which it appears that María's actions have been directed by the priest, and that she is actually the victim of conflicting loyalties and desires, there is a sudden shift in the direction of the reader's antagonism. Now the priest receives the unfavorable reaction, and María is an object of pity.

At a pivotal point in La familia de León Roch, Galdós presents the figure of María's abnormal brother, Luis Gonzaga. Through his intervention, María, who previously agreed to a compromise proposed by León, withdraws into ever-hardening mysticism. Joaquín Casaldüero states that Galdós adds Luis to the story in order to emphasize the ideas which he presents

through María's portrayal so that her significance will not disappear.⁹¹

The relationship between Luis and María has certainly extremely abnormal characteristics. Gustavo Correa mentions it as a case of incest.⁹² There can be no doubt that there is present a degree of affection that is unusual between brother and sister of their age. Galdós tells us that Luis's desire for purity was such that he had taken a vow never to look at the face of any woman other than his mother and sister.⁹³ However, it appears that forbidden emotions may have taken an occult direction, unknown even to their possessor. Gustavo Correa states that Luis appears as a rival to León and seals the separation between the married couple.⁹⁴ His attitudes toward León antedate their personal acquaintance with one another; when the two are introduced upon Luis's return from the seminary, he declares that he already knows him, and scrutinizes him at length.⁹⁵ Later, when María shows surprise over his knowledge of León, Luis replies that he had known all about León and the other members of the

91. Casaldüero, Vida y Obra, p. 76.

92. Gustavo Correa, "«Miau» y la creación literaria en Galdós" Revista Hispánica Moderna (New York, 1959), xxv, 103.

93. Obras, iv, 802.

94. Gustavo Correa, "Configuraciones religiosas en La familia de León Roch, de Pérez Galdós," Revista Hispánica Moderna (New York, 1960), xxvi, 87-88. 95. Obras, iv, 802.

family.⁹⁶ His dying advice to his sister is that she must complete a spiritual divorce from her husband; he tells her she is to love him not as a wife, but as a Christian. She is to offer herself up as a martyr of his irreligious philosophy for the goal of his conversion. If it is attained, then they will separate; she is to enter a convent and he a monastery.⁹⁷ The state of their relationship may be seen in the readiness with which María accepts his statements; she declares that she believes that God Himself is speaking through him.⁹⁸

Luis Gonzaga's personal spirituality is like that which Galdós previously condemned in the person of Serafina. Emilio Gamero y de Laiglesia considers the two to be parallel characters.⁹⁹ Luis has subjected himself to intense physical mortifications and deliberately provoked his illness to greater seriousness.¹⁰⁰ In returning from the seminary, he feels a sense of divine mission such as Serafina felt in going to Ficóbriga; he states that, when the priests told him he must leave the seminary instead of dying there, at first he was sad, but then he decided that God must have a purpose in sending him to Madrid. He says he realized that he was sent to give some final counsels to his sister, whom he loved more than anything else on earth.¹⁰¹ Like Serafina,

96. Obras, iv, 814. 97. Obras, iv, 816.

98. Obras, iv, 816.

99. Gamero y de Laiglesia, ii, 60.

100. Obras, iv, 808-809. 101. Obras, iv, 813.

he provokes disaster by his actions. The result is the final collapse of María's marriage and, ultimately, her death as a result of emotional conflicts.

The very description of Luis adds another element to Galdós's argument. Luis is more child than adult, and more woman than man. Galdós tells us that he has a waist like that of a twelve-year old.¹⁰² He actually is of a weaker and less vigorous appearance than his sister.¹⁰³ A constant theme in Galdós's descriptions of him is his effeminacy; the reader is told that Luis has had this appearance since infancy, and that he and María resemble each other as much as a man and a woman can.¹⁰⁴ Perhaps the author's most direct comment in this respect is the statement "Barbilampiño y endeble, se le creería nacido para el sacerdocio y para la contemplación de las cosas espirituales."¹⁰⁵ The obvious conclusion is that priests in particular and devout men in general are effeminate. This attitude is also illustrated by a comment of one of León's friends, who states that belief or nonbelief depends upon the sex of a person.¹⁰⁶

Luis possesses the same horror of the world which Serafina has. He explains that his sister is already somewhat tainted; the only thought that bothers him on his

102. Obras, iv, 809. 103. Obras, iv, 802.

104. Obras, iv, 802. 105. Obras, iv, 802.

106. Obras, iv, 795.

deathbed is that she might become more influenced by the world than she already is. He adds that, in his case, his priestly vocation preserved him from the beginning.¹⁰⁷ His goal for María is the same as Serafina's for Gloria; he wishes her to enter the convent and dedicate the rest of her life on earth to gaining heaven.¹⁰⁸

Like Serafina and Doña Perfecta, Luis Gonzaga is perfectly sincere. He feels that it is his divine obligation to tell his sister to separate herself more and more from her husband. Again, as in the case of Doña Perfecta and Serafina, perhaps the most appalling element in Galdós's portrayal of the situation is the amount of damage that Luis is able to cause in the midst of his sincerity. There is no sign that he might realize that, in encouraging his sister to be martyred by her husband and his philosophy, he is also offering her as a victim to her own emotions and conflicting loyalties. Contrary to the logical conclusions of his expectations, it is not her husband but her inner mental strain that finally kills María.

Galdós's analysis of the guilt of Luis can be seen in León's words and in the author's direct statement. He speaks of Luis's sincerity and says that, if the latter deceived anybody, it was himself. He states that Luis Gonzaga Tellería came closer than any other seminarian to the

107. Obras, iv, 813.

108. Obras, iv, 816.

imitation of Saint Aloysius Gonzaga, his namesake and the model of seminarians, but asks what such an exact copy of the external elements is worth if the essential things are left out.¹⁰⁹ León speaks of Luis's "horrible orgullo disfrazado de virtud," and asks "¿De qué te vale el desollarte vivo, si no tienes verdadero espíritu de caridad?"¹¹⁰

Apparently Galdós feels that the defect lies in the person's charity. As has already been seen, Serafina was condemned for an incorrect understanding of the love of God; here it would appear that Luis is condemned for a lack of Christian love. That he loved his sister cannot be doubted, but the form of Christian love which he advised her to have for her husband seems to be more an arrangement of rigid formalism than of inner feeling and charity.

The last mystical figure is that of Teresita la Monja, the wife of Don Juan Amarillo, the mayor of Ficóbriga. Her mysticism is not studied in detail; it is merely implied. She occupies only a minor part in the development of the story; she could be removed without the plot structure being damaged. However, her characterization is interesting because it provides another illustration of Galdós's attitude towards mysticism. The implication that she has mystical tendencies is drawn mostly from the author's statement that

109. Obras, iv, 810.

110. Obras, iv, 818.

she, as a girl, had been a novice in a religious order, but, upon the government decree which removed her from the convent, her religiosity cooled as she fell in love with Don Juan Amarillo.¹¹¹ As is the case with Serafina and María Egipcíaca, the quality of love is noticeably defective in her. She often criticizes the Lantigua family; when she and her friends are preparing for one of the ceremonies of Holy Week, she repeatedly speaks of a lack of devotion that would have caused the family to neglect the care of a religious image.¹¹² Her attitude towards Gloria is one of extreme malice. When the flowers which the latter sent for use in the ceremonies fall from the back of the wooden donkey, she considers the occurrence a sign that the flowers are contaminated, probably because of Gloria's sin.¹¹³ She also carries through Ficóbriga a rumor that Gloria has held midnight trysts with Daniel after his return to the town.¹¹⁴ Such actions indicate a definite lack of human love and sympathy. Like both Serafina and María Egipcíaca, she has never had any children. In fact, Galdós describes her as a "personificación de la esterilidad." Again, the author's attitude towards motherhood appears.

111. Obras, iv, 591-592.

112. Obras, iv, 592.

113. Obras, iv, 594-595.

114. Obras, iv, 620.

THE MARTYRED GIRL

Another figure of importance in the presentation of Galdós's thesis is that of the martyred girl. Rosario, Gloria, and María Egipcíaca fit into this category. In the case of each of the three personages, mental strain caused by conflicting emotions and loyalties results in a physical collapse. María Egipcíaca has already been presented as a mystical figure; consideration of Rosario and Gloria will suffice to illustrate this character type, and the role which it plays in the presentation of the thesis.

In Rosario, the conflict between her loyalty to her mother and her love for Pepe results in a physical collapse which is combined with insanity. Emilio Gamero y de Laiglesia writes that she is the victim of her mother's intense will. He states that she completely lacks will and energy of her own; the combination of her education and her mental illness makes her into a weak being which must be destroyed in the battle.¹¹⁵ Sherman H. Eoff notes that she sides with Pepe, but that she is dominated by her mother.¹¹⁶ He observes that the reader sees her personality giving way under the

115. Gamero y de Laiglesia, ii, 26-27.

116. Eoff, p. 7.

force of her mother's will as she progressively goes insane.¹¹⁷

In telling Rosario's story, the author adds nothing to his initial description of her; instead, through conflict and emotional strain, he develops the characteristics already present. In her first appearance, Rosario is described as delicate and weak. The author describes her not as beautiful, but as sweet, modest, and somewhat shy. However, he also tells us that her personality is not complete, and that something is lacking, or has not yet been provided.¹¹⁸ Early events show both her automatic tendency to accept her mother's judgment and her tendency to accept Pepe without any attempt to change him. She tells Pepe that Don Inocencio is an excellent person, and praises both him and his nephew, Jacinto.¹¹⁹ When Pepe and the priest have their first clash, the author tells us that her reaction is to look at her cousin with amazement.¹²⁰ However, there is no indication that she intends to reject him because of this clash. Instead of turning against him, she persists in thinking of herself as unworthy of him, since he is a well-educated man from the city and she is a simple country girl.¹²¹ It would seem logical that Pepe's observations on the costuming of the images in the church would alienate her, but, after the initial reaction

117. Eoff, p. 26.

118. Obras, iv, 411.

119. Obras, iv, 419-420.

120. Obras, iv, 417.

121. Obras, iv, 420.

of tears, she says that she had already realized that she had dressed the child Jesus incorrectly. At this time, her main concern is with her mother's anger; she warns Pepe to be careful and leaves in obvious agitation.¹²² The problem of dual loyalty now begins to provoke Rosario's illness; her mother tells us that she must now be confined to her room and secluded from Pepe.¹²³ That her seclusion is more than a mere stratagem of her mother's is shown by her trembling and her fever when she secretly meets Pepe at night.¹²⁴ She demands to know whether or not Pepe believes in God, and, reassured, declares her love for him.¹²⁵ Then, in the passion of her love, she swears to marry him.¹²⁶ However, when not strengthened by Pepe's presence, she is unable to continue resolutely. Her own inner agony is shown in the chapter entitled "Confesión." Galdós shows the torments of her conscience as she asks God why she can now deceive and hate her mother.¹²⁷ Her impending insanity is shown as her imagination and her emotional condition combine to make the people whom she sees through a glass door appear as grotesque figures and animals.¹²⁸ The mental strain she is under breaks forth as hysteria when she semi-deliriously tells her mother that

122. Obras, iv, 431.

123. Obras, iv, 435.

124. Obras, iv, 448.

125. Obras, iv, 449.

126. Obras, iv, 450-451.

127. Obras, iv, 472.

128. Obras, iv, 472-473.

she is leaving with Pepe, and begs her to prevent her from going.¹²⁹ Finally, from a letter written by Don Cayetano, Perfecta's brother-in-law, to a friend of his, we learn that Rosario has gone insane.¹³⁰

Rosario's main role in the presentation of Galdós's ideas lies in the direction which she gives the reader's sympathies. By presenting her inner conflict, Galdós persuades the reader to instinctively oppose the source of her problems. Her conflict comes from her mother's opposition to her love for Pepe. It might also be said that her conflict is caused by Pepe, and if Pepe were unattractively presented, the emotions which Rosario's predicament arouses would be directed against him; but Pepe is idealized and, as has already been seen, Doña Perfecta is presented in a distinctly unattractive manner. Since the reader is already antagonistic towards her, the emotions aroused by Rosario's predicament flow in the channel already prepared and turn strongly against the mother. It might be noted that Rosario's conflict is not presented strongly until the general direction of the reader's sympathies has been decided. If her emotional turmoil were presented quite early in the book, there would be danger that the reader might turn against Pepe. However, since the reader is already favoring Pepe by the

129. Obras, iv, 490.

130. Obras, iv, 493-494.

time that the state of her soul is revealed, such a possibility is effectively avoided.

