Anarchist Romance

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> A book is not a gospel to be taken in its entirety or to be left alone.
>
> It is a suggestion, a proposal – nothing more.
>
> — Petr Kropotkin, "Preface," in *How We Shall Bring About the Revolution: Syndicalism and the Cooperative Commonwealth*.[1]

Federica Montseny is usually remembered as the first woman appointed to be a cabinet minister in Western Europe. The daughter of two prominent Spanish anarchists, Federico Urales and Soledad Gustavo, Montseny was also a prolific writer and activist.[2] The family published *La Revista Blanca,* one of the most important anarchist publications of twentieth-century Spain. But equally important were the two book series the journal published: *La Novela Ideal* (Ideal/Anarchist Novel) and *La Novela Libre* (Free Novel).[3] These were part of a wider trend in Spain during the first third of the twentieth century. Known as *novelas cortas* (short novels), there were thousands of such series.[4] This article explores the background of *La Revista Blanca*, outlines the history of the Roman Catholic Church in Spain, and investigates the topic of anticlericalism in the cultural politics of Spanish anarchism. It concludes with an analysis of Federica Montseny i Mañé's *Resurrección,* an excellent example of anarchist anticlericalism and Montseny's belief in the redemptive power of Nature.

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La Revista Blanca

Urales and Gustavo published *La Revista Blanca* from 1898 to 1905. It resumed publication in 1923 with numerous contributions from Montseny. Usually described as individualists, they are more appropriately considered "anarchists without adjectives." Though Montseny promoted individualism, she joined the Confederación Nacional del Trabajo (National Confederation of Labor, or CNT) in 1923, eventually writing and editing its Barcelona daily, *Solidaridad Obrera*.[5] *La Revista Blanca* published a wide array of anarchists including Petr Kropotkin, Errico Malatesta, Ricardo Mella, Elisée Reclus, Max Nettlau, and Adrián del Valle. Del Valle wrote that adjectival distinctions — such as anarcho–communism, anarcho–feminism, anarcho–naturism, anarcho–syndicalism, etc. — were not important.[6] What was important to *La Revista Blanca's* editors was education and preparing the cultural base for the libertarian society.[7] Montseny wrote with pride of their "tireless work of culture and propaganda," denying it was a business.[8] A key component was restoring humanity's lost harmony with Nature destroyed by bourgeois civilization as pointed out in the first issue of *La Revista Blanca*'s second series.[9]

Three months after *La Revista Blanca* resumed publication there was a *coup* that ushered in a military dictatorship and censorship in Spain. Censorship limited the topics the journal could address and as Eulàlia Vega i Masana points out, the Montsenys' publications were fundamental to helping to keep alive anarchist and democratic ideas in Spain.[10] One of these cultural efforts keeping ideas alive was the *La Novela Ideal* series, part of "the struggle to put in place a society without masters or slaves, without rulers or ruled" — the "libertarian society."[11] The novels began in 1925 as a way to freely present libertarian ideas and to subsidize the journal.[12] As Montseny stated, "we wanted, in the novelized format, to deal with anti-religious, libertarian propaganda, and in favor of free love and against social prejudices."[13] The journal's circulation was significantly less than that of the novel. The journal printed eight thousand copies at its peak versus ten to fifty thousand copies of the novels.[14] Despite censorship, authors could write more freely in the novels, using their fiction as a pedagogical tool. *La Novela Ideal* lasted until 1938, Spain's second longest *novela corta* series.[15]

There are no exact figures for the readership; however, based on the limited amount of surviving correspondence with readers, I can hazard educated guesses.[16] Reviews appeared in the anarchist press in France and the Americas. Readers of both sexes from these countries wrote to the journal commenting on the fiction.[17] A response to a letter from a reader pointed out that the audience for the novels was quite diverse and that the series was written for the non–anarchist as well. The assumption was that the non–anarchist would "little by little comprehend the ideal." Several authors (there were around 167 different authors) were not anarchists, and perhaps because authors were paid it is not surprising that it was a diverse group.[18]

The Church in Spain

The Spanish Church was one of the most powerful hierarchies in post–World War I Europe. Rumored to have a great deal of financial power, it was a major landowner, in control of most schools, and a dominating factor in public life. In 1874 a coup overthrew the First Republic and restored the Borbon monarchy. The terms of the Concordant of 1851 making Roman Catholicism the state religion came back into force.[19] The Constitution of 1876 established the expenditure of state funds to support Catholic worship, provide stipends for priests and bishops, mandate religious marriage and burial in sanctified ground, and give bishops seats in the Senate. Non–Catholics were prohibited from building houses of worship or erecting religious symbols, and could only practice their faith in private services.[20] Church appointments were under state control from 1843, and there was no distinction between civil and religious events as Catholic religious rites and symbolism were integral parts of state ceremonies.[21] The oligarchy viewed Catholicism as the glue that held the weak national state together and, in turn, the Church supported the state. Frances Lannon argues that Spain was notable for having perhaps the most retrograde and anachronistic ecclesiastical hierarchy in Europe.[22]

During The Restoration, there was a Catholic revival, as religious vocations grew, especially among women, who eventually were half of the clergy.[23] Because the state provided few social services, the

Church became the dominant provider of social services and clergy frequently denied help to those who did not attend mass or confession.[24] Nuns staffed female prisons, and most nurses were in religious orders. The reputation of nurses during this period suffered among the working–class as shown in Montseny's unfavorable depiction of them in novels.[25] Convents sequestered pregnant prostitutes, often against their will, and religious authorities could seize children from "unfit parents."[26] Montseny's novel *El rescate de la cautiva* (The Rescue of the Captive) drew upon numerous real–life examples of the Church seizing young girls.[27] In this story, a couple adopted a girl from an *Inclusa* which were Church-run institutions that were a cross between a foundling hospital and an orphanage with exceptionally high mortality rates. When the young woman wanted to marry an areligious older man (but not an anarchist), the family sought the advice of the Inclusa's priest. The Church kept her in the Inclusa to prevent the marriage and the only way to "rescue the captive" was for the man to confess, attend mass, and take communion, which he does out of love for the girl.[28]

The Spanish-American War further strengthened ties between Church and state. The Church viewed Spain's defeat by the United States as a punishment for sins. The Church provided a constant criticism of public mores and demanded greater control of the press and education. In 1901, at the dedication of the basilica of Covadonga, the Bishop of Oviedo denounced modern publications (books, newspapers, pamphlets) as the weapons of the new "Moors," who were seeking to destroy the nation and the faith.[29] The Church divided the world in two and one had to take sides — either with the Church or with its opponents.[30] In the absence of a secular nationalism, the myth of a unified Catholic Spain prevailed.[31] On October 12, 1917, King Alfonso XIII declared the day a national holiday celebrating *hispanidad* and Catholic unity.[32] Two years later, he dedicated the entire nation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.[33] The Church enthusiastically supported the *pronunciamiento* of General Primo de Rivera in September 1923.[34]

The Church's lay organizations—Acción Católica (Catholic Action, founded in 1881) and its women's branch, Acción Católica de las Mujeres (Women's Catholic Action, founded in 1919)—spent enormous energies combating "immodesty" in art and the cinema, as well as the length of skirts.[35] Following instructions from Pope Pius XI in the December 23, 1922 encyclical *Ubi Arcano Dei Consilio,* Acción Católica conducted "the *holy battle* waged on so many fronts to vindicate for the family and the Church the natural and divinely given rights which they possess over education and the school."[36]

The Church's lack of concern over economic issues and democracy only highlighted the growing gap between the Church and both the urban working class and landless peasantry.[37] To close the gap, Pope Leo XIII had issued the *Rerum Novarum* in 1891 to address issues of working-class conditions and poverty. As a result, Church teachings were modified so labor became a task or responsibility like other obligations rather than a punishment for original sin.[38] However, this did not halt the steady increase of people abandoning the Church in urban areas. The rates of baptism and last rites fell off after the turn of the century, with baptism in the first week after childbirth dropping from 30% in 1900 in Barcelona to 10% in 1935.[39] The Church failed to address the changes in parishes, and unlike those in Northern Europe, was unwilling to develop any true, much less effective, implementation of *Rerum Novarum*.

