

Eugenio Noel, Joaquín Costa and the Regenerationism Movement in Spain

by

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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Literatures and Languages in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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## Abstract

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This research will present select narrative works of the twentieth century Spanish author Eugenio Noel and discuss them within the context of the regenerationism movement. Often viewed as a descendant of the members of the generation of '98, Noel is frequently aligned with this intellectual group; however, Noel himself has clearly expressed disassociation from them and placed himself within the circle of writers known as the *novecentistas*. Often undervalued by critics, his work nevertheless represents originality of both style and expression. Noel adopted a bohemian lifestyle and centered his ideology primarily on the related issues of *antitaurismo* and *antiflamenquismo* seeing within them the root causes for the decline of Spain before and after *el desastre de '98*. Noel was very much aligned to the regenerationism of Joaquín Costa and based his campaign for changes in his homeland on the latter's ideology.

Noel worked tirelessly to help the Spanish people reclaim *el alma de la raza*. His crusade took him on endless travels throughout Spain and the Americas where he gave many conferences and spoke not only against *flamenquismo* and *taurismo*, but also about other social issues. He extolled the proud history and accomplishments of the Spanish people and created a formidable body of literature, which addressed themes that were prominent among regenerationist thinkers.

Noel professed himself to be *un hombre de acción* and his plan for moving the country forward was to engage in an anthropological/ethnographic and rhetorical campaign to understand

the people and subsequently assist them in rediscovering and reclaiming the proud heritage of the Spanish nation and its citizens. The present research will discuss both the historical and social contexts to which Noel reacted as well as the specific regenerationist platforms of Joaquín Costa, Lucas Mallada and Ricardo Macías Picavea. Noel's unique literary style will be examined via an analysis of selected works and his alignment with the regenerationism movement will be established.

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1915

*Adoro mi Patria y puedo sostener con orgullo que en estos últimos años ningún joven de mi generación ... ha trabajado por ella como yo. Calumniado, impopular, solo, pobre, supe vencer el obstáculo repugnante de la indiferencia o de la envidia que produce a los perezosos todo movimiento. En el espléndido aislamiento con que me honran mis compañeros he logrado fortificar mi corazón; y su silencio, que tantos triunfos editoriales me ha restado, duplicó el esfuerzo de una labor que, cuando se conozca, tal vez produzca respeto. Mas mi Patria, a la que sacrifiqué muchas y no pobres cosas, no puede pedirme que mienta; e implacable con sus vicios, la digo en este libro recias verdades.*

*Eugenio Noel  
(Nervios de la raza)*

### Introduction

Eugenio Noel – heir to the ideological legacy of the generation of '98 or regenerationist thinker and member of the new literary group of *novecentistas*? Critics have often aligned the ideology of the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Spanish writer, Eugenio Noel (1885-1936) to that of those authors who immediately preceded him as standard-bearers of the generation of '98. Noel himself clearly disavowed this association and declared himself a member of the group known as the *novecentistas* as well as *un hombre de acción*. He insisted that rather than be considered among those writers who only created soul-searching narratives and brooded about the dire state of affairs in Spain after *el desastre de '98*, Noel preferred to be known as an activist who went beyond introspective rhetoric to regenerate the country and spirit of the Spanish people through his actions. These actions included extensive traveling and conferencing across Spain and the Americas and prolific literary production related to promoting progressive changes, which would move the Spanish nation and people forward.

The purpose of the current research is to examine primarily select narrative works of Eugenio Noel within the context of the Spanish regenerationism movement. This investigation

will demonstrate the author's close alignment to the campaigns of other regenerationist figures, in particular, Joaquín Costa, who significantly inspired and informed Noel's personal ideology for change in Spanish government and society. The regenerationist tradition greatly influenced Noel as both a writer and speaker by stirring him to articulate an important agenda for change and reform, which he activated through his many conferences across his native country and the Americas, and via his countless pieces of literature that appeared in newspapers, journals, and books.