The second figure of the martyred girl is that of Gloria, the young Catholic girl in love with Daniel Morton, a Jew. The emotional strain resulting from the conflict of her love for Daniel and her loyalty to her family, coupled with her intensely Catholic orientation, causes her physical death.

Galdós's early portrayal of Gloria shows both her strong religiosity and her tendencies to personal independence. For example, she feels that the Spanish rulers should not have expelled the Jews and the moriscos from their kingdom.¹³¹ However, when her father tells her that her tendencies are leading her to heresy, and that the matters she is considering are too much for a woman to understand, she, in her prayers, thanks God for having revealed her stupidity to her.¹³² Her personal charity is obvious; she intervenes with her father on behalf of the gravedigger Caifás, who has been fired from his job by the priest.¹³³ Not only does she help him, but she also shows real sympathy and understanding for him; she does not condemn him for his drunkenness, but instead says that his wife could drive anybody to bad conduct.¹³⁴ In contrast, her father and the

131. Obras, iv, 505.

132. Obras, iv, 508.

133. Obras, iv, 545-546.

134. Obras, iv, 522.

bishop help him as a somewhat cold act of charity; they mention his character, but recognize their Christian duty.¹³⁵

In the first chapters of the book, Gloria shows her tendencies to personal independence, but they do not remain dominant. Sherman Eoff notes that, at first, Gloria appeared to have a complex character, but then she was reduced to obedience to her family and her religion.¹³⁶ However, Daniel's presence renews her individualizing characteristics. Believing him to be a Protestant, she tells herself that they must be of the same religion because they love each other, and because of his personal character; she says she only sees two religions: that of the good and that of the evil people.¹³⁷ Daniel's presence begins her religious conflict, which Galdós presents to us in her nighttime soliloquies. She declares her love for Daniel, expresses her regret over the wall that divides them, and struggles with the conflict between her loyalty to her family and her love for him.¹³⁸ When Daniel has gone, she is left with the conviction, which her uncle the bishop condemns, that a person can achieve salvation in any religion.¹³⁹ However, she appears to almost wish to be convinced of the error of these opinions; she says she is certain that her uncle and her father will persuade

135. Obras, iv, 545-546. 136. Eoff, p. 45.

137. Obras, iv, 551. 138. Obras, iv, 550-552.

139. Obras, iv, 560.

her that she is mistaken.¹⁴⁰ Gloria goes on to worse doubts, but eventually the efforts of the two men succeed, at least outwardly. Rather than resolving her doubts, Gloria simply smothers them, but, the author tells us, within herself she maintains the conviction that a person could be saved in any religion.¹⁴¹

In the second part of the book, Gloria's role is principally that of a martyr-figure. She does not appear until after the birth of her child, and by that time emotional strain has changed her so much that her personality is almost unrecognizable. She is only a silhouette of her former vitality and liveliness. Sherman Eoff maintains that there are still traces of her rebellion, since she resists the idea of giving up her son and entering the convent.¹⁴² However, it should be noted that on these points she is opposing her aunt more than anyone else. Stephen Scatori observes the element of mysticism entering her personality.¹⁴³ Sherman Eoff notes that she absorbs the doctrine of martyrdom from her aunt.¹⁴⁴ He observes that, in the second part of the book, she shows passive resignation coupled with mystical zeal over her martyrdom and the possibility of Daniel's conversion.¹⁴⁵ In the end of the book, she, like María

140. Obras, iv, 561.

141. Obras, iv, 562.

142. Eoff, p. 45.

143. Scatori, p. 67.

144. Eoff, p. 9.

145. Eoff, p. 45.

Egipcíaca, dies a martyr to her own conflicting emotions and loyalties.

Through Gloria, Galdós is able to present his own viewpoints concerning religion. In her soliloquies and her conversations with Daniel, she expresses extremely liberal ideas concerning religion. At one point, she places the responsibility for creedal divisions upon men, rather than God, who, in the person of Christ, wished to unite. Galdós's attitude towards human love as its own justification for existence is shown in her statement "Los que se aman son de una misma religión."¹⁴⁶ For Galdós, there can be no justifiable barriers to the fulfillment of such a love as that between Gloria and Daniel. Gloria says: "Mirándolo bien, veo dos religiones: la de los buenos y la de los malos." She reasons that Daniel, because of his character, must belong to the same religion as that to which she belongs.¹⁴⁷ Here, Galdós shows that he believes that man is to be judged by his actions, rather than by his beliefs. The solution to the problem of religious differences rests with men; Gloria says that what men have done they can undo.¹⁴⁸ She mourns religious formalism when she says: "¡Oh Dios mío, dichosas las tierras donde la religión está en las conciencias y no en los labios, donde la religión no es una impía ley de

146. Obras, iv, 551.

147. Obras, iv, 551.

148. Obras, iv, 554.

razas!"¹⁴⁹ The fact that Gloria secretly persists in believing that a person can attain heaven through any religion, contrary to the belief commonly held in Spain at that time, indicates the direction of Galdós's sympathy. When Daniel tells her that he actually is Jewish, and not a Protestant, as she had believed, she immediately faints, and is unable to consider the problem rationally as it now appears.¹⁵⁰ However, the extent of her liberal expressions has been such that the reader cannot feel that her reaction is due to anything but her intensely orthodox religious training, which is bound to assert itself in a moment of crisis, coupled with the emotional strain resulting from the sin which they had just committed.

Through Gloria, Galdós presents again his attitude towards human love. Because of her love for Daniel, Gloria wavered in her faith and declared, as has already been seen, that lovers are united by their love into one religion. As Galdós expresses himself in this book, the love of God will run against human love between two people only when it is misunderstood or misdirected, as in the case of Serafina de de Lantigua. Gloria absorbs her aunt's idea of martyrdom and self-annihilation, but again and again refuses to enter the convent. The reason is finally made plain; if she enters,

149. Obras, iv, 556. 150. Obras, iv, 555-556.

she will never again see her son.¹⁵¹ She declares that she renounces everything except him.¹⁵² However, she finally agrees to the idea of becoming a nun when her aunt suggests that, by doing so, she will be able to sacrifice herself as a prayer for Daniel's conversion.¹⁵³ Here, it is seen that human love is able to accomplish what her aunt's concept of divine love was not able to do. For the sake of her beloved, Gloria agrees to sacrifice herself, whereas before she had been unwilling to do so to gain her own salvation. The possibility of Daniel's immediate conversion alters her intention, but she again declares that she will become a nun when she sees how upset Ester is over the possibility of her son accepting baptism.¹⁵⁴ When asked for an explanation, she declares that she will die before causing a mother and her son to disagree.¹⁵⁵ Again, her action shows the importance of maternal love to Galdós. The physical strain which provokes her death is her midnight flight through the countryside to the village where her son is being cared for.¹⁵⁶ Her dying request to Daniel is that he leave their son in Spain, where her family will raise him.¹⁵⁷ Again, human love is the dominant theme. Through her love for her son, Gloria is

151. Obras, iv, 635.

152. Obras, iv, 634.

153. Obras, iv, 641-642.

154. Obras, iv, 663-664.

155. Obras, iv, 666.

156. Obras, iv, 669-670.

157. Obras, iv, 675.

preferred to her sterile aunt and Teresita la Monja, neither of whom receive a remotely sympathetic portrayal from Galdós. Motherhood, when not altered by distorted emotions or ambitions, receives his supreme sympathy.

Gloria also is instrumental in directing the reader's emotions. Through the portrayal of the emotional conflict in her soul, Galdós draws the reader's sympathy to her. As in the case of Rosario, the reader withdraws from the source of her conflict. It might seem logical that Daniel would receive the reader's antagonism, but Galdós is able to enlist the reader on his side, and instead the emotion turns against Gloria's family, which is the other source of her problems. In particular, Serafinita appears repugnant. Her constant attempts to impose her standard of sacrifice, suffering, and martyrdom upon her niece intensify the problems, and antagonize the reader. John T. Reid notes that "The implication of the novel is that the frustration of Gloria's love for Daniel and her subsequent death are to be laid at the door of the inhuman intolerance displayed by the Catholic protectors of Gloria."¹⁵⁸ In this manner, Galdós is able to place the reader in opposition to the main orthodox Catholic characters in the book.

¹⁵⁸ Reid, p. 39.

THE SOLITARY HERO

A figure of extreme importance in the three novelas de tesis is that of the solitary man, rejected by society because of his beliefs, or his supposed beliefs, who must face the hostility of his social environment alone. This role is filled by the personages of Pepe Rey, Daniel Morton, and León Roch. In each of the novels, Galdós places one of these men in opposition to the religious intolerance and antagonism of an orthodox society.

In Doña Perfecta, Pepe Rey, a young city engineer who has come to the provinces to marry his cousin, Rosario, assumes this role. Joaquín Casaldüero writes that he represents tolerant rationalism opposed to dogmatism and intolerance,¹⁵⁹ and Salvador de Madariaga classifies him as a "sabio noble."¹⁶⁰

However, a variety of ideas has been presented as constituting Pepe's religious beliefs. George Portnoff writes that Galdós introduces his new religious idealism in which faith and reason are inseparable through Pepe.¹⁶¹

159. Joaquín Casaldüero, "«Ana Karénina» y «Realidad»," Bulletin Hispanique (Bordeaux, 1937), xxxix, 395.

160. Salvador de Madariaga, Semblanzas literarias contemporáneas (Barcelona, 1924), p. 75.

161. Portnoff, pp. 34-35.

John T. Reid writes that Pepe embodies the spirit of anti-traditional science which opposes itself to the old bigotries of provincial Spain, and states that he and Doña Perfecta are in conflict on every point, since she and those around her feel that science will destroy faith and religion whereas he feels that science is removing old superstitions.¹⁶² Stephen Scatori maintains that Pepe places himself against superstitious illusions with his scientific attitude, and states that his beliefs are those of a pure and simple religion which harmonizes with science.¹⁶³ However, Alexander Haggerty Krappe expresses a somewhat different attitude. He writes that Pepe's opinions, which he classifies as a mild deism, are not extremely radical, and says that if Galdós had wished to present a strong attack on Christian doctrine, he could easily have caused Pepe to defend some extreme heresy.¹⁶⁴ Mr. Krappe further notes that the myths which Pepe attacks in his first clash with Don Inocencio are largely pagan, and that when he attacks Dante's cosmology he is not attacking doctrine.¹⁶⁵ Not only does it appear that Mr. Krappe's analysis is closer to the actual situation, but it also seems that Pepe's beliefs are definitely orthodox. Before a

162. Reid, p. 39.

163. Scatori, pp. 53-54.

164. Alexander Haggerty Krappe, "The Sources of B. Pérez Galdós's, Doña Perfecta, Cap. VI," Philological Quarterly (Iowa City, 1928), vii, 306.