The Church emphasized reliance on paternalism and charity rather than acknowledge any possibility of social conflict. Confessional trade unions were formed, but they included workers and employers. Employers used the Catholic labor organizations to discipline workers, controlling and restricting any possibility of mass action, monitoring their lives, and firing those workers who did not attend mass. Employers opposed reductions in the work week or hours and wage hikes, arguing that any additional free time and money led to vice.[40] When priests in these organizations made a few attempts to promote the workers' interests over those of the employer, they failed.[41] While the hierarchy acknowledged and made obeisance towards *Rerum Novarum*, they believed their interests in Spain lay more with the bourgeoisie than with the working class.[42] In the ostensibly devout

Basque region, socialism was the dominant ideology of the organized workers. The only time when a truly social Catholic trade union, the *Solidaridad de Obreros Vascos* (Basque Workers Solidarity, SOV), challenged this dominance was during Spain's Second Republic from 1931–1939. Ironically, it gained strength from the reforms of Socialist trade union leader and Minister of Labor, Francisco Largo Caballero.[43]

In Catalonia, employers supported the formation of confessional unions, the *Sindicatos Libres,* as a weapon against the working class which was overwhelmingly in the anarcho–syndicalist CNT. For the CNT, the Libres were professional gunmen, hired by employers to eliminate the true representatives of the working class. According to Ealham, the employers used the Libres for "physically eliminating a generation of Catalan trade union militants."[44] Approximately 152 people died in Barcelona between 1921 and 1923, from both sides of the dispute, including twenty-one union officials within forty–eight hours.[45] The Libres assassinated Salvador Seguí, the leader of the CNT, in March 1923. There was an increasing radicalization and rise to power of a generation of younger leaders in Spanish anarcho–syndicalism.[46]

In the nineteenth century, the everyday practice of religion became the responsibility of women and part of the private sphere, thereby feminizing it. The expectation was that men would still be devout, but increasingly the division of life into spheres meant that religion and charitable works became almost exclusively the province of well–to–do women.[47] Religious practice became a dividing line between masculinity and femininity, especially when men wanted to be independent of religious strictures.[48] Men, regardless of their class, viewed priests and other religious figures as lesser men. Additionally, it was held that femininity and devotion were synonymous, especially among the working class and anticlericals.[49] Fiction reinforced this belief, generally portraying women with unparalleled religious devotion, for good or ill, depending on the beliefs of the author.[50]

There was rapid growth of the Marian cults, with the simultaneous binary view of women as either Eve (fallen) or Mary (virtuous); virtuous women were either virgins or mothers.[51] Domesticity was the object and the ideal woman was the *ángel del hogar*, the angel of the hearth.[52] This ideology drew on sixteenth-century Catholic texts such as Juan Luis Vives' *Instrucción de la mujer cristiana* and Fray Luis de Leon's *La perfecta casada,* which continued to be common wedding gifts.[53] According to these texts, it was a woman's duty to guard the private sphere, allowing only men to act in the public sphere.[54] In 1930, the encyclical *Casti Connubii* of Pope Pius XI reiterated ideals of womanhood: piety, purity, submissiveness, and domesticity.[55]

The Church, however, devoted more attention than the left to working–class women's issues with the *Sindicato Católica Femenina* (Female Catholic Union) and *Consejo Nacional de Corporaciones Obreras Católicas* (National Council of Catholic [Female] Workers' Corporations) having more female members than the socialist *Unión General de Trabajo* (UGT, General Labor Union).[56] This was due to a masculinist industrial worker emphasis among the Socialists and anarchists combined with the low level of Socialist organizing among peasants before the Second Republic. Anticlericals argued that clerical women's and labor organizations, alongside the Church's charitable actions, sought to prevent revolution by emphasizing religious activities. Church organizations were especially threatening to the socialist and anarchist movements that perceived feminism as dominated by religious and bourgeois women.[57] Anarchists believed that this hindered organizing and consciousness of oppression amongst its victims. An activist charged that the Church worked with women to eradicate rebelliousness.[58]

These were defensive reactions responding to the diminishing importance of religion in Spain.[59] The Church saw liberalism as only one of the most recent fruits of a whole series of errors in its genealogy of problems. It began with the Renaissance that led to the Reformation that gave birth to the French Revolution from which sprung liberalism.[60] For Montseny, the Renaissance was one of the three great ages when humanity made progress towards liberation and flourished in unfettered thought. The first was Greece with its "cult of beauty,

philosophy of happiness and heroism;" then came the Renaissance, which "awoke the world from the religious ignorance" of the Middle Ages; and, finally, the *Encyclopédie* of Diderot and d'Alembert, the "uplifting of the human spirit against the closed dogma of the Reformation."[61] Making the myth of classical Greece even more attractive was its presumed opposition to the Church, especially Greece's veneration of the human body. Because the Church penetrated all aspects of society, religious ideas shaped anticlerical forces. It is important to see the Church's position as an institution and thus a contributing factor to an anticlericalism that was not anti–Christian.

Anticlericalism

Anticlericalism was widespread among certain sectors in society, often lying dormant in the nineteenth century until something acted as a trigger.[62] By the twentieth century, anticlericalism developed more organized forms including social movements such as the Partido Socialista Obrero Españoles (PSOE, Spanish Socialist Workers' Party) and various anarchist groups. What changed in the twentieth century was a series of trends that together served as a catalyst for an *organized* anticlericalism: increasingly wider diffusion of forms of mass communication of these social movements, growing levels of education and literacy, and accelerating urbanization.[63]

Anticlericalism was a staple of nineteenth-century fiction, especially popular fiction. An autodidact who was taught by her mother, Montseny frequently read novels. She was particularly fond of Benito Pérez Galdós and some of the major French anticlerical authors.[64] These included famous writers such as Victor Hugo, George Sand, Eugène Sue, and Émile Zola. Translated into Spanish, these French authors were very popular in Spain.[65] Montseny also read other Spanish authors, including the anticlerical Vicente Blasco Ibáñez.[66]

Another French author mentioned by Montseny was Michel Zevaco. Initially a socialist and then an anarchist, as a Dreyfusard he served as the editor of the journal of the Anticlerical League of France and wrote for Jean Jaurès' newspaper as well as *Le Matin*.[67] *La Revista Blanca* serialized his novel *Le chevalier de La Barre,* based on the life

of Jean–François de La Barre, who was condemned for blasphemy, tortured, and beheaded. Translated by Soledad Gustavo, *El Caballero de La Barre, o Los Misterios de la Inquisición* ran for nearly two years.[68]

Even when the Catholic faith itself was not under attack, priests were frequent objects of ridicule, so much so that Spanish collections of proverbs from the seventeenth century onwards contained numerous negative examples of priests. This remained true even in the Franco years, when National Catholicism was an official ideology, reflecting anticlericalism's deep roots in Spanish culture.[69] Attacks on the Church remained popular topics from the scandalous "penny press" to classics of Spanish literature.[70] The works of both Pérez Galdós and Blasco Ibáñez featured priests as examples of political reaction.[71] Popular plays featured the stock character of the corrupt and corrupting cleric and plots of sexual escapades in convents and monasteries.[72] The 1901 premiere of Pérez Galdós' play, *Electra,* produced a massive anticlerical demonstration.[73]

Spaniards shared a common vocabulary and understanding due to the dominance of the Church, especially in education.[74] Paradoxically, this gave the Spanish anarchists a vocabulary upon which to build their assault on the Church. The weakness of the state, the lack of penetration by a secular vocabulary, and the profound influence of the Church, gave religious culture a resonance that no other could match. Anarchists and other popular movements adapted this culture to attack the Church. Anarchists used what they had at hand not simply to fill a gap, but to create a new vision wrapped in the vocabulary of the old.[75]

The Tragic Week (July 26 — August 1, 1909) in Barcelona was the most serious eruption of anticlerical actions before the Second Republic. A general strike against the calling up of troops to fight in the colonial conflict in Spanish Morocco quickly turned violent and crowds set fire to a third of the Church's property in Barcelona.[76] No priests or nuns were among the 112 killed, though twenty-one churches and thirty-one convents burned.[77]

The high death rate in the colonial wars, particularly among lower-class conscripts, fueled the Tragic Week protests. An additional circumstance was the fact that the colonial wars directly and indirectly benefitted two leading, intermarried, and devoutly religious businessmen, the Count of Güell and the Marquis of Comillas. They benefitted indirectly due to their business holdings in Morocco and directly as the Comillas shipping firm, the Compañía Transatlántica Española, transported the troops under a state contract.[78]

Montseny never wrote specifically on the Tragic Week, though she frequently invoked Francisco Ferrer as a secular anarchist martyr.[79] Following Bakunin's argument in his critique of Rousseau, Montseny considered the Church and state as two parallel institutions: the church established on the "fictitious fact" of divine revelation and the state on the "real fact" of force.[80] As part of the anticlerical forces in Spain, anarchists had long used religious terminology as a tool for education and symbolism, and anarchism was no different.[81] She used religious models and sources to enable her audience to easily understand her arguments. It was a central component in Montseny's writing; her work abounded in religious references that she used to convey a clear anticlerical message.[82] In a 1986 interview, Montseny noted her reading of Tolstoi, concluding that not only are Christianity and anarchism compatible, "we have always stated that Jesus Christ was the first anarchist."[83] *La Revista Blanca* published two almanacs at the end of the 1920s. The editors declared their intention to counter the numerous injustices committed in the name of the traditional almanac's religious symbolism and the state's violence and wars.[84] Each almanac included a lay calendar that replaced saints' names with historical events and replaced names of wars with flowers.[85]

Montseny made use of Jesus Christ in her adaptation of the Christ story: *María de Magdala*. *La Revista Blanca* also promoted the story by using explicitly Christian language such as the following announcement for the forthcoming novels in the series:

> María de Magdala is a resurrection of some of the figures of Christian mythology with the beliefs and sentiments of today. The possibility is that the passion

> of Jesús may have occurred, and is repeated, exactly, in our Christian prioritized societies, just as it was the pagan. In María de Magdala appear, updated and humanized, the principal personages of the passion of Christ: María Magdalena, María de Jesús, Marta, Mary, and Jesús himself, who today, with a greater concept of human dignity, rebels against the end of redemption and proclaims a Sermon on the Mount that is a song to life and to love.[86]

Persecution by the Church could also be an intellectual bonus and a sales point. The advertisement draws its language and characters from Christianity to promote anticlericalism. "Christian mythology" followed the word "resurrection," a direct questioning of the truth of the resurrection of Christ. The story followed the life of Jesús of Rigabell, born to seventeen–year–old María only five months after her marriage to a much older José. Before age fifteen, Jesús traveled to Barcelona and there discovered the "frightening coldness" and "unfeeling cruelty" of official charity and religion.[87] Throughout her account of his life in Barcelona, Montseny compared Jesús of Rigabell and Jesus of Nazareth. She identified them as two suffering beings struggling against oppression. At the end of the novel, Jesús returned the love of three women: the dancehall performer María Magdalena and the sisters María and Marta. Montseny concluded the novel by observing that Jesús' dilemma — the erotic love of three women — was itself more interesting than any solution.

Montseny did not hesitate to use the form and even the substance of religion to aid in understanding her work.[88] She repeatedly used a popular understanding of religious practices to convey anticlerical messages. Her first full-length novel, La Victoria, opens with the chapter "The Annunciation," in which Clara Delval, the central protagonist, spends Sunday afternoon listening to an anarchist orator in a park. Annunciation may have indicated the specific day, but it was above all a reference to the visit of the Angel Gabriel to Mary.[89] The speech, to which Clara listened "greedily," gave her a beatific vision of the future, where no one lacked anything, and life was peaceful and serene. This consequently gave her a fresh outlook

on life, and "opened new horizons." It was an annunciation because through the anarchist's speech she learned about and adopted a new path, her "virgin" dreams are now the basis of this new life, an "ideal revelation."[90] Here again is a potentially ambiguous religious reference, what the character signifies in this novel is a modern woman. Her modernity is proven by rejecting religious influences and being open to anarchism. What constituted a modern woman was of great concern to Montseny and she devoted a great deal of attention to it. For this article, it suffices to say a modern woman for Montseny was educated and secular (freed of "moral and religious slavery"), made her own decisions, was economically independent, and did not obey others (like fathers, in both the religious and secular senses of the word).[91]

Resurrección

Resurrección was the forty-third in the Novela Ideal series and its central thesis is anticlerical: the conflict between Nature and the Church (**Fig. 1**). Montseny's *Resurrección* went on sale on November 8, 1926. Described in *La Revista Blanca* as a "beautiful and intense novelette" about romantic conflicts and spiritual crises developing and ending in an "emotional rural drama."[92] Montseny's work centers on three individuals: a young priest, the local anarchist, and a woman. The

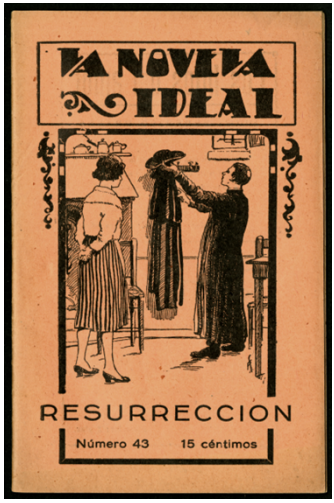

Figure 1 Fermín Sagristá's cover illustration.

protagonist is Jacinto Balaguer, a young seminarian revisiting his native village while having a crisis of faith. How his crisis played out in the thirty–two pages brings together many of Montseny's arguments about the Church, Nature, and love in a quintessential melodrama of good and evil using details of light, clothing, and animals.[93] The other two central characters are Carmela, who grew up with Jacinto in the village of Rubiñá and was his childhood playmate, and Pedro, an anarchist who came to Rubiñá from the capital.[94]

As the second son, Jacinto had to leave the village for the seminary and has returned to visit his family. Jacinto is still desperately in love with Carmela, who lives with Pedro and their daughter Paz (Peace) outside the village on a farm known as La Rocosa (the Rocky) at a height above the village. Pedro and Carmela live together in a free union based in love, not needing the "blessing of God nor the devil."[95] Pedro's independence leads the "blessed and reactionary" residents of the town (the mayor, priest, and political boss) to seek the couple's destruction. The local landowner, a marquis, holds the lease to La Rocosa and sets things in motion by refusing to accept the rent payment to put Pedro in arrears.[96] When Pedro enters the town to deposit the rent, local authorities attempt to arrest him, and a mob (led by Carmela's father) kills him as he tries to escape. Carmela enters the next day in search of Pedro and, grief stricken to find him dead, takes his body to bury him at La Rocosa. On her way to Rocosa, Carmela meets Jacinto, who assists her in carrying Pedro's body back for burial. Jacinto buries Pedro, spends all his time visiting Carmela, and eventually joins her to live on the farm. His family, village, and the Church ostracize Jacinto for this. Eventually, the villagers ignore the couple as the years pass. At the end of the novel, Carmela announces to Jacinto that she now loves him.

Resurrección uses several devices to press anticlericalism and replace the Church with Nature. The first is Montseny's choice of names: Carmela, Pedro, and Jacinto. They relate to natural objects. In Hebrew, Carmel is garden, orchard, or vineyard. Carmela is tied to the Virgin Mary, Our Lady of Mount Carmel.[97] While Carmela removes herself from the village by living high above it on a crag/promontory (Mount Carmel) — also symbolically elevating its residents over the

lower inhabitants of the village — her life is anything but virginal or cloistered. Pedro is Peter, rock in Greek (and possibly crag in Aramaic, also linking it to the farm). This carries the clear connotation of Saint Peter, the Rock upon which the Church was built. Like Saint Peter, Pedro is steadfast and unmovable in his ideals, his speeches spreading anarchism, and his martyrdom.[98] Montseny describes the speeches as a "new Sermon on the Mount," delivered with the "voice of an apostle."[99]

Jacinto is Hyacinth, a flowering plant, the name of different saints, and — as important — a classical allusion to the beautiful youth loved by Apollo, god of the sun. Classical allusions were endemic in anarchist writing. Adopting pseudonyms based on classical names was common, as in Espartaco and Diogenes, names of two *La Revista Blanca* contributors. Anarchists also promoted classical literature, history, and art. In only the fifth issue of *La Revista Blanca,* there was an article on ancient Greece in Catalonia. Montseny herself later wrote about the Greek city Empúries on the Catalan coast.[100]

There are numerous references in *Resurrección* to the contrast between Nature and religion. Montseny creates the contrast between the Church (dark) and Nature (light) by explicitly contrasting natural occurrences with the religious cloth of the young priest. Aside from the names, one of the most direct is the golden light of the sun (Apollo) illuminating the golden color of the grain as it is threshed in the open fields. Montseny contrasts this with the absence of light and resulting darkness of the seminary's closed space. Not only is the seminary dark in contrast to Nature, but the seminary is slowly destroying the color in Jacinto's cheeks, dulling his eyes, and causing him to waste away.[101] For most of *Resurrección*, the stark contrast of Jacinto's blonde hair with the black of his cassock symbolizes his internal conflict. The dust of wheat on the threshing floor rises around Jacinto, highlighting the black of his garments, which gives him a golden halo in the light of the sun, as he breathes in the air, expanding his lungs and chest. Nature is in him, restoring him, putting a sparkle to his eyes, and increasing his physical size. When Jacinto watches the threshers harvest the wheat and listens to their joking — "at times crude and bawdy" — he "abandons" himself to this "natural,

instinctive, and primitive happiness."[102] Montseny used the verb "to abandon"—to let oneself go—alongside the word "natural" in relation to laughter and joy. It is natural desires that produce happiness and joy against the suppression and darkness of religion. In a 1990 interview, Montseny made this interplay of light/dark equaling anarchism/reaction very explicit:

> The light when it appears, is the light of the anarchist ideology, of the new future society. This is what we wanted it to signify. That is to say — for us — light was the clarity which illuminates the consciousness and prepares the road to the future. This is what we intended to say, what we symbolized with the expression "the light of the ideal." Question: The light, in some samples of libertarian narratives, is contrasted with darkness with some spaces that are literally without freedom, as in prisons, the streets of some neighborhoods, the suburbs, or the clothing of some people, such as, for example, the black cassocks of priests. Can the opposition of Light/Darkness be interpreted as the transfer into fiction of the duality Ideology/Reaction. Answer: Yes, that interpretation is correct. The light for us was the antithesis of all the incarnations of reaction, beginning with the Church and continuing to the prisons or including what you have noted in the clothing of priests.[103]

Light, especially natural sunlight, was a common metaphor in anarchist imagery reflecting the contrast between the light of freedom and knowledge with the darkness of oppression and ignorance. Montseny plays out this contrast between the Church and Nature not just in these metaphors of light and dark, but also in the death and burial of Pedro. Carmela refuses to allow him to be buried in the village and buries him instead at La Rocosa.[104] She buries Pedro among the trees that he planted, creating another contrast: Church–sanctified ground versus ground sanctified by Nature working through humanity. Because Pedro is a "heretic" and Carmela lives with him without the benefit of religious sanction, Jacinto's mother tells him that Pedro

and Carmela "live like dogs."[105] In another telling use of Nature, the dogs that live with Carmela and Pedro are portrayed as better and truer companions than villagers. Distraught at Pedro's death, the dog Noble plays a key role in helping Carmela find Pedro's body while the other dog remains at the farm guarding the couple's daughter, Paz.[106] Nature, in the form of the dogs, is loyal, harmonious, and protective. Montseny further describes Pedro as a good man because of what occurred when he visited the village. The town's dogs would welcome Pedro as he entered, their tails wagging. Moreover, he played with and was popular with the village's children, another indication of his natural goodness.