The study will first present background information of the era preceding Noel as well as the years afterwards in order to contextualize his work historically, politically, and socially. Spain was in an age of considerable upheaval due to the uncertainty of the government and questions of succession to the throne. In addition, the country suffered the loss of its colonies after *el desastre de '98*, and its citizens were looking for ways to reclaim their former glory after suffering such a humiliating defeat from the United States. This important event produced a body of literature from the well-known members of the generation of '98 who tried to identify the root causes of the loss as well as the reasons for the overall decline of Spanish influence in the world. In the meantime, figures like Joaquín Costa, Lucas Mallada, and Ricardo Macías Picavea were in the midst of a campaign to regenerate the country and its citizens in order to modernize Spain according to the standards of the rest of Europe. The current investigation will demonstrate how contrary to the opinion of critics, Noel aligned himself to these members of the regenerationist campaign rather than follow in the steps of those members of the generation of '98 whom he considered to be ineffective. Instead of carrying on ceaseless internal dialogs within himself over the tragic turn of events, Noel set out to attempt to turn things around for the people and the country via his conferencing throughout Spain and the Americas and through the

numerous narratives that he composed. His unique and colorful style of message delivery, including a description of his literary techniques will be examined in order to identify his preferred methods for communicating his regeneration platform to the Spanish people. Finally, the study will compare Noel's regenerationist ideology with that of other prominent figures of the same movement. Although connected to each other and the same goals, each of these *hombres de acción* chose different strategies to achieve them. A summary of the study and a list of titles of Noel's works will conclude the investigation.

As stated previously, the current research will examine the narrative works of Eugenio Noel in order to identify his ideology within the context of the regenerationism of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century Spain. Eugenio Noel was primarily a writer of short novels that appeared in periodicals, essays, and one long novel. Because of his passion for their same ideals, Andrés Trapiello considers Noel to be *el hijo menor* of the generation of '98 (*Raíces de España* 1: 14). Literary critics such as José Esteban praise the work of Noel, whom they feel has been wrongfully neglected as an important twentieth century Spanish writer. Referring to Noel's various works, Esteban comments, "El hecho de que esta apasionante y apasionada obra en prosa, tan importante como irregular, no ocupe el lugar que en justicia literaria debe corresponderle, puede tener sus explicaciones racionales, pero nunca la de la imagen pintoresca que el mismo se forjó, como nos han hecho creer algunos de sus exegetas" (12).

Eugenio Noel, pseudonym for Eugenio Muñoz Díaz, was born of humble beginnings in Madrid to a shepherd turned barber and a maid who became a servant of the duchess of Sevillano. The author's earliest studies were undertaken with the Padres Escolapios where he demonstrated his passion for reading, and then under the sponsorship of the duchess of Sevillano, he entered the seminary in the Colegio y Casa Misión de los Cartujos de Tardajos near Burgos.

While completing his studies there, he realized that religious life was not his calling and returned to Madrid. He continued his religious education nevertheless, at the Seminario Conciliar de San Dámaso de Madrid, but at the same time began a relationship with the singer of opera and zarzuela, María Noel (“Mimí”) from whom it is said he took his pseudonym.<sup>1</sup> José Esteban identifies María Noel as the inspiration for his first literary work, *Alma de santa* [1909] (21). The duchess of Sevillano also sponsored his studies with Cardinal Mercier in Malinas, Belgium, but Noel eventually returned to Spain and ultimately gave up any desire to pursue theology or enter the clergy.

The author instead took up a bohemian life style in which he frequented cafés with such authors as Villaespesa, Carrere, Ciges Aparicio and the three González Blanco brothers (Andrés, Edmundo and Pedro). He also attended the *tertulias* at the café *Nuevo de Levante*, which were presided over by Ramón del Valle-Inclán. However, upon the advice of Ortega y Gasset, Noel enlisted as a volunteer in the Spanish army and fought in the Moroccan wars in 1909. According to his two biographers, César González Ruano and Francisco Carmona Nenclares, it was during this period of time when Noel acquired “... ese horror por lo doloroso, esa flamencofobia ... ” (37) that was to influence his writing so deeply.