165. Krappe, p. 303.

crucifix, he declares his belief in both God and the devil, and participates in such a traditional action as kissing the image.¹⁶⁶ In his first clash with Don Inocencio, he tells his cousin that the only reason he made the statements which were received as evidence of atheism was to anger the priest.¹⁶⁷ In the entire book, there is no indication that his beliefs are anything but orthodox; unacceptable beliefs are repeatedly attributed to him by the people in Orbajosa, particularly Doña Perfecta and Don Inocencio, but, after he proposes them himself, he attempts to assure the priest that he has only been joking, and that their beliefs are not discordant.¹⁶⁸ It appears that the religious question gives the priest an opportunity, which he obviously wants, to prevent the marriage between Pepe and Rosario, but there is no indication that Galdós intends to oppose two religious attitudes to each other, unless it be the blind, unquestioning acceptance of Doña Perfecta and the more independent attitude of her nephew, who is not unwilling to argue with the priest and to defy the traditional authorities in order to marry his cousin. It would appear that, instead of representing religious liberalism, Pepe stands for modern knowledge and customs in the non-religious sphere. When the priest asks his opinion of Orbajosa, the younger man advocates the investment of money

166. Obras, iv, 449.

167. Obras, iv, 417.

168. Obras, iv, 417.

in projects which would provide employment for the beggars of the town. Don Inocencio, however, sees no need for such an action, since charity will serve the purpose, and Orbajosa is not a poor town, since there are many rich families.¹⁶⁹ In this incident, Pepe represents the newer attitude, and the priest advocates the unchanging economic traditions. Apparently Don Inocencio and Doña Perfecta expect his modern ideas to encompass religion as well as other areas, for he is unable to remove their early impression of his beliefs; in fact, it appears that they almost seem to be waiting for him to express atheistic ideas.

Galdós obtains sympathy for Pepe principally by directing sympathy away from his opponents. The reader is not attracted to him because of his intellectual brilliance, as is the case with Daniel Morton, or because of high moral standards, such as those of León Roch, as much as because he is the object of the antagonism of those people against whom the reader is antagonistic. Sympathy for him is obtained in a more negative than positive fashion. He does not appear to have any outstanding qualities that might distinguish him from the other characters. W. D. Howells notes that he is tactless and imprudent, and that he even thinks of intrigue, although he finally rejects the idea.¹⁷⁰ César Barja observes

169. Obras, iv, 413.

170. Howells, p. x.

that he is as pedantic as Don Inocencio.¹⁷¹ José Balseiro writes that there is a contradiction between the way that Galdós describes Pepe and the way Pepe acts; the author tells us that he is alert, well-educated, intelligent, but he nevertheless fails to realize quite early that Don Inocencio is his enemy, even though the priest's actions should have alerted him.¹⁷² It is the actions and qualities of those people who oppose Pepe, rather than his own, that enlist the reader's sympathies for him. In the early disagreements between him and Don Inocencio, the priest is so obviously baiting him that the reader automatically favors the younger man. When accused of a plot against her nephew, Doña Perfecta at first maintains her innocence and then freely admits everything, advancing her intentions as justification for her actions.¹⁷³ It is at this point that the reader is finally alienated from her and placed in total sympathy with Pepe. Since Rosario's inner conflict is not fully revealed until after the reader's attitude has been definitely decided, there is no danger that sympathy for her will react against Pepe, who is one of the causes of her emotional confusion.

However, since there is no clear ideological battle which Pepe is fighting, there is no real need for him to have unusual personal stature. The principal purpose of the book

171. Barja, p. 588.

172. Balseiro, p. 182.

173. Obras, iv, 457.

is to criticize, rather than to advocate. Galdós attacks intolerance and clerical interference in non-religious matters. However, in this book, little attention is given to the attitudes and ideology which are so clearly presented in the other two novels of the series.

In Gloria, Galdós presents Daniel Morton, a Jewish man of exceptional brilliance and deep religiosity. Through him, the author is able to criticize Spanish Catholicism. A second function of Daniel's is to present the alternative of Galdós's attitude towards religion.

In combatting Spanish intolerance, coupled with the idea that salvation could be achieved only through the Catholic Church, the author's main weapon in this book is Daniel's deep faith and personal religiosity. When Daniel regains consciousness after the shipwreck, among his first words is a biblical quotation.¹⁷⁴ The bishop himself, in discussing the matter with his brother, describes him as extremely religious and compares him with the young Spanish Catholics who are lukewarm in their faith and negligent in its practice.¹⁷⁵ The presence of Rafael del Horro greatly helps Galdós in this matter. Although he has previously appeared as an enthusiastic defender of his religion, in a conversation with Don Silvestre he reveals that he has many doubts, and views religion as a consolation for women and a restraint

174. Obras, iv, 531.

175. Obras, iv, 539.

on the passions of the masses of society.¹⁷⁶ In contrast, Daniel, as the bishop says, speaks of his beliefs only in general terms and does not directly display his viewpoints.¹⁷⁷ However, although he prefers to remain silent about the actual content of his beliefs, they are completely sincere, and he accepts, as he tells Gloria, everything that his religion teaches.¹⁷⁸ By presenting these two figures, Galdós is able to make Spanish Catholicism appear weak and insincere in comparison to the Judaism which Daniel represents. Another contrast appears in the difference between Daniel and Don Buenaventura, Gloria's uncle. When Don Buenaventura says that, if he were in Daniel's position, he would become a Jew in order to marry the girl whom he had loved and dishonored, Daniel's response is to tell him that he is not a Catholic if he has this attitude, and to accuse him of accepting whatever is convenient for him to believe and rejecting the rest.¹⁷⁹ When Don Buenaventura attempts to dismiss worship and liturgy as unimportant, Daniel's response is to declare that he sees tremendous value in them.¹⁸⁰ The fact that he then explains that worship is important to him because it represents Jewish society as well as religion does little to change the reader's view of the strength of his faith.

176. Obras, iv, 537-538. 177. Obras, iv, 539.

178. Obras, iv, 555-556. 179. Obras, iv, 612.

180. Obras, iv, 614-615.

Daniel is also important because of the verbal expression which he gives to Galdós's criticisms of Spanish Catholicism. They are presented principally in an extended conversation with Don Juan de Lantigua. His principal criticism is lukewarm devotion, especially on the part of the men, in a country which considers itself to be the most religious in the world.¹⁸¹ His statements appear to conform to the attitude, so often found in these novels, that piety is a feminine, rather than a masculine, quality. Later, in his conversation with Don Buenaventura, Daniel gives the persecution of the Jews by the Christians as a major reason for not changing his religion. He also states that all that his people have suffered has only bound them more firmly to their religion, and declares that he is unable to join the enemy that has caused them to suffer so much.¹⁸² Here, Daniel directly presents Galdós's criticism of religious intolerance.

Where religion is concerned, Daniel plays somewhat differing roles in the two parts of the book. Sherman Eoff notes that, in Part One, he was the symbol of a forbidden faith and the cause of Gloria's conflict.¹⁸³ It is not until the end of this section that it is learned that he is Jewish, but there is no indication that he is anything but orthodox and devout in whatever his religion may be. Throughout most

181. Obras, iv, 543-544. 182. Obras, iv, 614.

183. Eoff, p. 9.

of Part Two, the situation remains the same. As a devout Jew, he is able to fulfill a role that would be difficult for a freethinker to cope with. Rafael Cansinos Assens considers it of importance that the Spanish Catholics now have to defend themselves against a man with a strong faith who sincerely practices his own religion, rather than against an unbelieving liberal.¹⁸⁴ In this capacity, Daniel is able to criticize not doctrines, but practice, and not ideas, but attitudes. He declares that he hates Christianity not because it is false or evil, but because it is cruel and useless.¹⁸⁵ Towards the end of the second part of the book, there are indications that his beliefs have been undergoing slight modifications. He tells his mother that he considers the Hebrew rite to be narrow and insufficient; he intends to bring Gloria to the supreme God whom he worships.¹⁸⁶ A fuller explanation appears in a soliloquy, in which he declares that he does not believe his religion to be the only possessor of eternal truths; he states that Christianity also contains them, although in a disfigured form. He also says that, in his attitude towards religion, he is able to rise above the level of differing doctrines and see God over the different forms.¹⁸⁷ At the end of the book, Galdós tells the reader that Daniel died after two years of insanity

184. Cansinos Assens, p. 65.

185. Obras, iv, 614.

186. Obras, iv, 657.

187. Obras, iv, 638.

caused by a search for the religion of the future, which he finally felt he had found.¹⁸⁸ Walter T. Pattison states that this event indicates that Daniel as well as Gloria found inadequacies in his own religion.¹⁸⁹ It appears that the author is again presenting his own religious attitudes, this time in referring to the all-encompassing faith of the future in which all religions are to be united and all doctrinal differences and intolerance are to disappear. However, the fact that Daniel dies insane and Gloria never really rejects her orthodoxy indicates that Galdós feels that the world is not yet prepared for this new belief which is approached only by dreamers and madmen.

It is Daniel's intellect and, initially, his character which enlist the sympathies of the reader for him and the purpose which he fulfills in the book. Emilio Gamero y de Laiglesia maintains that he causes so much suffering that he would not receive this sympathy except for the brilliant qualities which Galdós gives him. His intellect and knowledge become apparent quite early; when the bishop attempts to convert him, he is amazed by the younger man's knowledge of the Bible, the writings of the Fathers of the Church, and contemporary religious issues.¹⁹⁰ Even before the discussions begin, Don Angel praises his intellect and character in

188. Obras, iv, 678. 189. Pattison, p. 44.

190. Obras, iv, 542.

speaking to Don Juan de Lantigua.¹⁹¹ His personal charity stands in contrast to that of the Christians. When both Don Juan and Don Angel de Lantigua discuss Caifás's vices while making arrangements to extend charity to him, Daniel appears to agree with the judgments they express and the decisions they make.¹⁹² However, two days later, Gloria learns that he has given Caifás all the money he needs without discussing his faults, but instead binding him to secrecy. Gloria immediately understands that Daniel is obeying the biblical injunction to give gifts in secret, rather than publically.¹⁹³ In contrast, it might be noted that most of the Christians in the book have a constant tendency to verbally cite whichever virtue they are practicing in their actions.