In a confrontation just before Pedro's death, the well–to–do of the village delegate the town's priest to bring the couple to the Church. The priest waylays Carmela alone on the path to the village because he fears Pedro. The priest tells Carmela they must return to the Church, be married, and baptize Paz. Carmela's response is an affirmation of the natural life in which they live, a happiness created by her and Pedro, rather than God or man. She states, "We love each other, work together, and we do not exploit anyone's fanaticism or ignorance. By our full and free will was our daughter born. We conceived her and none other than ourselves...." The priest, enraged by her response, threatens that they will drive Pedro away and force her to her parents' home or sequester her in a convent — a traditional punishment for unwed mothers.[107]

Carmela responds that she is an adult and that the time of sequestrations in convents is past. She is nobody's property to be told what to do. Furthermore, she has a gun, and she will defend herself and her child if they are threatened.[108] Carmela is like most of Montseny's female protagonists: fierce, independent, and willing to defend herself verbally and with weapons — she carries a shotgun. Jacinto's mother is a complete contrast: simple, incapable of understanding, devout, and blindly obedient to the authority of her husband and the Church. While Carmela is Montseny's new leonine woman, Jacinto's nameless mother remains crippled by her husband, the Church, and the traditions they embody.[109]

There is an implied critique of Catalan rural tradition in *Resurrección*. One of those traditions was the system of inheritance. Upon marriage, the eldest child, regardless of sex, gained legal control over fixed property.[110] The remaining children divided the rest upon the death of the parents.[111] As the second son, Jacinto is destined for the priesthood and his older brother will inherit. Their sister will be allowed to choose between marriage and the convent.[112] Jacinto did not want to become a priest. He became one because of tradition. Montseny uses the Catalan word *hereu* for the son who will inherit the family property, rather than the Castilian *heredero*. The *hereu* is dissolute, a drunk, a man who is clearly unfit to manage the farm. Jacinto is prevented by tradition and by his father's authority from his *natural* destiny, farming.

Montseny's critique was not limited to these rural traditions, as she was also implicitly criticizing Catalan nationalism. Associated with the rural peasantry and the industrial elite in Barcelona, Catalan nationalism claims that its base is the peasant's common sense, *seny*.[113] It was rooted in the traditions of the strong patriarchal rural family and in paternal authority as a metaphor for the Catalan nation.[114] Montseny's criticism of this rural family is also a criticism of a myth of Catalan nationalism.

These critiques are secondary to *Resurrección*'s anticlericalism. Montseny's novel uses Pedro's life in the same way that the Church uses the lives of the saints — for moral guidance and instruction.[115] They instruct and provide guidance to readers by giving concrete examples of exemplary lives. In her narrative, however, she reverses the roles. Rather than a Christian martyrdom, a life given for religion, Pedro is an anarchist martyr, his life given for freedom and Nature. Pedro points out to Carmela that the demons are fallen angels that revolted against God's "tyranny," making Lucifer the first rebel.[116] In a further critique of religiosity, as Marian cults grew in the first third of the twentieth century, Jacinto has his own version: "He believed in the Virgin, because he imagined her with Carmela's face."[117]

Initially, the belief in the village is that Jacinto is spending time at La Rocosa to bring Carmela back to the Church. The local priest ("more malicious than others") suspects the truth and informs on Jacinto to the bishop.[118] Pedro's martyrdom is Jacinto's salvation, freeing Jacinto from the clergy and allowing him a closer relationship with Nature in his natural destiny as a farmer. Carmela initially rejects Jacinto's offers of assistance, denying that he is still the friend of a shared youth. He is no longer Jacinto the man but a priest. Jacinto denies this, telling her that he is not a priest but the saddest and the most wretched of men. Love for Carmela is his torment, a moral torment that is more desirable than religious penances.[119] Through the final portion of the novel, Jacinto transforms from wretched seminarian to happy and free outcast. Jacinto rejects the instructions of the Church and moves into La Rocosa on Carmela's invitation. She insists that he remove his priest's robes and gives him Pedro's clothes to wear. She welcomes him to the garden and in this romance the happy ending is the free union outside of marriage.

Jacinto becomes the resurrection of Pedro and at the end, the love of Carmela. To those in the village, Jacinto now appears to be Pedro: "Dumbfounded, the peasants saw Pedro, a man dressed like him and as energetic a worker as he, who looked after the land of La Rocosa."[120] The Balaguers and the rest of the village consider Jacinto dead. Like the protagonist of Sor Angélica, Jacinto's leaving the Church is a resurrection in rejecting not only the Church but also his family. It is as an individual that he becomes a free and independent man. His "death as a priest and as a son is his resurrection as a man, his return to Nature and to Life."[121] The faith that Pedro died for, and that Jacinto adopts, is a faith in Nature with humanity as its supreme creation. Montseny uses the Church's own symbolism and subtle arguments for the strength of independent women to advance anticlericalism.

Criticism

Montseny has used the trope of symbolic death and rebirth that is also present in early Soviet literature. The old self is dark (the priest's cassock), a shell covering the new self, which lies beneath to be discovered.[122] Even though this is the story of Jacinto's maturation, it is

not truly a *Bildungsroman* — devoted to the moral and social development of the single main character — as the focus is on the three characters and we share their thoughts equally. To read this narrative solely as a work independent of time and place of production is to misread it, to ignore the significance and purpose of *Resurrección*. It should not be fitted into a category and discarded as an unimaginative work of fiction using tropes. Montseny's literary anticlericalism uses an established literary tradition — the thesis novel (*novela de tesis*).[123] The thesis drives the novel rather than stylistic considerations such as narrative, language, character, or place— unless these are key to the thesis.

While Montseny's novels can be compared to early Soviet novels that she read and reviewed for *La Revista Blanca,* there are significant differences.[124] First, and most obviously, Montseny's characters do not adhere to a version of Marxist–Leninism, much less Marxism. Second, unlike the Soviet hero, the death — symbolic or otherwise — of a protagonist in a Montseny novel is not for the benefit of the collective but rather for the benefit of an individual.[125] In the Soviet proletarian fiction that Montseny read, the collective is elevated above the individual, the central character's actions — even death — elevate their collective class. In *Resurrección,* neither Pedro's literal death nor Jacinto's symbolic one benefit the collective. These deaths only aid in the individual transformation of Jacinto. The martyrdom of Pedro, the love triangle, the political and religious symbolism, are all elements of melodrama. The melodramatic form allows Montseny to claim a morality based in nature, rather than in Church doctrine or patriarchal systems of property.[126] She was very proud that the Franco régime condemned *La Novela Ideal* as having poisoned three generations of Spaniards.[127]

Several scholars who have varying views of Montseny's works place her fiction in the genre of the popular romance novel, which can have the effect of shoving her work to the side, out of the way, to focus on "serious" and "literary" authors.[128] Ana Lozano de la Pola and Nuria Cruz Cámara, however, both object to the classification of her work solely or "simply" as romance fiction.[129] They argue that while sharing similarities with the genre, Montseny is more complex in her

treatment of her female protagonists. Cruz Cámara argues for the importance of the political context of when these works were written and in which series they appeared. Some critics fault the lack of eroticism in the Novela Ideal series, and the extensive use of dialogue, and assert that Montseny was a "prisoner of the mental structures and literary usage" of the romance novel (and reliant on clichés of blonde women).[130] These critiques are also applicable to other authors, including Carmen de Burgos, but she is in the canon, unlike Montseny.[131] As I have argued, these "imprisoning structures" were not followed unwittingly, but as deliberate choices in order to reach the widest audience.