Because of Noel’s outspokenness against the war in Morocco and his publication, *Notas de un voluntario* which was based on his African military experiences and articles from the republican newspaper, *España Nueva*, Noel was in and out of prison during the years 1909 and 1910. After finally receiving his freedom, he took up his strong *antiflamenquismo/antitaurismo* campaign. Noel traveled all over Spain and crossed the Atlantic four times to the Americas

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<sup>1</sup> María Cruz García de Enterría notes the existence of a French author by the name of Eugène Noël who published several books about Rabelais, Voltaire, Michelet, etc. between 1855-1870 (155). Ramón Gómez de la Serna also indicates that Eugenio Noel “... se había dotado de ese seudónimo de progenie francesa, sonoro y lleno de fijeza rotunda y de invierno ... ” (308).

between the years 1918 to 1936 to speak about the values of the Hispanic culture as well as to promote the ideals of his campaign “ ... siempre, siempre, con un afán reformador ... ” (Esteban 25). Upon his return to Spain from his fourth and last trip, the author died in a hospital in Barcelona in April 1936.

Eugenio Noel began his literary career in 1909 with the short novel, *Alma de santa* and continued writing prodigiously from that point on. Eugenio de Nora identifies three major trends in the narrative works of Noel: 1) those short works whose major theme is anticlerical and expressed in unrealistic accounts; 2) those that reflect a false erotic and religious mysticism; 3) and finally, those that represent the characteristic themes of the generation of '98 regarding the decline of Spain to which Noel reacted so vehemently (288). In another analysis, Andrés Trapiello classifies Noel's books into two main categories, namely, chronicles and novels (*Raíces de España* 1: 19). In his chronicles, Trapiello sees Noel as searching for an immediate audience and therefore he opts to write in a clear, straightforward journalistic style. However, in his novels, Noel's narrative style takes a sharp turn and becomes much more baroque in its expression. Trapiello observes that in these novels, Noel makes a point of including numerous citations of the works of other authors of questionable merit as well as using language which may be classified as the popular jargon of the day (*Raíces* 1: 20).

As mentioned previously, critical opinion has frequently linked Noel to the writers of the generation of '98; Noel, however, has distanced himself ideologically from this group. He preferred instead to be considered a *novecentista* rather than a *noventayochista*. Noel remarks, “Los del 98 son todos hombres que cierran una época. Hombres brochés. ¿Qué horizontes nuevos abren? Contribuyen a la anquilosis de la raza. Intelectuales sin dinamismo. Sentimentales. Seremos los novecentistas los que extirparemos el cancer que está royendo la

vitalidad de la raza ... Son hombres sin proyecciones. Sólo hay uno que puede hacerlo: Joaquín Costa” (*Diario íntimo* 1: 141).

Besides classifying himself as a *novecentista*, Eugenio Noel also extolled the work of Joaquín Costa (1848-1911) and initiated his own famous campaign against *flamenquismo* and *taurismo*. Both as a journalist and as a novelist, he wrote and lectured considerably against these two elements despite the fact that they were a significant part of Spanish popular culture. He viewed both of these activities as being at the root of Spanish decline and moral decay.

As stated previously, Noel’s thinking was, according to most critics, a further extension or reaction to that of the generation of ’98, but Noel himself preferred to be aligned with the voices of reformers such as Joaquín Costa. The latter called for a *cirujano de hierro* who would excise oligarchy and *caciquismo* from the government and replace it with politicians who would guarantee that all of the constitutional institutions of the presidential regime would function. Andrés Trapiello states: “Costa fue con el único con el que de verdad llegó a identificarse Noel, peregrinó incluso hasta su tumba para hacerse junto a ella un retrato, cómo no, que diera fe de su ardor regeneracionista” (*Raíces* 1: 14).