After the reader's attitude towards Daniel has been formed, the actions of the Christians serve to strengthen it. The sudden changes in their attitudes when they learn that he is Jewish, rather than Protestant, appear as both absurd and frightening. Don Juan Amarillo declares that he must leave Ficóbriga;¹⁹⁴ the bishop, who previously praised his intellect and moral qualities, now orders him from the house with the word "deicida."¹⁹⁵ Even Gloria cannot face

191. Obras, iv, 533.

192. Obras, iv, 545-546.

193. Obras, iv, 448-449.

194. Obras, iv, 581.

195. Obras, iv, 582.

the situation; when he finally brings himself to reveal his religion to her, she faints, and upon regaining consciousness, hurls hysterical accusations at him.¹⁹⁶ After having formed a definite opinion about Daniel, the reader is not likely to change it upon learning the exact nature of his religious beliefs; in fact, the reaction of the Christians is so extreme that, not wishing to identify with them, the reader is forced into further sympathy with Daniel. Also, at this point in the book, the exact nature of the sin which the two sweethearts have committed is not yet fully clear. There have been only a few non-specific references in the midst of the swiftly-developing events that accompany Daniel's declaration of his religion.¹⁹⁷ For this reason Gloria's dishonor cannot, at this point, have much effect on the reader's attitude towards Daniel. Furthermore, when the Christians reject Daniel, only Gloria knows of their sin; the others condemn him without having any reason to change their attitudes other than the fact of his religion. Once again, the simple fact of persecution is instrumental in deciding the direction of the reader's sympathies.

In the second part of the book, Daniel's character can no longer bring him the admiration of the reader, but the attitude of the people of Ficóbriga places him in the position of a martyr, and his conversation with Don

196. Obras, iv, 575-576. 197. Obras, iv, 579.

Buenaventura keeps him from losing too much stature. Emilio Gamero y de Laiglesia states that Galdós does not excuse Daniel's actions in repaying those who saved his life with deceit and dishonor; he maintains that Daniel's conduct is even more inexcusable than it might otherwise have been because he brings the catastrophe on a family that cannot accept a solution incompatible with their faith.¹⁹⁸ For these reasons, Daniel's character cannot earn him further admiration. However, it should be noted that his concealment of his religion appears quite understandable in view of the reaction which the truth provokes. Furthermore, even if Galdós does not excuse his actions, neither does he condemn them. He attacks distorted religiosity both directly and indirectly, but nowhere does he criticize Daniel. Instead, he reveals the inner conflict which draws sympathy towards Daniel. Emilio Gamero y de Laiglesia maintains that his simulated conversion harms him in the eyes of the reader.¹⁹⁹ However, Galdós describes his personal agonies in such detail that the reader cannot help sympathizing with him. In his soliloquy on this matter, it appears that his main concern is with the welfare of Gloria and, to a lesser extent, with that of his son.²⁰⁰ When Daniel returns to Ficóbriga, the

198. Gamero y de Laiglesia, ii, 40-41.

199. Gamero y de Laiglesia, ii, 41.

200. Obras, iv, 637-638.

townspeople wish to avoid all contact with him; even a beggar returns his alms.²⁰¹ Again, the reader must automatically sympathize with the man who finds himself an outcast.

Perhaps the most effective single sentence in the book is Daniel's declaration, immediately after the beggar refuses his company, "'¡Ah!, impío Nazareno..., ¡nunca seré tuyo, nunca!'"²⁰² Here, it is seen that the townspeople's actions have done nothing but strengthen Daniel's attitude towards Christianity. In the conversation with Don Buenaventura, Daniel's statements about religion place him in a favorable light, whereas Don Buenaventura's only react against him. Although the reader cannot approve of the misfortune which he brought upon Gloria, the other events prevent an unfavorable attitude from being formed.

In La familia de León Roch, there is presented the figure of León, the protagonist, who must combat the hostility of an antagonistic social group alone. Through this personage, Galdós is able to present his liberal attitudes, and, through the actions of the people who place themselves in opposition to León, he is able to criticize intolerance, false mysticism, and clerical intervention in family life.

León's character and personal beliefs are presented in the context of a matrimonial failure. He appears to be more tolerant than his wife or her family. He tells one of

201. Obras, iv, 605-607. 202. Obras, iv, 607.

his friends that he is entering marriage with the intention of forming his wife's intellect and character,²⁰³ but, when he discovers that her personality is already determined, the author tells us that he respects her conscience.²⁰⁴ However, after the initial emotion of their marriage has passed, the difficulties become apparent. Galdós states that, after two years of marriage, they have little communication with one another; he gives as cause León's refusal to participate in his wife's devotional practices.²⁰⁵ However, if the initial cause is his refusal, the reason for the continuation of the problem appears to be the intensity with which María dedicates herself to her devotions. León mentions that the large amount of time which she spends in church is lessening the time which is given to the household and to him; her reply would indicate that he definitely has understated the situation.²⁰⁶ When he accuses her of abusing the confessional to the extent of receiving the sacrament every day and holding long, secret conferences with her confessor, instead of answering directly, she replies that she cannot receive spiritual direction from the irreligious gatherings which he holds at the house.²⁰⁷ By now, the extent of the difficulties which their differing religious attitudes has caused

203. Obras, iv, 774.

204. Obras, iv, 779.

205. Obras, iv, 795.

206. Obras, iv, 796.

207. Obras, iv, 797.

has become apparent. However, the nature of León's beliefs has not yet been clearly shown. It is apparent that he is not a practicing Catholic, but, although he refuses to take part in his wife's devotional practices, there has not yet appeared any indication that he merits the name of "atheist" which is so often applied to him. In fact, it actually seems that he does believe in God; he prays for Monina, the daughter of the woman he loves, when she is in danger of death.²⁰⁸ In addition, he explicitly states that he believes in a life after death, eternal justice, and the goals of perfection.²⁰⁹

In the presentation of León, the most important single element for the author's argument is the moral standard which his protagonist embodies. Walter T. Pattison notes that he tries to live by a code of conduct which is not based on religion, but on reason and philosophy.²¹⁰ This high standard of personal conduct gives acceptability to the new idealism of a religion of faith and reason which George Portnoff maintains is presented through León.²¹¹ The latter's high moral standards are given a strong presentation in this book. Confronted with the failure of his own marriage, he confesses his love for Pepa to her, but explains that he is morally bound to María, whom he cannot leave in order to form

208. Obras, iv, 837. 209. Obras, iv, 952.

210. Pattison, p. 45. 211. Portnoff, pp. 34-35.

an illegitimate family.²¹² He states that he may have been more to blame than she was for the tragedy in their marriage; he says that her culpability was in her extreme loyalty to her religion, and asks himself if perhaps he also was fanatical in his beliefs, and also says that she has been perfectly faithful to him whereas he has loved another woman.²¹³ It is in contrast to the conduct of those people who make the strongest accusations of him that he gains real stature. Gustavo Correa notes the atmosphere of moral depravation which surrounds most of the members of the Tellería family.²¹⁴ When Gustavo, León's brother-in-law, accuses him of bringing dishonor upon the family, León counters with serious accusations of his own.²¹⁵ Gustavo's admission and León's innocence of actual immorality make the former's insistence that he is less culpable than the other because he is justified by his faith appear absurd. León's refusal to defend himself gives him further stature because of his innocence. After the death of his own wife, he declares his renunciation of Pepa, the woman whom he loves. This action appears to come from a sense of obligation to obey the laws of society; his main concern is to avoid dishonor, in particular where the children would be concerned. However, he does not appear to

212. Obras, iv, 859-860. 213. Obras, iv, 859.

214. Correa, "Configuraciones," p. 88.

215. Obras, iv, 818-819.

accept completely the laws which demand separation in the circumstances in which he and Pepa find themselves; he even seems somewhat uncertain of his own position. Nevertheless, he feels that he must follow these standards.²¹⁶ This act of obedience to a moral code which is ordained by a society with which he is not in complete sympathy gives him even more stature in comparison with the people who are of the dominant belief and who seek to maintain the standards of conduct where society as a whole is concerned but who do not follow them in their own lives. Sherman H. Eoff maintains that both María and Pepa have the primary role of testing León's character.²¹⁷ Since he emerges victorious from the crisis, the rational and philosophical attitudes which he represents are vindicated.

In addition to the role played by León's character, the emotional attitudes displayed by those who place themselves in opposition to him contribute to the direction of the reader's sympathy. Constant accusations of atheism, recognized as false, assume the appearance of false persecution. León becomes the victim of his wife's family; their constant appeals for money consume, he says, one-fourth of his fortune.²¹⁸ The manner in which they are willing to request, and at times almost demand, his material assistance

216. Obras, iv, 951-952. 217. Eoff, p. 11.

218. Obras, iv, 851.

makes their attitude towards his beliefs especially repugnant. The intolerance which they display condemns itself through the circumstances in which it appears. María's emotional and, later, hysterical attitudes towards religion also condemn themselves by the effects which they produce. They also turn the reader against the priest who initiates and directs them.

THE PRIEST

Galdós also presents a series of clerical figures which aid in the presentation of his thesis. The principal personalities of this group are Don Inocencio, Don Silvestre, Don Angel, and Padre Paoletti.

Don Inocencio, the priest in Doña Perfecta, is a personage of mixed character. His principal importance lies in his role in the plot and the direction which he gives the reader's emotions.

A point of basic importance in the development of the novel is the control which Don Inocencio has over Doña Perfecta. Stephen Scatori notes that his influence appears in everything that happens in the house.²¹⁹ The situation appears to be a result of her automatic dependence upon her spiritual advisor, who now attempts to control non-spiritual matters. However, José Balseiro maintains that he is not really her spiritual advisor, for everything he says has an earthly, temporal origin.²²⁰ In any case, whatever the exact circumstances causing the situation may be, it is clear that, as Sherman Eoff notes, the priest motivates her and directs her actions.²²¹

219. Scatori, p. 51. 220. Balseiro, p. 180.

221. Eoff, p. 7.

In the initial clashes, Don Inocencio is obviously the cause of disagreement, but afterwards he remains largely in the background, and it does not become obvious until almost the end of the book that he has persuaded Doña Perfecta to take action against her nephew. Don Inocencio's hostility is apparent from his first words about Pepe, when, speaking to himself, he calls Pepe a "prodigio."²²² He and Pepe have hardly become acquainted with one another before the sharp conflicts begin. José Balseiro notes the way the priest persists in directing the topic of conversation so that it will suit his interests and then lamenting the turn of the conversation.²²³ Alexander H. Krappe feels that this first battle represents the conflict between Progress, in the form of Pepe, and Reaction, as Don Inocencio. However, as has already been noted, he feels that it is strange that a Christian priest should be shocked by Pepe's statements, which are not extremely radical.²²⁴ The obvious answer is that the priest wants to be shocked; he appears to be doing everything possible to provoke a conflict and, at the same time, to give the impression that Pepe is causing it. Gerald Brennan notes the "ironic humility" with which he protests his ignorance and praises the knowledge with which Pepe is going to destroy Christianity, and notes that this attitude and the

222. Obras, iv, 410. 223. Balseiro, p. 180.

224. Krappe, p. 303.

way he forces it on Pepe are characteristics which harm his image.²²⁵ From the first encounter, Don Inocencio has lost all possibility of gaining the sympathy of the reader. Since the reader is alienated from him, there now is almost automatic sympathy for Pepe, the object of the priest's antagonism. In this way, the author is able to direct the emotions of his audience away from the orthodoxy represented by Don Inocencio.