I am not a literary scholar, nor do I want to engage in debates over literary quality. Montseny's fiction is an engaging body of work that deserves more attention. In offering other models, even through genre fiction, her work questioned hierarchies and provided challenging opportunities to think about these social relationships. They offered examples of people remodeling these relationships, enabling readers to see what can be done in the present, contrary to the accusations of anarchism as chiliastic, utopian, etc. She used fiction as in the opening epigraph by Kropotkin who also wrote that creating socialism was "a question of reshaping all relationships." Gustav Landauer wrote that "[t]he state is a relationship between human beings, a way by which people relate to one another; and one destroys it by entering into other relationships, by behaving differently to one another." Playing off the works of Landauer and Kropotkin, Montseny challenged individuals to create their own individual relationships as part of building the foundations for the future society.[132] Federica Montseny i Mañé should be remembered for more than the dubious honor of being the first female minister in Spain.

Notes

1 Petr Alekseevich Kropotkin, "Preface," in *How We Shall Bring About the Revolution: Syndicalism and the Cooperative Commonwealth*, eds. Emile Pataud and Emile Pouget, (1913, repr., London: Pluto Press, 1990): xxx.

2 Federico Urales was the pseudonym of Joan Montseny i Carret and Soledad Gustavo was used by his *compañera* Teresa Mañé i Miravet. I am using her parents' pseudonyms for clarity.

3 The "ideal" is one of many common synonyms for anarchism especially used in periods of censorship. The series was a double entendre: the Ideal Novel and simultaneously the Anarchist Novel. For a nearly complete listing of both series go to my 2001 reader's report at https://archief.socialhistory.org/en/collections/la-novela-ideal-and-la-novela-libre. Accessed August 2023.

4 Alberto Sánchez Álvarez-Insúa, "Literary Collections," in *Kiosk Literature of Silver Age Spain: Modernity and Mass Culture*, eds. Jeffrey Zamostny and Susan Larson (Bristol: Intellect, 2017), 21. This edited anthology has several useful articles on the *novela corta*.

5 Federica Montseny**,** *Mis primeros cuarenta años* (Barcelona: Plaza & Janés, 1987), 38.

6 Palmiro de Lida [Adrián del Valle], "Evocando el pasado (1886–1892), III," *La Revista Blanca* 6, no. 103 (1 September 1927): 211.

7 Brigitte Magnien states that the "impressive lists" of publications were not solely for proselytizing anarchism, but also to spread a universal "democratic" culture. Brigitte Magnien, "'La novela ideal' (1925–1938) à la conquête de la conscience publique... Avec de l'amour et des idées," in *De l'anarchisme aux courants alternatifs XIX e-XXIe siècles*, eds. Marie–Claude Chaput and Julio Pérez Serrano (Nanterre: Université Paris X/Publidix, 2006): 259.

8 Montseny**,** *Mis primeros*, 52.

9 Their use of "naturalism," *la naturaleza*, is different from naturism (*naturismo*), which includes the practices of nudism, naturopathy (use of natural remedies), and/or vegetarianism. While advocates of these practices could overlap with anarchism, in this same issue, the editors stated that these were a way of life yet not the means to regain humanity's lost compatibility with Nature. La Redacción, "Nuestras ideas y nuestros propósitos," *La Revista Blanca* 1, no. 1 (1 June 1923): 2–3.

10 Eulàlia Vega i Masana, "La 'Novela Ideal' de Frederica Montseny. Una moderna experiència d'emancipació femenina," (Lecture at the Congrés Internacional Gènere i modernitat a la Catalunya contemporània. Escriptores republicanes, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Bellaterra, Catalunya, October 25, 2007) https://filcat.uab.cat/gelcc/escriptores/

congres/Vega.pdf. Diego Abad de Santillán referred to these as "stupid novels" in a 11 April 1927 letter to Max Nettlau. Max Nettlau Papers, Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis, Amsterdam, Netherlands.

11 "La Novela Ideal," *La Revista Blanca* 2, no. 33 (1 October 1924), 4.

12 "La Novela Ideal," *La Revista Blanca* 3, no. 42 (1 March 1925), 1. This is the explanation for the period's "apparent paradox" seen by Danièle Bussy Genevois in the preference for fictional to the traditional essay. Danièle Bussy Genevois, "La novela rosa revolucionaria: Federica Montseny y Alejandra Kolontai (1926-1928)," in *Escritura y revolución en España y América Latina en el s. XX* (Madrid: Fundamentos, 1994): 26. Montseny noted that the literary activism alongside their social activism supported revolutionary movements and political prisoners. Carmen Núñez Esteban and Neus Samblancat Miranda, "Federica Montseny: Una visión ácrata de la literatura," *Scriptura*, nos. 6–7 (1990), 184.

13 Montseny**,** *Mis primeros*, 42.

14 Patricia V. Greene, "Federica Montseny: Chronicler of an Anarcho-Feminist Genealogy," *Letras Peninsulares* 10, nos. 2–3 (1997/1998), 344. Miguel Iñiguez, *Enciclopedia histórica del anarquismo español* (Vitoria: Asociación Isaac Puente, 2008), s.v. "La Novela Ideal."

15 Magnien ponders critically the "undeniable success" of the series. Magnien, "'La novela ideal'," 269–270.

16 I base this on my examination of the letters preserved in the Archivo General de la Guerra Civil Española (AGGCE). It is impossible to know what the archive is missing, but the readers' letters that are saved were from both sexes. I enjoyed reading her novels, which is one reason I wrote about them. The Francoists burned almost all her correspondence, including daily letters between her and her partner Germinal Esgleas. Montseny, *Mis primeros*, 51.

17 "Consultorio general," *La Revista Blanca* 12, no. 308 (14 December 1934), 1012. Marisa Siguan Boehmer, *Literatura popular libertaria: Trece años de "La novela ideal" (1925–1938)* (Barcelona: Península, 1981), 43.

18 A wealth of details can be found in Carlos Serrano, "Relato breve y literatura militante: En torno a 'La Novela Ideal'," in *Encuentro sobre Formas Breves del Relato: Formas breves del relato coloquio Casa de Velázquez–Departamento de Literatura Española de la Universidad de Zaragoza, Madrid, febrero de 1985*, eds. Yves-René Fonquerne, Aurora Egido, and Leonardo Romero (Zaragoza: Secretariado de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Zaragoza/Casa de Velázquez, 1986): 221–241.

19 Jo Labanyi, *Gender and Modernization in the Spanish Realist Novel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 177.

20 The hierarchy opposed even this "concession." Adrian Shubert, *A Social History of Modern Spain* (London: Routledge, 1992), 148–149. Frances Lannon, "The Social Praxis and Cultural Practice of Spanish Catholicism," in *Spanish Cultural Studies: An Introduction: The Struggle for Modernity,* eds. Helen Graham and Jo Labanyi (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995): 40. Reportedly, Britian's king would not visit Spain because of these restrictions. Gerald Brenan, *The Spanish Labyrinth: An Account of the Social and Political Background of the Civil War*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 38. With the brief exception of the Second Republic (1931-1939), this official Church–state relationship remained in effect until the post–Franco Constitution of 1978.

21 Labanyi, *Gender and Modernization*, 177 and Julián Casanova, "A vueltas con los símbolos religiosos," *El País* (Madrid), April 19, 2008.

22 Frances Lannon, "A Basque Challenge to the Pre–Civil War Spanish Church," *European Studies Review*, 9, no. 1 (1979), 30.

23 "Thirty–four new male orders appeared after 1875 and 115 monasteries were founded. They had 22,000 members by 1910....The female orders led the revival of the regular clergy after 1875. Forty–one new orders were founded during the Restoration and by 1900 there were over 42,000 nuns, making up almost half of all the clergy." Shubert, *Social History*, 150. At the end of the Primo de Rivera dictatorship just before the Second Republic, there were more than twenty thousand "male religious" and sixty thousand nuns. Lannon, "Social Praxis," 40.

24 Chris Ealham, "The Myth of the 'Maddened Crowd'," in *The Splintering of Spain: Cultural History and the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939,* eds. Chris Ealham and Michael Richards (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005): 129.

25 Montseny, *María de Magdala,* Novela Ideal 56 (Barcelona: La Revista Blanca, 1927), 23–25. The cover has an alternate title, *María de Magda* that was an error. *La Revista Blanca* 5, no. 96 (15 May 1927): I. *La vida que empieza,* La Novela Ideal 79 (Barcelona: La Revista Blanca, 1928) and its sequel, *Sor Angélica,* La Novela Ideal 83 (Barcelona: La Revista Blanca, 1928), published a month or so later. In these novels, Sister Angélica reaches her fulfillment only when she falls in love in *La vida que empieza* (The Life that Begins) and then leaves the order and truly becomes an angel for the man she loves in *Sor Angélica* (Sister Angelica). This man was a blind soldier, presumably blinded in Morocco.