In another interpretation of his position on Spanish regeneration, Ángeles Prado hypothesizes that Noel, in his earnest campaign to defeat *flamenquismo* and *taurismo*, was merely looking for another path to fame and notoriety after all possibilities which his book against the war in Morocco offered him had been exhausted. She writes: “Agotadas las posibilidades que le ofreció su libro contra la guerra de Africa, esta guerra suya contra el flamenquismo y los toros le proporcionará una popularidad más ruidosa y, desde luego, menos comprometida y arriesgada que su lucha contra la política militar del Gobierno” (*Denunciador* 3). Given Noel’s preoccupation with audience response to his appearances as well as his

penchant for histrionics and display, it is feasible that the desire for notoriety was a significant part of his personal agenda.

The present investigation will also discuss the influence of music as a theme in Noel's rhetorical campaign to remake Spain more in the image of the rest of Europe, which was a major goal of the regenerationists. Noel had a formidable knowledge of the subject, as evidenced in his narratives that integrate the area of music of European composers into his texts such as the short novel entitled *El allegretto de la sinfonía VII* (1916). He also wrote several literary pieces that appeared in *España, nervio a nervio*, (1924) and those entitled *Musicalia: Bella Voz* and *Musicalia: El piano de la señorita* that will be discussed in this research. Part of Noel's plan for the regeneration of Spain was to promote the music of such composers as Ludwig van Beethoven and Richard Wagner who were so important to this historical period and enjoyed great popularity in Spain. It is interesting to note that Noel went so far as even to wear his hair like Beethoven in order to resemble this composer's appearance. Since *flamenquismo* is related to a specific musical genre or style, the present study will explore the relationship between Noel's recognized knowledge of music, particularly that of European composers, and study its impact on the formation of his ideological framework for Spain to be more like the rest of Europe.

Critics have almost all unanimously acknowledged the paucity of scholarly investigative studies, which exist regarding the work of Eugenio Noel. In a 1994 newspaper article, "Los papeles de Noel" that appeared in *El país*, William Lyon writes, "... hoy día al mencionarse el nombre de Eugenio Noel son muchas las personas que no saben de quién se trata. Y sin embargo a principios de siglo era uno de los escritores y críticos sociales más famosos de España" (2). An investigation of sources indicates that very little has been written within the last 10 years regarding the work of Noel. In 1992, José Esteban compiled a bibliography of Noel's works but

only included those that were housed in the Biblioteca Nacional of Spain (“Prólogo”, *Las siete Cucas* 47-53). In 1995, Francisca Escudero Vidal completed a bibliographic review of the writer’s works that appeared in Madrid’s *Revista de Literatura*. It attempted to create a more complete listing of Noel’s narrative *oeuvre*, but at the same time acknowledged the difficulty of accomplishing the task. This difficulty was due mainly to the inaccessibility of some of the texts as well as Noel’s own system of publication. Once again, in 2001, Javier Barreiro attempted to catalog Noel’s works and compiled a bibliography based on one that had been established by Abelardo Linares in 1988; however, Barreiro added additional works that Linares had not included. The same reasons of inaccessibility of texts and Noel’s system of publication are also cited for the lack of substantial research done in the area of his literary corpus. Moreover, the body of current research that does exist is very limited in number. Very interestingly, William Lyon also reports in his article in *El país* the presence of not only additional pages of Noel’s *Diario íntimo*, but also unedited papers, which are in the possession of a possible relative of Noel (3). The current investigation will synthesize existing research and more clearly define the author’s ideology within the framework of regenerationism and demonstrate how Noel’s plan for Spain compared with those of other regenerationists such as Joaquín Costa, Lucas Mallada, and Ricardo Macías Picavea.