The situation which the priest causes goes beyond his control, even more than María Egipcíaca's spiritual condition goes beyond the control of the cleric who causes it. When his niece, María Remedios, attempts to persuade him to tell Caballuco, Doña Perfecta's uneducated but muscular devotee, to use physical force against Pepe, he refuses to do so,²²⁶ and he previously protested to Caballuco that he did not want him to kill Pepe.²²⁷ However, he is no longer able to control the events, and Pepe is killed at Doña Perfecta's impulsive order.²²⁸ The fact that he does not wish the young man's death does not alter his responsibility in the eyes of the reader; Emilio Gamero y de Laiglesia notes that his washing of hands at the conclusion of his

225. Gerald Brenan, Literature of the Spanish People (Cambridge, 1951), p. 390.

226. Obras, iv, 485. 227. Obras, iv, 465-466.

228. Obras, iv, 492.

conversation with his niece does not change the attitude towards him.²²⁹

The question of Don Inocencio's sincerity has no obvious answer. In his conversation with his sister, he mentions having exposed Pepe's atheism and his vices, and explains that it was his duty as the spiritual director of the family to take action in the matter.²³⁰ Since he has absolutely no need to act hypocritically before her, it may be assumed that he honestly believes what he says. However, in view of his initial treatment of Pepe, it cannot be doubted that he was determined to discover both atheism and vices. María Remedios' almost hysterical behavior, which results when he refuses to intervene further, shows that he was manipulated by her in his conduct towards Pepe.²³¹ However, this fact cannot excuse him in the eyes of the reader, since he was far too instrumental by his own actions in causing the disaster.

Don Inocencio receives the reader's antagonism at two principal points in the book. When he irritates Pepe and deliberately provokes the clash between them, initial dislike is aroused. Near the end of the book, when it is revealed that he was the cause of the actions against the young man, much of the antagonism which had been directed against Doña

229. Gamero y de Laiglesia, ii, 26.

230. Obras, iv, 480. 231. Obras, iv, 481-482.

Perfecta now turns against him. Since it is now known that he initiated her activity, and later directed it, he receives the blame for it.

In the novel Gloria, Galdós presents the figure of Don Angel, the kindly bishop of Ficóbriga. Although there is little that can be said against his character, he nevertheless plays a role in the directing of the reader's sentiment according to Galdós's thesis.

The excellence of the bishop's character is strongly emphasized by Galdós. He tells us he is kind, benevolent, and unable to think evil of people.²³² He writes that he is very much loved by his people, and mentions that he is perfect in his fulfillment of his religious practices.²³³ Unlike Don Inocencio and Don Silvestre, he refuses to intervene in non-religious matters; he tells Rafael del Horro that he will not use his influence to help him win the elections or marry Gloria.²³⁴

However, accompanying these characteristics is a certain degree of effeminacy. This quality is not as pronounced as it is in the case of Luis Gonzaga, but it is definitely suggested by the author. He tells us that the bishop is physically like a large child.²³⁵ When the sailors venture out in the storm, he sheds tears of piety and

232. Obras, iv, 513. 233. Obras, iv, 514.

234. Obras, iv, 514-515. 235. Obras, iv, 513.

admiration,²³⁶ and also cries upon the death of Don Juan de Lantigua.²³⁷

After describing the bishop's good qualities, Galdós presents, without saying a single word against him, an incident which somewhat negates the previous impression, and even causes him to appear as a hypocrite. During the storm, when there is danger of the death of the ship's crew and passengers, the bishop, in true Christian love for the people who are about to perish, urges the sailors to go save them. But the storm is severe, and the best and most experienced of them, recognizing the danger, refuse to go. He then begs them to go in the name of God, and protests that they are not Christians if they do not save the victims.²³⁸ However, it is quite obvious that, in spite of all the Christian charity and concern which he displays for those on the ship, his actions are limited to attempting to persuade other people to rescue them. There is no indication that he even thinks of undertaking such a job himself. When the parish priest, Don Silvestre, comes forward and declares that he will save them, the bishop praises him, and declares amidst tears that those who lack faith should learn from him.²³⁹ However, he does not appear to be interested in learning anything himself. This incident gives the impression that perhaps the Christian

236. Obras, iv, 528.

237. Obras, iv, 582.

238. Obras, iv, 528.

239. Obras, iv, 528.

love which is so apparent in him is lacking something.

The bishop's reaction when he learns of Daniel's religion gives emphasis to Galdós's criticism of religious intolerance. Previously, Galdós mentioned that he felt strong compassion for those people in doctrinal error.²⁴⁰ When he believed that Daniel was a Protestant, his main emotion, as it appeared in a conversation with Gloria, was one of pity and concern for Daniel's soul.²⁴¹ But when he learns that Daniel is a Jew, his reaction is one of horror; when he orders him from the house, Galdós says that anger appeared on his face for the first time in his life.²⁴² By this point in the book, Daniel has gained both the sympathy and admiration of the reader, so the bishop's reaction turns the reader against him and, indirectly, against the orthodox Catholicism which he represents. The idea that anybody with his virtues could be intolerant to this extreme also helps place the reader against the ideology which he represents. Since Don Angel has not yet done anything which the reader feels is not in accordance with orthodox Catholic attitudes, the obvious conclusion is that this reaction is also the acceptably orthodox one.

However, in spite of his intolerance and the few other defects which he shows, the overall picture of Don Angel is a

240. Obras, iv, 514.

241. Obras, iv, 524.

242. Obras, iv, 534.

favorable one, and it is precisely this element which is most important in his contribution to the presentation of Galdós's thesis. Ricardo Gullón states that his presence shows that Galdós did not want to blame religion for the tragedy of the novel, since his portrayal is favorable.²⁴³ However, it is precisely by presenting such a personage that Galdós is able to exonerate himself partially from the charge of blindly attacking orthodox religion. If every character of conservative viewpoints whom he portrayed had an extremely bad character, or were presented quite negatively, his book would be nothing but an emotional diatribe, and would be easily recognized as such. Since he presents Don Angel and a few other orthodox characters, such as Don Juan de Lantigua, in a somewhat favorable light, he is able to give his argument a more balanced appearance and a degree of subtlety without which it would be automatically rejected by an educated reader with an even perspective on the matters which the book discusses. Also, by presenting these personages, he is able to assure that the book will not be automatically rejected by orthodox or intolerant Catholics. If the book were never to reach those people who could be accused of the attitudes which are attacked, there would be no purpose to writing it.

In the novel Gloria, there is presented the distinctly unpriestly figure of the priest Don Silvestre. Of the various

243. Gullón, p. 64.

clerics presented in this novel and in La Familia de León Roch, he is the only one with strong life and vitality, but he is also the one who least conforms to the standards of conduct for a priest.

Don Silvestre appears as the most virile, masculine personage in the entire book. His physical courage is tremendous; when the bishop is unable to persuade the sailors to venture out in the storm and save the lives of the shipwrecked people, it is Don Silvestre who comes forth and inspires others to come with him.²⁴⁴ The author describes his collection of guns and fishing equipment, and tells of his love for hunting.²⁴⁵ As has already been noted, the devout men in these novels tend to be effeminate, but it would appear that Don Silvestre is an exception. Soon, however, the reader realizes that he is not devout, and that his figure merely serves to confirm the tendency, in Galdós's novels, for masculinity and religiosity to be incompatible. The townspeople appreciate him for his unpriestly qualities; the men like him because he says mass quickly and the women because he preaches with a dramatic and picturesque style.²⁴⁶ At election time, he dedicates himself with energy and determination to the cause of the orthodox party; he even goes to the point of physically bringing in the voters.²⁴⁷ He becomes

244. Obras, iv, 528. 245. Obras, iv, 529.

246. Obras, iv, 528. 247. Obras, iv, 529-530.

so involved in the election that the bishop reprimands him for neglecting his pastoral duties.²⁴⁸ Galdós notes his extreme pride over having saved Daniel from the waves.²⁴⁹ The reader might accept this pride as natural if it did not reach extremes, but Don Silvestre eagerly reads aloud a letter in a newspaper about the rescue, and Galdós tells us that the letter was actually written by himself.²⁵⁰ This later behavior destroys the earlier impression made on the reader; Walter Pattison writes that Galdós gave the reader a sense of Christian edification at the time of the rescue, but the later conduct is disillusioning.²⁵¹ The author shows that Don Silvestre is actually incapable of presenting an elementary defense of the doctrines of his religion; when Rafael del Horro, the young Catholic politician, expresses reservations about certain dogmas, his response is to declare that, if he had his books handy, he would be able to answer him.²⁵² In the midst of this discussion, he declares that he hates arguments.²⁵³ However, it would appear that such a statement is simply his way of avoiding an argument on this particular matter, for he does not in general appear to shrink from conflicts. The author tells us that he is liberal in his gifts to the poor,²⁵⁴ but his conduct with

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248. Obras, iv, 563. 249. Obras, iv, 532.
 250. Obras, iv, 540. 251. Pattison, p. 64.
 252. Obras, iv, 537. 253. Obras, iv, 537.
 254. Obras, iv, 528.

Caifás is anything but charitable. When Caifás and his children are reduced to beggary, we are told that Don Silvestre has ordered him dismissed from his job.²⁵⁵ However, his worst conduct in this matter is to accuse Caifás of thievery because he has been able to pay his debts and take his possessions out of pawn. The fact that so far no one in Ficóbriga has reported anything stolen does not change his attitude.²⁵⁶

Through his portrayal of Don Silvestre, Galdós is able to illustrate, rather than contradict, his attitude that religious devotion is not ordinarily dominant in a masculine personality. As has been noted, Don Silvestre, although a priest, is not a devout man. However, on certain occasions religious piety does appear in his speech. In these cases, the effect on the reader is similar to that of Serafina's and Luis Gonzaga's form of piety, for the statements reveal a distortion of the inner values of religion. One of the more emotionally repelling scenes is the banquet which Don Silvestre gives to celebrate the victory in the elections. He invites the leading citizens to come and celebrate with a simple meal, in the manner of the early Christians,²⁵⁷ but the result is a splendid feast.²⁵⁸ However, the tone of the banquet is the most effective element in the scene. Walter T.

255. Obras, iv, 545.

256. Obras, iv, 564.

257. Obras, iv, 524.

258. Obras, iv, 556.

Pattison notes that the spirit is that of "the chosen few exulting over the destruction of the wicked," and states that the verses which Don Silvestre quotes from the sixty-seventh psalm are indicative of the general attitude of those present.²⁵⁹ The reader can hardly avoid being struck by the attitudes displayed and being emotionally repelled by them. A second instance occurs when Don Silvestre learns that Daniel is a Jew. His immediate reaction is to declare that he does not regret having saved his life, because the Bible says to bless those who curse you and do good to those who hate you.²⁶⁰ Again, the reader is disgusted by his words, for there has not yet been any indication that Daniel hates a single person in Ficóbriga.