26 The Patronage for the Suppression of the White Slave Traffic worked with the Trinitarians, the Adoration, and the Oblates, whose convents took in prostitutes. Pedro Trinidad Fernández, "La infancia delincuente y abandonada," in *Historia de la infancia en la España contemporánea, 1834–*

1936, ed. José María Borrás Llop (Madrid: Ministerio de Trabajo y Asuntos Sociales and Fundación Germán Sánchez Ruipérez, 1996): 481.
27 Montseny, *El rescate de la cautiva*, La Novela Ideal 62 (Barcelona: La Revista Blanca, 1927).
28 Ealham discusses the "repressive and draconian religious figures" and gives the example of nuns baptizing hospitalized children without parental consent as producing popular anticlericalism. Chris Ealham, "Anarco–Capitalistes, Lumpenburgesía and the Origins of Anarchism in Catalonia," *ACIS Journal* 7, no. 1 (1994): 55.
29 Quoted in Carolyn P. Boyd, "The Second Battle of Covadonga," *History and Memory* 14, nos. 1–2 (2002), 48.
30 Lannon, "Social Praxis," 42.
31 This is an argument of Shubert's *Social History*.
32 Casanova, "A vueltas con los símbolos religiosos."
33 Lannon, "Social Praxis," 44.
34 Attacks on the position of the Church such as a 1923 proposal to abolish religious education and to tax religious property, were among Primo de Rivera's justifications for his coup. Shlomo Ben–Ami, *Fascism from Above: The Dictatorship of Primo de Rivera in Spain, 1923–1930* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 23–24.
35 Lannon, "Social Praxis," 44–45. The exact founding date of Acción Católica is unclear. See Frances Lannon, *Privilege, Persecution and Prophecy*: *The Catholic Church in Spain, 1875*–1975 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 146–149. Compare Montseny's comment on a week Acción Católica devoted to combating "improper" beach attire. Montseny, "Glosas: La moral en las playas," *La Revista Blanca* 13, no. 337 (5 July 1935), 648 with a bourgeois newspaper account: "La moralidad en las playas," *La Vanguardia* (Barcelona), 31 May 1935. Art was another object of Church criticism. "To be truly real, art had to be related to religion and therefore heedful of moral criteria which, for example, made nude statues completely unacceptable." Lannon, "Basque Challenge," 34. The philosopher and art critic Arthur Danto's argument is relevant here. "The mystery of painting, almost forgotten since the Counter–Reformation, lies in its ability to generate a kind of illusion that has less to do with pictorial perception than it does with feeling." "The Body in Pain," *The Nation* (November 27, 2006), 24. Montseny had very strong views about art, and illustrations in anarchist publications frequently featured nudes, justified on aesthetic grounds and appeals to nature, but also clearly anticlerical.
36 Pius XI, *Ubi Arcano Dei Consilio*, paragraph 54 of the English language version on the Vatican website (there is not one in Spanish), December 23, 1922. https://www.vatican.va/content/pius-xi/en/encyclicals/documents/

hf_p-xi_enc_19221223_ubi-arcano-dei-consilio.html accessed in August 2018. The italics are in the original.

37 Helen Graham also links it to landholding patterns. In the northern parts of Spain, where smallholders predominated, the Church worked with local peasants through credit banks and other services. But in the south, where there were the large, landed estates, these services were absent. Helen Graham, *The Spanish Republic at War, 1936–1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 5.

38 Shubert, *Social History,* 156.

39 Shubert, *Social History*, 162. He states that Asturias and Madrid were not much different.

40 Ealham, "Anarco–Capitalistes," 53.

41 Geraldine M. Scanlon, writing about female Catholic unions, argues that even when the organizers were sincere, they ended up aiding the owners and reaffirming the established hierarchy. Geraldine M. Scanlon, *La polémica feminista en la España contemporánea (1868–1974)* (Madrid: Siglo XXI de España Editores, 1976), 100.

42 Lannon, "Social Praxis," 44.

43 The Solidaridad de Obreros Vascos (SOV) was "a moderate, Christian inspired union movement with several priests prominent in its ranks and close links with the centre–right Nationalist party (Partido Nacionalista Vasco, PNV). Its membership was restricted to workers and employees of pure Basque descent; its unions rejected ideas of class struggle and advocated a conciliatory line in labour disputes. Finally, SOV shared the PNV's ideal vision of social harmony for the Basque Country based on 'national' (meaning Basque) solidarity between workers and employers." Juan Pablo Fusi Aizpúrua, "The Basque Question, 1931–7," in *Revolution and War in Spain, 1931–1939*, ed. by Paul Preston (London: Methuen, 1984): 183. Fusi on page 190 remarks that there was a strong racial and corporatist view in both the SOV and PNV.

44 Ealham, "Anarco–Capitalistes," 54. For a vastly more favorable portrayal of the Libres, and correspondingly harsh on the CNT, see Colin M. Winston, *Workers and the Right in Spain, 1900–1936* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985).

45 Anthony Beevor, *The Battle for Spain: The Spanish Civil War, 1936–1939* (New York: Penguin Books, 2006), 15.

46 See Ealham, *Class, Culture, and Conflict in Barcelona, 1898–1937* (London: Routledge, 2005); Gerald H. Meaker, "Anarchists Versus Syndicalists," in *Politics and Society in Twentieth-Century Spain*, ed. by Stanley G. Payne (New York: New Viewpoints, 1976): 29–72; Angel Smith, *Anarchism, Revolution, and Reaction: Catalan Labour and the Crisis of the*

Spanish State, 1898–1923 (New York: Berghahn Books, 2005); and Winston, *Workers and the Right*.

47 Nerea Aresti Esteban, *Médicos, donjuanes y mujeres modernas: Los ideales de feminidad y masculinidad en el primer tercio del siglo XX* (Bilbao: Universidad del País Vasco, 2001), 35–37.

48 Aresti argues that the gender differences in mass attendance and the growth rates of nuns versus monks reflect this gendering of religion. Nerea Aresti Esteban, "Changes in Gender Expectations in Spain (1900–1936)" (PhD. thesis, State University of New York at Stony Brook, 2000), 162.

49 Gendering the lesser other as female is tied to the history of religious intolerance in Spain. "One way of according infamy to Jews was precisely by attributing to them the category of 'imperfect males', that is, women." Richard M. Cleminson and Francisco Vázquez García, "Breasts, Hair and Hormones," *Bulletin of Spanish Studies* 86, no. 5 (2009), 635, n. 38.

50 Authors lived private lives often in contradiction to their public discourse. The distinction between public views and private actions is exemplified by the affair between two major Spanish novelists, the feminist yet devoutly Catholic Emilia Pardo Bazán (1851–1921) and the anticlerical Benito Pérez Galdós.

51 Aurora Morcillo, *True Catholic Womanhood: Gender Ideology in Franco's Spain* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2000), 18.

52 Mary Nash, "The Rise of the Women's Movement in Nineteenth–Century Spain," in *Women's Emancipation Movements in the Nineteenth Century: A European Perspective*, eds. Sylvia Paletschek, and Bianka Pietrow-Ennker (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004): 253.

53 Morcillo, *True Catholic Womanhood,* 2. Scanlon, *La polémica*, 21.

54 Lou Charnon–Deutsch, "Concepción Arenal and the Nineteenth Century Spanish Debates About Women's Sphere and Education," in *Recovering Spain's Feminist Tradition*, ed. by Lisa Vollendorf (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 2001), 200.

55 Pius Xi, "On Christian Marriage to the Venerable Brethren, Patriarchs, Primates, Archbishops, Bishops, and Other Local Ordinaries Enjoying Peace and Communion with the Apostolic See," December 30, 1930. https://www.vatican.va/content/pius-xi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_19301231_casti-connubii.html, accessed August 2023.

56 Not until 1932 did the socialist UGT equal the CNCOC in female membership. Mary Nash "'Ideals of Redemption'," in *Women and Socialism, Socialism and Women: Europe Between the Two World Wars,* eds. Helmut Gruber and Pamela M. Graves (New York: Berghahn Books, 1998): 355.

57 Nash, "'Ideals of Redemption'," 354.

58 There is little information for María Dolores Rodríguez except that she

published this article. Iñiguez, *Enciclopedia histórica*, s.v. "Rodríguez, María Dolores."

59 "Catholic archaism, however, was not limited to nostalgia for the confessional uniformity of a former age and for political structures capable of enforcing such uniformity. It extended also to a thorough going rejection of what Pius IX's *Syllabus of Errors* of 1864 had called 'modern civilization,' as manifest in anything ranging from socialism through co–education to experimental art forms." Lannon, "Basque Challenge," 29.

60 Lannon, "Basque Challenge," 34 and Lannon, "Social Praxis," 41–42. At the end of the Primo de Rivera régime the Bishop of Lerida complained "From where did the perdition of Spain stem if not from these damned liberties, the stepdaughters of the revolution?" Quoted in Ben–Ami, *Fascism from Above*, 353. Peter Gowan, argues that the anti–liberal ideas of Juan Donoso Cortés influenced politicians and intellectuals across Europe, including Pius IX, Louis Napoleon, Bismarck, and Nicholas I. "A Spanish Singleton," *New Left Review,* no. 6 (2000), 144–149.

61 Montseny. "El retorno de la naturaleza," *La Revista Blanca* 9, no. 192 (15 May 1931): 584. The popularity in anarchist publications of reproductions of Greek sculpture and Renaissance paintings with classical themes contrasted with the Church's condemnation of these very same works.