The outline for the current research study is as follows:

Chapter I will present an overview of the historical and sociological movements in which Eugenio Noel found itself as well as explore the plans for regeneration as defined by the principal figures of the period. It will outline the history, politics, and culture of the era since each of these areas impacted the intellectual thought of the aforementioned figures of Joaquín Costa, Lucas Mallada, and Ricardo Macías Picavea. It will study the government of Antonio

Cánovas del Castillo which José Álvarez Junco characterizes as “a *non-competitive oligarchical monarchy*” (71) with the significant presence of local *caciques* as part of its structure. This phenomenon of *caciquismo* dominated the local politics of the period. Álvarez Junco states that *caciquismo* was a manifestation of the social reality characterized by a duality “... between a formally centralized administration and the real fragmentation of political power” (71). As part of the reaction to *caciquismo*, the figure of Joaquín Costa rose to prominence because of his position against the oligarchy and *cacique* form of government. This study will explore Costa’s assessment of the political condition as well as his proposed remedies since Noel was aligned so closely with his position. It will also investigate the work of Lucas Mallada and Ricardo Macías Picavea in order to determine the extent of their influence on the regeneration ideology of the period.

Chapter II will introduce the figure of Eugenio Noel and provide biographical information that impacted his literary work. Significant experiences such as his years in the seminary under the sponsorship of the duchess of Sevillano, as well as the time spent in military service in North Africa and his subsequent incarcerations all influenced his later life. It will speak about the writer’s unconcealed bohemian life style and describe his *antiflamenquismo* and *antitaurismo* convictions, which became the cornerstones of his ideological campaign. It will also report how some other Spanish intellectuals of the nineteenth century such as Gaspar Núñez de Arce, Clarín, Palacio Valdés, Emilia Pardo Bazán, Ortega y Gasset and Joaquín Costa also held *antiflamenquismo* sentiments. It will discuss Noel’s attachment to the philosophy and plan for Spanish regenerationism of Costa and other regenerationist leaders such as Lucas Mallada and Ricardo Macías Picavea. It will identify the distinguishing features of these plans as compared to the activities of the members of the generation of ’98.

Chapter III will present an analysis of select works of Noel, which contribute to an understanding of his concept and campaign for the regeneration of Spain. The works that will be examined will be those that discuss *antiflamenquismo*, *antitaurismo*, and other areas that contributed to Noel's agenda for reform and change such as *europianización*, *caciquismo*, and *señoritismo*. Music as a theme in his literature will also be studied since Noel possessed a formidable knowledge of the field and was very interested in German composers, namely Richard Wagner and Ludwig van Beethoven. The research will identify each narrative work that is selected and summarize its relationship to Noel's regenerationist thought and campaign. It will relate these works to the historical and sociological events that were occurring simultaneously during their period of composition.

Chapter IV will analyze the text of various narratives in order to determine the stylistic choices that Noel made and distinguish his work from that of other writers. Where precisely does the uniqueness of his art lie? Noel was known for the interesting language that he used in his writing. Ricardo Senabre states the following regarding the literary style of Noel: "La absoluta libertad en la creación léxica, la resurrección de formas arcaicas, la mezcla deliberada de lo dialectal y lo popular, son maneras distintas de superar los usos lingüísticos habituales, que al autor se le antojan insuficientes" (324). As expressed earlier, Trapiello found that Noel demonstrated a very baroque style that was characterized by his citing of numerous authors of secondary importance in his texts (*Raíces* 1: 20). Furthermore, Senabre finds a tendency of Noel to combine already existing words, e.g. such as the verb and complement in *sacamuélas* and *sanalotodos*, and his addition of suffixes such as *ío* and *ía* to create collective nouns such as *mujerío* and *hampería* (325, 327). The author under investigation also added local color to his narratives by including the popular dialectical expressions of both Castile and Andalucía.