In La familia de León Roch, the priest Padre Paoletti finally appears as the cause of the central conflict in the novel. His importance is not realized until the end of the drama, when the reader learns that he has caused the disagreements between María and León through the extreme influence which he has over her.

The structure of the novel is such that the author's entire portrayal of the priest must be accomplished in a few chapters. There are occasional previous indications of his existence, and of the influence which he has on María's life,

259. Pattison, pp. 74-75. 260. Obras, iv, 581.

but no developed description of him is presented until the last part of the book.

The author's strongest emphasis is on the relationship between him and María. She places complete trust and confidence in him, rather than on her husband. This situation is presented during her illness. When she says she hears the noise of a crowd of people, León is unable to convince her that she is mistaken, but she accepts Padre Paoletti's explanation of a sentence.²⁶¹ The priest appears to be fully aware of the influence which he has over her; he tells León that, since he has never deceived her, she believes him like the Gospel.²⁶² He has actually come to control the small details of her life; he mentions having prescribed the routine of her life and of having received her most hidden secrets.²⁶³ The resultant mysticism has already been discussed, but it should be mentioned that the spiritual sensitivity which he inspired in María shows signs of going beyond his own control; when María tells León that he is going to be converted, she declares that he will live as she does, in perpetual anguish of conscience and fear that innocent actions may actually be sinful.²⁶⁴ The priest mentions having repeatedly calmed her scruples, in particular those related to her relationship with her husband.²⁶⁵ However,

261. Obras, iv, 910.

262. Obras, iv, 904.

263. Obras, iv, 925.

264. Obras, iv, 831.

265. Obras, iv, 924.

the simple fact that repeated assurances were necessary indicates that the priest was unable to control the situation completely.

In certain ways, it would appear that the author was attempting to suggest more than a simple relationship of priest and penitent between Padre Paoletti and María. Gustavo Correa notes the existence of "una especie de amancebamiento espiritual" which exists between them and repels her husband.²⁶⁶ The obvious fact that she accepts without question whatever the priest tells her, but is unable to place an equivalent trust in her husband, is indicative of a distorted relationship, especially since there is no real indication that León had ever attempted to deceive her until the spiritual divorce between them was complete. The priest and León have both attempted the same project; each intended to model María's personality, to regulate her life, and to direct her in what each considered the desirable direction. However, the priest has been successful whereas León has failed completely. Just as León and María grow apart, so the priest and María draw together in their spiritual relationship. León realizes that his wife places greater trust in her spiritual advisor than she does in him; the author tells us that Padre Paoletti's statement that she completely believes what he tells her awakens old sorrows in her husband.²⁶⁷

266. Correa, "Configuraciones," p. 87.

267. Obras, iv, 904.

When the priest assures León that Doña María will live for them,²⁶⁸ the obvious implication is that he feels that he, as well as León, has a strong personal interest in her recovery.

After María's death, the author, in continuing his portrayal of the priest, emphasizes his sincerity. Emilio Gamero y de Laiglesia notes that, when he tells María to separate herself more and more from her husband, he is not acting out of any evil intention, but out of the conviction that he is doing his duty.²⁶⁹ In his conversation with Frederico Cimarra, he refuses to use his influence in non-spiritual matters even to the extent of helping him see his daughter.²⁷⁰ He also refuses to discuss the possibility of an adulterous relationship between León and Pepa, and declares that worldly affairs are not his job.²⁷¹ He refuses to participate in an attempt to use religion for secular interests, even though his religious ends might gain thereby; when Frederico Cimarra asks him to become his wife's spiritual advisor, he says he will do so if there is a sacred goal involved, but when he is told that Frederico simply wishes to use his wife's religiosity in order to make himself socially acceptable, he refuses to consider the possibility.²⁷² As in the

268. Obras, iv, 905.

269. Gamero y de Laiglesia, p. 58.

270. Obras, iv, 947-948. 271. Obras, iv, 945.

272. Obras, iv, 948-949.

case of so many other characters in the series, it is his sincerity that adds emphasis to Galdós's argument. The manner in which the reader's antagonism is directed towards him has already been discussed. The fact that he is so obviously sincere makes him doubly important to the thesis. He refuses to participate in any extended insincere or opportunistic use of religion, and fulfills what he considers to be his spiritual duty, but in doing so he ruins a marriage and is instrumental in causing María's death. His only questionable action is committed with good intentions; when he is brought to María's deathbed, he participates in the deception, but only in order to calm her and to aid in her physical recovery.²⁷³ The one action of his which, by his standard of conduct, is morally wrong has good results, whereas his actions of sincerity and duty have disastrous results. In this way, Galdós is able to give extra emphasis to his criticism of the problems caused by false mysticism and over-reliance upon spiritual advisors.

273. Obras, iv, 903-904.

THE HYPOCRITE

Another character type which appears only briefly but which fulfills a definite role in the presentation of the thesis is that of the person who has a primarily utilitarian attitude towards religion. This attitude takes different forms, ranging from a willingness to make external adjustments for the sake of the demands of society to total hypocrisy. The three primary personages of this type are Rafael del Horro, Don Buenaventura de Lantigua, and Federico Cimarra.

Rafael del Horro, the youthful Catholic politician in Gloria, is the first of these figures to appear. Initially, he is presented as an ardent Catholic, but after this portrayal has been accepted by the reader, it is revealed that in his personal beliefs he is definitely not orthodox. The implication is that he maintains his loyal, devout appearance for the sake of his political ambitions. His portrayal is begun when the bishop praises him extravagantly; Don Angel declares that he is a valiant defender of the Church and an admirable example of believing youth.²⁷⁴ Soon it is revealed that he has come to Ficóbriga to work in the elections.²⁷⁵ When discussing with his daughter the possibility

274. Obras, iv, 512-513. 275. Obras, iv, 513.

of her marrying Rafael, Don Juan de Lantigua also praises him highly for his loyalty to the Church and the enthusiasm with which he champions Her cause.²⁷⁶ However, in a conversation with Don Silvestre, Rafael reveals his real beliefs. He declares that he doubts many things which the Church teaches, but feels that religion is beneficial because it acts as a restraint on the passions of the mass of society and provides many consolations, particularly for women.²⁷⁷ He explicitly states that he does not believe in hell, and feels that the questions of heaven and eternal life are too much for him to decide.²⁷⁸ He also says that, when talking with freethinkers, he tells them that basically they believe almost the same things, but that it is necessary not to publicize these matters for the sake of the orderly functioning of society.²⁷⁹ However, the implication of the chapter is that his silence on this matter is due to personal opportunism. He tells the priest that, due to a combination of circumstances and personal choice, politics is the only field which is open to him.²⁸⁰ It now appears that the enthusiasm with which he defends the Church is simply a way of ensuring his political success. The extent to which his hypocrisy extends is shown in the banquet which the priest gives to celebrate the victory

276. Obras, iv, 516.

277. Obras, iv, 537.

278. Obras, iv, 538.

279. Obras, iv, 538.

280. Obras, iv, 536-537.

in the elections. When he is asked to make a speech, he at first insists that he is unworthy, due to his youth, inexperience, and lack of knowledge. However, he then asks that his sincere faith and love for his religion compensate in this matter. He presents his political efforts as arising from a desire to ensure the triumph of the Church, which he praises in terminology that could easily come from Serafina de Lantigua. He then strongly denounces the modern spirit of impiety and irreligion.²⁸¹ This speech is instrumental in emotionally alienating the reader from him and the orthodoxy which he claims to represent. Since it has been revealed that, in his case, his beliefs are nothing more than external pretense, the obvious conclusion is that the same is probably true in the case of other such enthusiastic defenders of the Church. In describing the storm in which Daniel was shipwrecked, Galdós writes that Don Angel is supported by Rafael's arm, and mentions that the scene presents a picture of the Church supported by enthusiastic youth.²⁸² When Rafael's hypocrisy is later revealed, the obvious conclusion is that the support upon which the Church is depending has sadly decayed. The fact that the bishop so strongly praises him is of definite importance in the impact which his hypocrisy makes on the reader. If he were not so enthusiastically described, the reader's expectations of him would be different, and he would simply appear as another hypocrite.

281. Obras, iv, 567.

282. Obras, iv, 519.

But he has been approved by the highest Church authority in the book. The reader learns that, during the course of the book, Don Angel has been elevated to the rank of cardinal.²⁸³ The combination of his rank and the enthusiasm with which he praises Rafael gives the latter's hypocrisy a double impact. If Don Angel expressed the attitudes which the politician presents as his own, the results might be even stronger, but there also would be a definite danger of disbelief on the part of the reader. This possibility is avoided by giving the attitudes to a more plausible subject, and the impact is obtained by the ecclesiastical approbation which this subject receives.

Don Buenaventura de Lantigua, the second personage of this character type, also appears in the novel Gloria. As Gloria's uncle, he comes to Ficóbriga after the death of his brother, Don Juan de Lantigua.²⁸⁴ He is presented in his attempts to effect a respectable solution to the problem posed by Gloria's dishonor and the difference of religion between her and the father of her child. In an extended conversation with Daniel, he reveals that his personal beliefs are not very orthodox, and he shows himself quite ready to accept a compromise solution which will be socially acceptable.²⁸⁵ In contrast to the faith shown by Daniel,

283. Obras, iv, 646.

284. Obras, iv, 583.

285. Obras, iv, 611-615.

Don Buenaventura's personal attitude towards religion appears quite weak and hypocritical. When explaining his reasons for being a Catholic, he mentions his upbringing and the influence of his mother and adds a belief that Christ was the most admirable example of moral perfection. Daniel, however, immediately accuses him of accepting those elements of Catholicism which suit him, and rejecting the rest.²⁸⁶

Don Buenaventura feels that the moral law is necessary for society, and tries to persuade him that basically they both believe the same thing.²⁸⁷ Daniel, however, is unable to accept his assertion that worship, form, and liturgy are of little importance.²⁸⁸ The situation of a Jew, who is obviously despised by the majority of Catholics in Ficóbriga, emphasizing to a Christian the importance of belief and of the external aspects of a religion is quite forceful. Don Buenaventura's attempts to compromise only harm his position because of the presence of Daniel. Also, there are indications that he ordinarily avoids any sign of his actual beliefs. He asks himself about revealing the depths of his conscience to a Jew;²⁸⁹ apparently he has never before displayed his true attitudes. Galdós states that he previously participated in politics and worked for the Catholic

286. Obras, iv, 612. 287. Obras, iv, 613.

288. Obras, iv, 614. 289. Obras, iv, 613.

party.²⁹⁰ This notation helps identify him with Rafael del Horro. If he did not live with the external manifestations of orthodoxy, his liberal attitude might be acceptable to the reader, but since he wishes to appear as a loyal Catholic, his actions take the form of hypocrisy. His reason for doing so is not entirely obvious; Walter T. Pattison states that it is social pressure.²⁹¹ His actions are not presented as repugnant, like those of Rafael del Horro, since little emphasis is given his external religiosity. Instead of appearing quite unattractive, he simply serves to give Daniel's faith an excellent appearance by contrast with his own.