62 Background is provided in Joan Connelly Ullman, "The Warp and Woof of Parliamentary Politics in Spain, 1808–1939: Anticlericalism versus 'Neo–Catholicism'," *European Studies Review* 13, no. 2 (1983), 145–176. Anticlericalism was widespread among anarchists, believing as they declared at the Zaragoza congress, "for humanity religion is purely subjective and consequently will be relegated to the sanctuary of individual consciousness, and not a matter of moral coercion or public ostentation." Notice the use of sanctuary, "*sagrario*" – from the same root as sacred. Confederación Nacional del Trabajo, "Concepto confederal del comunismo libertario," *La Revista Blanca* 14, no. 384 (29 May 1936), 441.

63 Shubert argues that what was new in the twentieth century was urbanization. Shubert, *Social History*, 165.

64 The importance of her reading is repeatedly stressed by Montseny in numerous interviews she conducted as well as her memoirs. Núñez Esteban and Samblancat Miranda, "Federica Montseny" and Carmen Senabre Llavata, "Arte y anarquismo. Entrevista con Federica Montseny" *Cimal: Cuadernos de Cultura Artística*, no. 29 (1986): 86–92. The importance of French anticlerical novels is discussed in Brian John Dendle, *The Spanish Novel of Religious Thesis, 1876–1936* (Princeton: Princeton University, Dept. of Romance Languages, 1968), 14.

65 George R. Esenwein states that Sue was particularly important in Spain. *Anarchist Ideology and the Working–Class Movement in Spain, 1868–1898* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 128. Montseny knew French. Montseny devoted an entire article to another French anticlerical author in "George Sand, o la amorosa," *La Revista Blanca* 8, no. 171 (1 July 1930), 57–59.

66 Montseny wrote a positive obituary for Blasco Ibáñez in "Ha muerto un novelista," *La Revista Blanca* 7, no. 114 (15 February 1928), 555–558. According to Magnien, the literary world in the twenties treated both Blasco Ibáñez and Pérez Galdós badly and rejected them. This reached "an indecent level at the time of their deaths." Despite this, they were the preferred reading of the public. Brigitte Magnien, "Crisis de la novela," in *Los felices años veinte: Crisis y modernidad*, eds. Carlos Serrano and Serge Salaün (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2006): 251.

67 Additionally, Zevaco was an early film producer.

68 The story ran for fifty–nine issues, from July 1925 (año 3, no. 51) through December 1927 (año 6, no. 110).

69 One collection from 1627 contained almost three hundred examples of hostility towards priests and a collection published during the Franco regime contained over two hundred. Shubert, *Social History*, 165. Frances Lannon defines National Catholicism as an ideology that looked back to the age of imperial greatness and whose central tenet was the inseparability of Catholicism and Spanish identity.

70 Shubert, *Social History*, 166.

71 Dendle, *Spanish Novel,* 23. Some novels by Blasco Ibáñez and Pérez Galdós feature priests who run the domestic sphere in place of the husband, adding a gendered dimension to its anticlericalism. Dendle, *Spanish Novel,* 53.

72 Ullman. "The Warp and Woof," 155–156.

73 The demonstration was in response to an article by the King's tutor and confessor denouncing liberalism as a sin. Brenan, *Spanish Labyrinth*, 38.

74 Ullman, ""The Warp and Woof of Parliamentary Politics in Spain, 1808–1939," 147.

75 I am not agreeing with the millennial argument usually associated with Eric Hobsbawm that anarchism is close to religion and hence chiliastic, millenarian, and irrational. See his *Primitive Rebels: Studies in Archaic Forms of Social Movement in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1965).

76 Lannon, "Social Praxis," 43. Compare this figure with those from the Civil War when the destruction was just thirteen of 236 buildings destroyed in Barcelona. Ealham, *Class, Culture, and Conflict*, 186. Military service was

universal, but the well–to–do could pay to avoid it.

77 Shubert, *Social History*, 166. Raymond Carr has a smaller total figure of forty-two buildings. Raymond Carr, *Spain 1808–1975*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 484. The destruction in the Tragic Week was greater than the destruction of the Church's Madrid and Malaga properties in May 1931 known as the *quemada de conventos*.

78 Angel Smith, "Barcelona Through the European Mirror," in *Red Barcelona: Social Protest and Labour Mobilisation in the Twentieth Century,* ed. Angel Smith (London: Routledge, 2002): 6 and Smith, "From Subordination to Contestation: The Rise of Labour in Barcelona, 1898–1918," in *Red Barcelona,* 38.

79 Ferrer was the educator and founder of the Modern School movement who was tried and executed following the Tragic Week. For English language versions of Ferrer's work see the anthology edited by Mark Bray: Francisco Ferrer, *Anarchist Education and the Modern School: A Francisco Ferrer Reader* (Oakland: PM Press. 2019).

80 Bakunin's note to his 1867 "Federalism, Socialism, Anti–Theologism," in *Bakunin on Anarchism*, ed. Sam Dolgoff, 2nd ed. (Montréal: Black Rose, 1980), 441, note 12.

81 Clara Eugenia Lida, "Literatura anarquista y anarquista literario," *Nuevo Revista de Filología Hispánica* 19, no. 2 (1970), 370. In this article, Lida is also making a distinction between anarchist texts and "literary" anarchists, authors whose anarchism was temporary and not profound.

82 As Helen Graham points out "Catholicism determined the culture, the mind sets and the actions not only of the faithful, but also of its opponents." Helen Graham, "Spain and Europe," *Historical Journal* 35, no. 4 (1992): 970. Scientists, often themselves anticlerical, used an explicitly religious vocabulary to describe maternity and the eminent gynecologist, Vital Aza Díaz, argued that when a woman gave birth she became, like Mary, without sin. Aresti, "Changes in Gender Expectations," 217. The use of religious forms in popular literature is common throughout Europe. "In 1865 Bakunin had been preparing *Catechism for a Revolutionary* for his colleagues in the Secret Alliance. In Spain, the bombastic writer and republican politician Roque Barcia published in 1869 *El evangelio del pueblo*, with great success among his co–religionists. The anarchists adopted the same form, and three years later, Nicolás Alonso Marselau, the Andalusian internationalist with the greatest prestige, published from a Seville jail *El evangelio del obrero* in 1872." Lida, "Literatura anarquista," 373. Reprinted in 1898 and 1931, the *evangelio* was a popular document. Alonso Marselau also edited a journal of the same name. The funding came from Protestants in the United States. Iñiguez, *Enciclopedia histórica*, s.v. "Alonso

Marselau, Nicolás."
83 Senabre Llavata, "Arte y anarquismo," 88.
84 "Un tomo notabilísimo," *La Revista Blanca* 4, no. 83 (1 October 1926), I.
85 *Almanaque de "La Novela Ideal" 1927* (Barcelona: La Revista Blanca, 1926) and *Almanaque de "La Novela Ideal" 1928* (Barcelona: La Revista Blanca, 1927).
86 "La Novela Ideal," *La Revista Blanca* 6, no. 97 (1 June 1927), I. On persecution, see Montseny, "Pi y Margall o una vida austera," *La Revista Blanca* 8, no. 180 (15 November 1930), 273–275 where she notes Pi y Margall's *Historia de la pintura* was condemned by the Church and its sale forbidden by royal decree. This made it even more desirable to anticlericals.
87 Montseny, *María de Magdala*, 26.
88 Nor did Isadora Duncan hesitate to use religion. "I had come to Europe to bring about a great renaissance of religion through the Dance, to bring the knowledge of the Beauty and Holiness of the human body through its expression of movements, and not to dance for the amusement of overfed Bourgeoisie after dinner." Isadora Duncan, *My Life* (New York: Liveright, 1927), 85. Montseny was a great admirer of Duncan. Montseny, "Isadora Duncan, o una tragedia clásica," *La Revista Blanca* 6, 106 (15 October 1927), 298–300, "La resurrección de Isadora," *La Revista Blanca* 7, no. 151 (1 September 1929), 163–165.
89 Montseny, *La Victoria* (Barcelona: La Revista Blanca, 1925). It also ties directly into what Clara states about giving her own life and that of her only son at the end of Montseny's novel *El hijo de Clara*, the sequel to *La Victoria*. She is sacrificing her son for the good of humanity. It is clearly a mother's sacrifice of her son paralleling that of Mary and Jesus. Montseny, *El hijo de Clara* (Barcelona: La Revista Blanca, 1927), 254.
90 Montseny, *La Victoria*, 13. Note again the mixed–use religious imagery and the double use of the concept of "ideal."
91 Montseny, "La mujer nueva," *La Revista Blanca* 4, no. 72 (15 May 1926), 24. The literature on Montseny's views on "the woman question" topic is extensive and there is no consensus. Montseny's own writings contain numerous contradictions which should be placed in historical context. In English there are dissertations and a very few articles dealing with her ideas, usually by literature scholars. Catherine Davies, Shirley Faye Fredericks (a historian), Patricia V. Greene, and Sarah Leggott in English. Understandably in Spanish and Catalan there is more material by a diverse set of authors. Nuria Cruz Cámara, Irene Lozano, Mary Nash, and Susana Tavera i Garca have published important studies of Montseny.
92 "La Novela Ideal," *La Revista Blanca* 4, no. 84 (15 November 1926), I.