Abelardo Linares points out the following observation regarding Noel's literary style: "Molesta su apresuramiento en la composición, su no tomarse en serio, a menudo, a sus mismos personajes, su ocasional "tremendismo" y mal gusto, su didactismo, su dionisiaca desmesura, en fin" (23).

The elements of Noel's creative technique will be examined in such a way as to identify the extraordinary features that permitted him to carry out his *antiflamenquismo* and *antitaurismo* campaign across the Spanish peninsula as well as on the other side of the Atlantic via his rhetoric. Ángeles Prado notes both the satiric and caricature-like style in Noel. She observes: "Es ahí donde esa obra se levanta hasta alcanzar niveles de alta excelencia estilística" (*Denunciador* 3). She also informs the reader that Noel's work constitutes an indispensable resource in understanding the work of the post war Spanish writer, Camilo José Cela (*Denunciador* 12). It carries with it overwhelming emotional tones and he writes with a profound sense of mission and commitment to goal. However, in analyzing the author Eugenio Noel, Prado asks whether his writing and behavior were part of a sincere approach to regenerate Spain or merely an attempt to gain the limelight by making himself a public spectacle as accounts of his frequent histrionics suggest (*Denunciador* 3)? Or perhaps his work represented, as Rosario Cambria hypothesizes, the frustrated voice of a "want-to-be bullfighter" who confessed in his personal diary at the early age of nine, that he desired to imitate the renowned bullfighter Espartero who was killed by the bull. Cambria theorizes, "¿Será que estamos en presencia del fenómeno psicológico de 'objeto vivamente deseado-frustración-odio al objeto antes deseado' "? (223-224).

The present study will compare and contrast his literary work and public activity in order to arrive at a synthesis of Noel's ideology and formal position. As stated previously, Noel has emphatically stated that he does not consider himself a member of the *noventayochistas*, but

prefers to align himself to the group of *novecentistas*, and especially to the ideology of Joaquín Costa. This investigation will also examine various examples of Noel's literary corpus in order to determine if his work in actuality strongly supports this position. Ángeles Prado queries whether Noel was a reformer of society, a missionary tied to the work of improving the cultural life of his people, a scientist, or an artist of the word pledged to molding the world around him in beautiful forms of expression (*Denunciador* 3). Through this critical analysis of Noel's work, information from his texts will be synthesized in order to answer the question that Prado has proposed. A final summary of the investigation along with a list of titles of his works will be included in the chapter. Archaic Spanish that appears primarily in quotes from the texts of the authors has been modernized.

## Chapter I

### Historical Perspectives of Spain (1875-1936)

#### Historical, Political, and Social Background of Spain (1875-1936)

The end of the nineteenth century brought about an era of significant political, ideological, and socio-economic turmoil in Spain. The country had been experiencing recurrent political crises since 1833 due to the question of succession to the throne and issues of Carlism and the civil wars, which followed. In 1868, the September Revolution ended the reign of the Bourbon monarchy and resulted in the abdication of the throne by Queen Isabella II. Coalition leaders of the new government that was formed included General Francisco Serrano of the Unionists as regent and Juan Prim, the Progressives' chief as prime minister. They attempted to establish a constitutional monarchy that Unionists, Progressives, and Democrats alike would have to accept. In 1870, The Duke of Aosta, Prince Amadeo of Savoy, second son of King Vittorio Emanuele II of Italy, was elected King Amadeo I of Spain. Days after this election, Prime Minister Juan Prim, one of Amadeo's chief supporters, was assassinated resulting in significant political challenges for the king. He ultimately abdicated the throne after serving little more than two years as king. The First Republic of 1873 was proclaimed after Amadeo's sudden departure but eventually disintegrated into chaos until the Bourbon monarchy was once again reinstated during the period known as The Restoration (1874-1875). This action resulted in the establishment of a new social environment. As the country moved from a proto-industrial economic structure toward an industrialized economy, it underwent what E. Inman Fox labels "... a transition that brought with it a changing social structure defined by the consolidation of a monied middle class, an emerging organized working class, and the instability of the traditional *petit bourgeois*" (21). Furthermore, according to Fox, Spain's political structure, characterized