Federico Cimarra, the husband of Pepa, the woman whom León loves, is the third figure in this group. Although all three of the men manifest a lack of belief in orthodox religion, he is the only one who specifically expresses an intention to utilize religion for the sake of his advancement. Although he appears occasionally in the earlier chapters of the book, his role in Galdós's thesis is not presented until the conversation with Padre Paoletti after María's death. He frankly admits that he seriously mistreated his own wife and declares that he has no love for her.²⁹² He explains that he wishes to rehabilitate himself in the eyes of society;

290. Obras, iv, 617.

291. Pattison, p. 84.

292. Obras, iv, 946.

according to his plan, the priest will become Pepa's spiritual advisor and incline her to mysticism so that he may become respectable.²⁹³ Padre Paoletti refuses to participate in such activity, and declares that he has seen many Spanish men like him, but that he outdoes them all. Cimarra's totally utilitarian attitude towards religion is so obvious that it needs no comment or explanation.²⁹⁴ Of definite importance is the priest's comment which gives Federico's attitude a general significance. Since the priest himself declares that there are many other men like him, the reader is more likely to accept such an observation as true than if Federico or another unbeliever had made it. The obvious conclusion is that many men who appear to sincerely practice their religion do so only for the sake of the conventions of society, to which they defer for the sake of convenience or personal gain.

293. Obras, iv, 948.

294. Obras, iv, 949.

THE PEDANT

A figure whose actions are of minor importance, but who nevertheless provokes a definite emotional reaction, is that of the Catholic pedant. The two personages who most clearly fit into this category are Jacinto, the nephew of Don Inocencio, and the scholarly inclined Doctor López Sedeño, the secretary to Don Angel.

In Jacinto, the most obvious personality characteristic is his rather offensive pedantry which is particularly effective when combined with his youthfulness and inexperience. He is pictured as a rather intelligent person; the author states that he received honors at the university from which he graduated.²⁹⁵ Galdós explicitly tells the reader that his pedantry is excusable, due to his youth and the praise which his uncle lavished upon him.²⁹⁶ However, after having made this statement, he proceeds to make this characteristic appear quite offensive. Although Jacinto says little about the actual content of Darwin's theories, he appears to be anxious to discuss them, if only to show that he is acquainted with them.²⁹⁷ He seems to be quite eager to display his knowledge of the Church's attitudes towards

295. Obras, iv, 422-423. 296. Obras, iv, 423.

297. Obras, iv, 424.

non-Catholic ideas; although the topic of the current conversation is somewhat different, he hastens to mention that the Church has condemned the teachings of certain philosophers as well as certain religious concepts. The author here notes that he wished to display his learning in making this statement.²⁹⁸ He appears to identify himself closely with the Church, and to be desirous of avoiding a suggestion that his loyalty might be questionable; when he mentions that he ordered Allan Kardec's book on spiritualism from Madrid, he emphasizes that he did so only out of curiosity.²⁹⁹ His constant attempts to display his knowledge appear ridiculous in view of his obvious youthfulness. Galdós says that he is only a little over twenty years of age, has cheeks that are pink like a girl's, and has no beard.³⁰⁰ If he were older and endowed with mature qualities, his pedantry would not appear notably offensive, but since he is not, the reader is alienated from him. Joaquín Casaldüero maintains that he and his "memorismo" stand in contrast to Pepe and his scientific attitude of observation and criticism.³⁰¹ It would appear that the reaction which Jacinto provokes actually helps Pepe in the eyes of the reader. Both of the young men are educated, intelligent, and possible husbands for Rosario.

298. Obras, iv, 426. 299. Obras, iv, 461.

300. Obras, iv, 422.

301. Casaldüero, Vida y Obra, p. 65.

However, Pepe, although considerably older than his competitor, attempts to avoid any display of knowledge or learning. Jacinto's pedantry directs the reader's sympathy away from him, and almost automatically towards his rival. Since Jacinto is more closely identified with the old, orthodox attitudes than Pepe is, Galdós's thesis profits by this reaction. In this same manner, emotion is also directed away from Don Inocencio by Jacinto. The younger man is closely identified with his uncle; Galdós states that he was educated under the priest's direction,³⁰² and when he appears in the story, he always appears with his uncle. He seems to be a shadow of Don Inocencio and to have no real identity of his own. For this reason, the negative emotion which he arouses in the reader has a definite effect on the attitudes which are being formed towards the priest.

The second figure of the Catholic pedant is that of Doctor López Sedeño, the bishop's secretary. Galdós states that Don Angel habitually consulted him on all serious matters which he considered.³⁰³ In the situations in which he is presented, he almost always manages to find a newspaper article about which he is usually able to make a pedantically Catholic observation or remark. At one point, Galdós says that, with an important demeanor, he asks Don Juan to listen while he reads a case of the consequences of

302. Obras, iv, 422.

303. Obras, iv, 415.

lack of religion.³⁰⁴ In another such incident, he exclaims over the dreadful incidents in France, using that country as an example of the dreadful consequences of national abandonment of Catholicism.³⁰⁵ Since his main occupation appears to be reading newspapers in order to find fragments of information which he can cite when making observations about religion, the reader is left with an impression of uselessness. A sort of effeminate daintiness appears to touch his personality; during the storm in which Daniel's ship is wrecked, when the main concern should be with the people whose lives were endangered by the ocean, the fact that he accidentally steps in the mud gives intense annoyance to everyone present.³⁰⁶ His pedantry, while less obvious than that of Jacinto, nevertheless is definitely offensive, since it appears to be his only function in life. Whereas Jacinto was also, Galdós states, quite fond of pretty girls and anticipating a legal career,³⁰⁷ López Sedeño, as a priest, appears to have no such interests. The dominant impression that he leaves on the mind of the reader is a negative one which reflects badly on the orthodoxy he seeks to defend.

304. Obras, iv, 553.

305. Obras, iv, 540.

306. Obras, iv, 526.

307. Obras, iv, 423.

THE CATHOLIC IDEAL

In contrast to all the unattractively portrayed orthodox personages in Gloria there is the figure of Don Juan de Lantigua, the father of Gloria. John T. Reid maintains that he personifies the nineteenth century ideal as Galdós understood it.³⁰⁸ The author directly states that Don Juan considers religion to be not only a control of the conscience of the individual but also as a control of society; he feels that it should be an official instrument in the direction of human affairs. His concern is with authority rather than with liberty.³⁰⁹ Galdós also tells us that he is compromising in his practical life, with his contacts with those of differing viewpoints, but that he is totally uncompromising in his own orthodox beliefs. Don Juan is the eloquent lay apostle of the Church; he verbally defends Her and Her earthly structure.³¹⁰ In a long conversation with Daniel, he shows his own feelings concerning the present lack of devotion of which Daniel accuses Spanish Catholicism. He admits, with obvious regret and almost pain, that the charges of a weak and lukewarm practice of the religion, especially on the part of Spanish men, are valid.³¹¹ However, he feels

308. Reid, p. 39.

309. Obras, iv, 504.

310. Obras, iv, 504.

311. Obras, iv, 543.

that there is hope for the future, and that it is a mistake to search for a spiritual awakening outside of the doctrinal framework of the Catholic Church.³¹² The only strongly unfavorable note about him that appears in the first part of the book concerns the steps which he takes to preserve his daughter's doctrinal orthodoxy. Galdós describes the manner in which he directs her reading when she first shows signs of independence.³¹³ When she makes too definite a display of possible future nonconformity, he tells her that she must be careful because a woman is incapable of understanding advanced ideas; she might be led into heresy if she does not exercise caution.³¹⁴ Don Juan is not condemned for these actions, but there is a definite implication that, if Gloria were permitted free intellectual investigation, she would reach unorthodox conclusions and possibly heretical attitudes in her religious beliefs. After falling in love with Daniel, Gloria, believing that he was a Protestant, comes to the conviction that a person can attain salvation in any religion. Don Angel, her uncle, strongly condemns this opinion in accordance with the commonly held belief of nineteenth-century Spain.³¹⁵ He and Don Juan, attempting to correct these attitudes, practically smother her with a combination

312. Obras, iv, 545.

313. Obras, iv, 506.

314. Obras, iv, 508.

315. Obras, iv, 560.

of arguments and personal severity.³¹⁶ Here, both of the brothers appear to be well-meaning but slightly cruel in their treatment of Gloria. Nevertheless, there is no definite condemnation of either man. Don Juan's portrayal remains primarily favorable. At the banquet which Don Silvestre gives to celebrate the electoral victory, most of the participants appear to be exulting over their defeated atheistic enemies, but Don Juan speaks of patience, martyrdom, the difficulties confronting the Church, and the need to maintain her free from corruption.³¹⁹ However, when he learns Daniel's religion, he is no longer so restrained. When he is told that Gloria and Daniel have been seeing each other secretly, he reacts with stupefied disbelief.³¹⁸ When he is told that Daniel is Jewish, he responds with intense anger.³¹⁹ When he confronts the two lovers in his house, he collapses with an apoplectic attack and dies soon after.³²⁰ The intensity of his reaction, at a time when he could not possibly have learned of everything that the two young people had done, is stunning. Having seen such an extreme reaction in a person who was portrayed as the Catholic lay ideal serves primarily to alienate the reader, who is already in sympathy with the two lovers. Once again, by portraying intolerance, Galdós

316. Obras, iv, 562.

317. Obras, iv, 567.

318. Obras, iv, 580.

319. Obras, iv, 581.

320. Obras, iv, 582.

is able to alienate the reader from its source. As the reader now cannot remain in sympathy with Don Juan, he can no longer have the same attitude towards the ideal which the man represents. However, the overall portrayal of Don Juan is quite favorable, and stands in contrast to the treatment which many orthodox personages receive from the author. John T. Reid states that his characterization as sincere and well-meaning shows Galdós's basic attitude towards the problems which he considers in the book; he feels that his spirit is broad and not violent.³²¹ However, it also appears that, because of this portrayal of Don Juan, Galdós is able to avoid the charge of being fanatically anti-Catholic. Both Don Juan and Don Angel receive generally favorable treatment from the author. If every orthodox Catholic were portrayed in a distinctly unattractive manner, Galdós's argument would lose much of its strength. Since the author is willing to concede that some sincerely orthodox people can be acceptable and useful personalities, the story is raised above the level of a tirade against Catholicism. Through such characters as Don Juan and Don Angel, he hopes to make the book acceptable to those people whom he is most anxious to reach.

321. Reid, p. 40.

GROUP PERSONALITIES

In addition to individual characterization, Galdós utilizes a method of group characterization whereby background personages, often without any individualizing traits, contribute to the dominant impression of the novel. In this category are the less important inhabitants of Orbajosa and Ficóbriga and certain members of María Egipcíaca's family.