The title and Montseny's authorship were announced in the previous issue but issue 84 had the synopsis.

93 I suspect Montseny is also drawing on Emilia Pardo Bazán's *La madre naturaleza,* as both are pastoral fantasies where the couple is the hero and love triumphs. Ruth El Saffar, "Mother Nature's Nature," *Anales Galdosianos*, no. 2 (1987), 94.

94 It is not clear if the capital is Barcelona, referring to provincial capital, or Madrid, referring to the national capital.

95 Montseny, *Resurrección,* La Novela Ideal 43 (Barcelona: La Revista Blanca, 1926), 6.

96 Montseny, *Resurrección*, 19

97 This also ties into the Carmelite order, a *Carmelo* is a Carmelite convent. This order was not one of the ones that took in prostitutes to "reform" them. Trinidad Fernández, "La infancia delincuente y abandonada," 481.

98 Again, "ideal" in these texts is synonymous with anarchism.

99 Montseny, *Resurrección*, page 8 for voice of an apostle and page 9 for new Sermon on the Mount.

100 Juan Mas Cabré, "Grecia en Cataluña," *La Revista Blanca* 1, no. 5 (1 August 1923), 2–4. Montseny "La ciudad muerta," *La Revista Blanca* 4, no. 76 (15 July 1925), 108–110. She also used the Greek goddess of love in the title of another article: "Bajo el signo de Afrodita" *La Revista Blanca* 7, no. 145 (1 June 1929), 18–21.

101 There are repeated comments by several characters about how much thinner he is on each visit, and there is an extended discussion of his mother's fears for his health due to the seminary life, which are dismissed by the village priest.

102 Montseny, *Resurrección*, 6–7.

103 Montseny's responses and questions from the authors in Núñez Esteban and Samblancat Miranda in "Federica Montseny," 183.

104 Carmela cries out that there is no room in the cemetery for Pedro, a comment that cannot be literal but only figurative. The cemetery was sanctified ground so the Church would not have allowed Pedro to be buried there — nor would Pedro have wanted to be buried there. This is also an allusion to the Nativity story — no space for the wanderers.

105 Montseny, *Resurrección*, 8 and 11.

106 The names have didactic purposes: Noble and Paz (Peace). Dogs not only have symbolic names but represent an Edenic Nature. Montseny noted in an article how few knew that her childhood was in the country. Montseny, "España en convulsión: Entre los mujiks catalanes: Aventuras de la propaganda," *El Luchador: Periódico de Sátira, Crítica, Doctrina y*

Combate, 3, no 94 (13 January 1933), 4. This was on a farm and there were numerous dogs. When one became rabid the family was unable to kill it and had to turn to the hated Guardia Civil to do it. Montseny, "Nuestros hijos: Los huérfanos de Casa Viejas," *El Luchador* 3, no. 97 (10 February 1933), 1. Dogs are portrayed again as the only true friends of an orphaned hunchback in her short story "Amanecer" in the *Almanaque de 'La Novela Ideal' 1927,* 27–36.

107 She could also be declared a prostitute, a traditional view of unwed mothers. Aresti, "Changes in Gender Expectations," 54.

108 Montseny, *Resurrección*, 18–19. This would have been shocking at the time. However, Montseny's female characters rarely take shit and are readily prepared to use weapons to defend their independence. Clara in *La Victoria* carries a pistol and María Luisa—the protagonist of Montseny's *Heroínas,* La Novela Libre 20 (Barcelona: La Revista Blanca, 1935)—leads a group of guerrillas.

109 *La leona* (The Lioness) would become one of Montseny's many nicknames. She describes Carmela as like a lion when she defends herself against the harassment of a group of young men.

110 The stem family predominates in Galicia, the Basque region, and Catalonia. Josette Borderies–Guereña, "Niños y niñas en familia," in *Historia de la infancia en la España contemporánea,* 24.

111 William A. Douglass, "Iberian Family History," *Journal of Family History*, 13, no. 1 (1988): 4. The inheritance system is that the eldest child—son *or* daughter—inherited upon their marriage.

112 David Sven Reher states that in northern Catalonia tradition favored the male child over any female offspring. "Marriage Patterns in Spain, 1887–1930," *Journal of Family History*, 16, no. 1 (1991), 23.

113 Montseny's surname is both the name of a peak in Catalonia and of a local noble family, possibly distantly related. It is a compound of *mont* (mountain) and *seny* (like the Scots *canny*).

114 Susan M. DiGiacomo, "'La Caseta i l'Hortet'," *Anthropological Quarterly*, 60, no. 4 (1987), 160.

115 The Russian revolutionaries similarly used religious models. See Nina Tumarkin, "The Myth of Lenin During the Civil War Years," in *Bolshevik Culture: Experiment and Order in the Russian Revolution,* ed. Abbott Gleason, Peter Kenez, and Richard Stites (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 77–92.

116 Montseny, *Resurrección*, 15.

117 Montseny, *Resurrección*, 14. Because Pedro and Carmela lived together as equals based in free love, she is not a wife, which would have implied her subordination to Pedro and then to Jacinto, but an independent equal in her

relationships with the two men.
118 Montseny, *Resurrección*, 28–29.
119 Montseny, *Resurrección*, 13.
120 Montseny, *Resurrección*, 30.
121 Montseny, *Resurrección*, 31.
122 Katerina Clark, *The Soviet Novel: History as Ritual*, 3rd ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), 174.
123 Of course, the *novela de tesis* is not specifically of the left or right, just that the thesis is the driving force.
124 Soviet Marxism and anarchism do share a strong drive to cultural revolution, especially in the elimination of religion. See Sheila Fitzpatrick, "Cultural Revolution Revisited," *Russian Review*, 58, no. 2 (1991), 207.
125 The exception to this is when Clara offers Nardo to humanity, a mother's sacrifice for the collective good. Montseny, *El hijo de Clara*, 254.
126 Peter Brooks, *The Melodramatic Imagination: Balzac, Henry James, Melodrama, and the Mode of Excess* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), 44.
127 Montseny**,** *Mis primeros*, 41.
128 A critical view of the series is presented by Brigitte Magnien, Serge Salaün, Carlos Serrano, "Le discours amoureux dans La Novela Ideal. Tristes topiques," in *Le Discours des groupes domines (domaine Ibérique et Latino-Américain): Actes du colloque* (Paris: Université de la Sorbonne nouvelle Paris III, Service des publications, 1986), 101-109. More positive analyses are Bussy Genevois, "La novela rosa revolucionaria" and Patricia V. Greene, "Federica Montseny: Crónicas de cultura y combate," in *Eduardo Barriobero y Herrán (1895-1939): Sociedad y cultura radical*, ed. Julio Bravo Vega (Logroño: Universidad de La Rioja, 2002), 123-134.
129 Ana Lozano de la Pola, "Re-visitando a Federica Montseny. Una lectura de La Victoria y sus lecturas," *Arbor,* no. 719 (2006): 399–405 and Nuria Cruz Cámara, *La mujer moderna en los escritos de Federica Montseny* (Woodbridge: Tamesis, 2015).
130 Magnien, Salaün, and Serrano, "Le discours amoureux," 103, 107. And she has a fair number of dark–haired female protagonists as well. Two of them are Vida in *La indomable* and María Luisa in *Heroínas*. See Montseny, *La indomable* (Barcelona: La Revista Blanca, 1928) and Montseny, *Heroínas*.
131 Michelle M. Sharp, "Carmen de Burgos: Teaching Women of the Modern Age," in *Kiosk Literature*, 311–328. Burgos is Montseny's bourgeois counterpart, writing thesis novels with extensive dialogues and melodrama, while initially proclaiming humanism rather than feminism (albeit later changing). See also Anja Louis, *Women and the Law: Carmen de Burgos, an Early Feminist* (Woodbridge: Tamesis, 2005).

132 She had read both authors. "[I]t is a question of reshaping all relationships..." Kropotkin, "The State: Its Historic Role," in *Selected Writings on Anarchism and Revolution*, ed. Martin A. Miller (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1970), 262 and "The state is a relationship between human beings, a way by which people relate to one another; and one destroys it by entering into other relationships, by behaving differently to one another." Gustav Landauer, "Weak Statesmen, Weaker People," in *Anarchism: A Documentary History of Libertarian Ideas. Volume One: From Anarchy to Anarchism 300 CE–1939*, ed. Robert Graham (Montréal: Black Rose Books, 2005), 165. See a more contemporary call to "compost" the state by Vishwam Jamie Heckert, "Loving-Politics: On the Art of Living Together," in *The Anarchist Imagination: Anarchism Encounters the Humanities and the Social Sciences*, ed. Carl Levy and Saul Newman (Abingdon: Routledge, 2019), 139.