by an ineffective administration, a corrupt electoral system, as well as a high illiteracy rate within an outdated system of education, was unable to develop a capitalist democracy comparable to the level of the rest of Europe (21). José Álvarez Junco points out that the major concerns of the period had also shifted from those which dominated the earlier part of the century, namely, from issues of constitutional debate to those of labor unrest, the emergence of peripheral nationalisms, new colonial uprisings and a renewal of military interventionism (72). In fact, the country suffered the loss of several colonial wars including *el desastre de '98* in which its sovereignty over Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines ended. Álvarez Junco notes that even though this so-called disaster may not have prompted a severe economic recession or posed a serious threat to the monarchy, it did create an acute perception of crisis among the people, even if a true one did not really exist (73-74).

In response to these critical events, serious attempts were made to regenerate the nation. According to Álvarez Junco, initiatives such as rebuilding the navy, creating new incentives for national industry, limited administrative decentralization, and reform of the suffrage were made (76). A period of national soul-searching also took place particularly within a group of literary intellectuals traditionally known as the generation of '98. The predominant figures of this group of writers were Miguel de Unamuno (1864-1936), Ángel Ganivet (1865-1898), Ramiro de Maetzu (1874-1936), José Martínez Ruiz (Azorín) (1873-1967), Pío Baroja (1872-1956), Antonio Machado (1875-1939), and Ramón de Valle-Inclán (1866-1936). These authors tried to establish guidelines for the regeneration of Spain by identifying the national character of the Spanish people through examination of the country's history. Fox states: "All of this brought forth an extraordinary group of intellectuals devoted to defining the 'problem of Spain' in the context of an historical national identity and to national regeneration through modernization,

always, however, in the spirit of national unity” (21). The present study will examine this transitional period of Spain (1874-1936) in an effort to establish the historical, social, and political framework within which the author who is being investigated in this study, namely, Eugenio Noel lived and acted.

### The Restoration of the Monarchy

A key government figure during this period of transition was the historian, politician, and man of letters Antonio Cánovas del Castillo. During Spain’s political crisis from 1868-1874, Cánovas took the lead in promoting the restoration of the Bourbon monarchy. Shortly after Alfonso XII was proclaimed king (1875), Cánovas established a regency ministry and became premier for six years with small interruptions in 1875 and 1879 during the short-term cabinets of Marshals Jovellar and Martínez Campos, respectively. Álvarez Junco describes Cánovas’s regime as one that was directed towards triumph “...in the internal war against the Carlists and in the colonial war in Cuba ...” (67). Having been successful on both counts, Cánovas was able to restrict the influence of the military by granting them internal autonomy, freedom in dealing with the remaining colonies and yielding to them a few honorary seats in the Senate. Cánovas was a central figure during the Restoration. He established the constitution of 1876 and all the laws of the monarchy. As for his political opponents, Álvarez Junco observes that those who abided by Cánovas’s policies were granted freedom to publish their own newspapers, to associate and to compete in elections with the understanding that eventually they would acquire power, while those who remained opposed to his government experienced repression and imprisonment for their leaders. The workers’ organizations suffered the harshest treatment by Cánovas because he viewed them not as enemies of the specific political system, but as

undermining the social order that had been established. As a result, their associations were deemed illegal, their leaders were incarcerated, and their publications halted (67-68).