The secondary inhabitants of Orbajosa personify the fanaticism and clericalism which rise against Pepe Rey. Most of them receive no individualizing treatment; they are portrayed as a group and act as a group. Emilio Gamero y de Laiglesia notes that the situation in Orbajosa is such that the people are docile instruments of the ecclesiastical figures.³²² Ricardo Gullón observes that their fanaticism collides with the love between Pepe and Rosario.³²³ Emilio Gamero y de Laiglesia notes that everyone in the town, from the bishop to the day laborers, participates in the conspiracy against Pepe.³²⁴ Throughout the book, it is quite obvious that their actions arise from their old traditionalism which

322. Gamero y de Laiglesia, ii, 27.

323. Gullón, p. 62.

324. Gamero y de Laiglesia, ii, 24.

is unable to accept the presence in their town of anything representing new trends or attitudes. There is nothing to indicate that their resentment against Pepe arises from any personal injury they have received from him; instead, they are merely participating in the conspiracy formed and directed by Doña Perfecta and Don Inocencio. Emilio Gamero y de Laiglesia observes that this conspiracy arouses the emotions of the reader.³²⁵ The townspeople contribute to making Pepe appear a martyr; it is in this role that he gains the sympathy which he receives from the reader. By their actions, the Orbajosans alienate the reader from the traditions which they represent and direct his emotions towards the new attitudes which they attack in the person of Pepe Rey.

The less important inhabitants of Ficóbriga, in the novel Gloria, also contribute, by their group actions, to the presentation of Galdós's thesis. Their primary function lies in their persecution of Daniel, which arouses the reader's sympathy for their victim. When he returns to Ficóbriga, after Don Buenaventura has called him back, the townspeople make it quite obvious that they wish to have no contact with him. He is refused lodging at the inn, and the people flee from his presence.³²⁶ When a ridiculously high price is demanded for a loaf of bread, the shop owner finally gives

325. Gamero y de Laiglesia, ii, 24.

326. Obras, iv, 605.

it to him out of conspicuous charity.³²⁷ This particular display of Christian love, whereby a gift of charity is accompanied by extremely uncharitable actions, emotionally alienates the reader from the Catholicism which, it is implied, the people represent. There is constant emphasis on Daniel's religion; the women that draw away from him scream "¡El judío!... ¡El judío!"³²⁸ Such extremely emotional attitudes direct the reader's sympathies towards the object of their hatred. In addition to the role played by their actions towards Daniel, their treatment of Gloria also directs the reader's feelings. After the birth of her child, she is treated as an outcast. When she goes to the church to attend some Holy Week services, almost everyone withdraws from the building.³²⁹ The author says that a rumor that she leaves her home at night to meet Daniel passes through the devout women of the town.³³⁰ Their attitude only increases the sympathy which the reader feels for Gloria and further alienates him from the orthodoxy which the townspeople are supposed to represent.

Although the members of María Egipcíaca's family are presented with individualizing characteristics, they, with the exception of her twin brother, Luis Gonzaga, form a dominant impression and may therefore be considered as an

327. Obras, iv, 606. 328. Obras, iv, 605.

329. Obras, iv, 596. 330. Obras, iv, 620.

example of group characterization. Her parents, the Marqués and Marquesa de Tellería, and her brothers, Gustavo and Leopoldo, present a picture of external respectable religiosity with an almost complete lack of inner, sincere attention to the precepts of their religion. The Marquesa maintains an outer appearance of loyalty to Catholicism. She praises María and Luis for their devotion to their religion.³³¹ However, in the same conversation with León, she criticizes her daughter for religious excesses and tells how she had quarreled with her and even hit her in an attempt to convince her that she should not expect her husband to take part in her religious practices.³³² After León and María have separated, when María is preparing to follow her husband, the Marquesa suggests to her daughter that no husband would like her devotional excesses, and says that holiness and sanctity are possibilities to be considered before marriage rather than after.³³³ The Marqués also maintains an externally devout appearance, and appears to be quite concerned with religion. He tells León that the latter's lack of belief is worrying María, and that she eventually will reach the point of hating him. He further states that León's atheistic reputation is frightening, and suggests that, as a solution, León should maintain an appearance of orthodoxy, as everybody else

331. Obras, iv, 781. 332. Obras, iv, 782.

333. Obras, iv, 877.

does.³³⁴ However, the Marquesa has told León that her husband is romantically involved with another woman.³³⁵ Gustavo appears as an ardent defender of the Church; his father describes the enthusiasm of his arguments.³³⁶ In a conversation with León, he speaks strongly of the importance of religion, and, although praising the latter's personal qualities, declares that if he had been in a position to make the decision, he would never have married his sister to León.³³⁷ However, his father later explains that he has fallen in love, and is going to follow the Marquesa de San Salomó on her journey abroad.³³⁸ Nevertheless, when his sister is dying, he accuses León of having a criminal relationship with Pepa Fúcar and of not respecting the dying woman.³³⁹ When León makes a counteraccusation, Gustavo admits his own culpability, but declares that he is superior to León, because through his religious faith, which León lacks, he has the quality of repentance.³⁴⁰ This final judgment, in view of León's actual innocence of anything beyond emotional involvement with Pepa, appears ridiculous. Leopoldo alone of the Tellería family makes no attempt to preserve a religious appearance, but by association with the rest of the family, he appears to participate in their external religiosity. His lack of moral

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| 334. <u>Obras</u> , iv, 785. | 335. <u>Obras</u> , iv, 782. |
| 336. <u>Obras</u> , iv, 806. | 337. <u>Obras</u> , iv, 790-791. |
| 338. <u>Obras</u> , iv, 805. | 339. <u>Obras</u> , iv, 917-918. |
| 340. <u>Obras</u> , iv, 919. | |

sense is early apparent. His mother strongly criticizes his dissipation and idleness,³⁴¹ and his brother attacks his expensive tastes.³⁴² He does not attempt to hide his own attitudes; he tells León all that is being said about the latter's atheism, and speaks of how horrible it must be to have an extremely devout wife.³⁴³ However, simply by being a member of the Tellería family, he is associated in the reader's mind with external religion. The overall impression created by the family is an extremely unfavorable one. Gustavo Correa writes of an atmosphere of moral depravation caused by Leopoldo's debauchery, the Marquesa's lack of real maternal or humanitarian feelings, and the concubines of the Marqués and Gustavo.³⁴⁴ Hilario Sáenz maintains that, in the environment this family lives in, morality, religion, and honor are reduced to pure formula.³⁴⁵ As the family places itself in opposition to León, the latter automatically receives the reader's sympathy. The reader is repelled by the pious exterior and corrupt interior attitudes of the family, and his admiration naturally turns towards León, who in his moral qualities rises far above his relatives. By his personal conduct, León vindicates the religious liberalism

341. Obras, iv, 781. 342. Obras, iv, 789.

343. Obras, iv, 787.

344. Correa, "Configuraciones," p. 80.

345. Hilario Sáenz, "Ideario galdosiano," Hispania (Stanford, 1945), xxviii, 365.

and philosophical attitudes which he symbolizes, and the Telleria family, by their actions, harm the religious orthodoxy to which they pay lip service and cause it to suffer in the eyes of the reader.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it may be said that the different characters of these three books fulfill a role of vital importance in the presentation of Galdós's thesis. Through the different character types, his ideas and attitudes are presented and the emotional involvement of the reader is obtained.

The author's method of first presenting a favorable description of the individual character and later revealing different undesirable qualities both helps exonerate him from a charge of blindly attacking religion in every way possible and also gives greater impact to the various elements of his thesis. Don Angel and Don Juan de Lantigua both receive a favorable initial presentation which helps the author deny a possible charge of fanatical opposition to Catholicism. In addition, their moral excellence forces their religious intolerance into sharp relief and their personal loyalty to their religion implies that such intolerance is an acceptable Catholic attitude. In the case of such personages as Doña Perfecta, Serafina de Lantigua, Don Silvestre, and others, the later appearance of negative qualities gives the excellence of their initial impression the appearance of hypocrisy or formalistic morality.

The existence of various favorable qualities in some of the personages whom the author attacks actually helps his argument. For example, many of these characters are completely sincere in their actions. Doña Perfecta and Ester, acting in perfect sincerity, resort to unethical means to attain the ends which they are convinced they must pursue out of duty. Serafina, Luis Gonzaga, and Padre Paoletti are completely sincere as they subject those whom they love to extreme emotional torments. If any one of these characters were insincere, much of the impact he makes would be lost, for it is the sight of disaster rising from such excellent motivation that emotionally repels the reader and places him in sympathy with the victim. The religious devotion of many characters, including Doña Perfecta, Serafina, Luis Gonzaga, Ester, and Don Angel, harms their image and aids in the presentation of the author's thesis. In some instances, the damage which they cause is quite closely linked to their concept of their religious duty, and in other cases it reflects directly upon their spirituality, giving it the appearance of hypocrisy or surface formalism. As has been noted above, moral excellence also, upon occasion, harms a character's image. Serafina de Lantigua is a model of careful virtue, which forces the damage she causes into strong relief. The consequences of her actions discredit her

standard of conduct; the two combined force the reader's sympathy away from her.

In many instances, negative characterization has as important a role, or even a more important one, in the direction of the reader's favor than does positive characterization. In each of the three books, sympathy is directed towards the solitary hero and away from his orthodox opponents. However, often his opponents do more to aid his stature in the reader's eyes than his own conduct can do. Pepe Rey, as victim, gains sympathy that he could never receive if he were to remain in the role of intruder. The irrational attacks of the environmental characters direct the reader's favor towards the hero in each of the three books. Each of the protagonists gains by the atmosphere of religious hypocrisy and formalism in the social setting. When there might be danger that his own personal qualities might prove insufficient for the control of the reader's attitudes, the personal failings or inadequacies of the members of the opposition fulfill the requirement.

The timing of events in the development of the plot and in the revelation of the personal qualities of many of the characters is instrumental in the directing of the reader's favor according to the author's intent. For example, the fact of Gloria's dishonor is not clearly revealed until after the author describes the irrationally intolerant reactions of Don Angel and Don Juan de Lantigua to the fact

that Daniel is a Jew. Rosario's inner conflict is not presented until the reader is already in sympathy with Pepe, who might have been rejected as the cause of her problems if they had been presented before a dislike had already been formed of Doña Perfecta. Through such careful planning and presentation, the reader's attitudes are directed into channels formed by the author.

Throughout the books, the various methods which the author uses to gain the emotional support of the reader appear to succeed in directing the latter's attitudes and favor in accordance with Galdós's intent. However, the question of exactly whom he is able to guide in this matter would require further study in order to obtain an adequate answer. The author appears to be quite capable of directing the attitudes of those people who are in a degree of sympathy with his viewpoints; he simply arouses and channels pre-existing inclinations. A matter for further consideration would be the question of whether or not he is able to so direct a person of a truly neutral position, a partially committed Catholic, a regularly practicing Catholic, or an extremely loyal one. In particular, there remains the question of the possibility of his so affecting a person of the extreme types whom he attacks in these novels. Is he able to convince the fanatic, the pedant, the mystic, or the

Catholic ideal? In order to obtain a satisfactory answer to these problems, further investigation is necessary.

In connection with the problem of the sympathies of the reader, another topic which remains to be studied concerns the sudden shift from the last of this series of novels to the first of the novelas españolas contemporáneas. Between La familia de León Roch and La desheredada, the emotional involvement of Galdós's audience appears to disappear. The reasons for this change and any possible effects of it will require further study.

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