Cánovas had assembled the first election in 1877, and everything remained well-ordered until 1881, when he advised an alteration in government. In order to accomplish this, he recommended to King Alfonso XII of the newly restored Bourbon monarchy that he appoint as Prime Minister, Práxedes Mateo Sagasta, a supporter of the 1868 revolution who by now had embraced more moderate positions, but who also surrounded himself with other former revolutionaries. During this period, a workers' association known as the *Federación de Trabajadores de la Región (FTRE)* was formed but, according to Álvarez Junco, its inability to integrate the working classes as well as the perception of its being a criminal organization led to its ultimate disappearance (68). Sagasta and his followers remained in power for two years until Cánovas once again became premier (1881) and remained in office until November of 1885. The focus of Cánovas's government this time was in the area of foreign policy. Scuffles invariably occurred between Spain, the Germans and the French, and the instability of the monarchy became ostensible when in November of 1885 the young King Alfonso XII died of tuberculosis. Alfonso XII's widow, who was pregnant at the time, occupied the throne and Cánovas realized that the only way to fortify the monarchy was to grant an opportunity to his moderate Liberal opponent, Sagasta. In May of 1886, during the first few months of Sagasta's Liberal government, the queen gave birth to a boy, Alfonso XIII who was declared king; however, his mother, Queen María Cristina, would serve as regent until his sixteenth birthday. According to Álvarez Junco, Sagasta devoted his efforts this time to the implementation of an ambitious program of reforms that included "... religious and educational liberties, freedom of expression and association, universal male suffrage, trial by jury, military reforms, abolition of

slavery in Cuba and Puerto Rico, and the codification of the civil law” (70). He also carried out a moderate policy of free trade.

According to Álvarez Junco, when Cánovas returned to power in 1890, “ ... the political framework that would predominate in Spain for the next thirty years was thus complete” (Álvarez Junco 70-71). Describing that framework today, he states that it could be defined as a *non-competitive oligarchical monarchy* where daily decisions were made by a small number of competing political figures and not by an autocratic monarch. This was all part of the new structure where political liberties and civil rights were now being extended to the citizens of the country (Álvarez Junco 71). However, because of this plan, the researcher states that *caciquismo* began to overtake local politics due to the chasm that was widening between a few urban centers where major issues were decided and a predominantly rural society. In addition, places like Barcelona and the province of Bilbao in the Basque Country became centers of industrial growth that encouraged the advent of new ruling classes. These groups challenged the traditional Madrid governance and changed the nature of the concerns of the 1890’s from those that heretofore had dominated the country, namely, constitutional debate. He identifies the new areas of focus as “ ... labor problems, the emergence of peripheral nationalisms, new colonial insurgencies and a renewal of military interventionism ...” (Álvarez Junco 71-72).

### Spanish Colonial Crisis

Ultimately, Prime Minister Cánovas was assassinated in 1897, but not before one of the most serious political problems of the 1890’s occurred. This was the Spanish Colonial Crisis. Enrique Moradiellos reports that between February 1895 and April 1898 Spain sent an army of 200,000 soldiers to Cuba to suppress a rebellion of around 40,000 insurgents (117). The Spanish

government had been attempting to resolve the issue of the colonial crisis through the adoption of a policy of military power and granting political and economic concessions with which they permitted both Home Rule as well as Cuban free trade with foreign countries. Both strategies ultimately proved ineffective.

In addition, according to Moradiellos, the “... successive Spanish governments were forced to reject United States offers to mediate in Cuba or to purchase the colony” (117) due to the intensified nationalism of both the armed forces and the general public. He describes the situation in the following manner:

On the one hand, they [the Spanish authorities] were economically and militarily too weak to crush the rebels or sustain a long drawn-out campaign. On the other, because of military feeling and the pressure exercised by the political opposition, they felt they could not give way to the United States and the rebels without putting the stability and very survival of the Restoration regime in jeopardy. (117)

The U.S. declared war with Spain on April 23, 1898 and instructed its naval forces in the Atlantic and Pacific to attack the Spanish militia in the bay of Cavite in the Philippines and the port of Santiago in Cuba. Victory came to the Americans and the Spanish fleets were destroyed in both theatres of war. Spaniards knew the conflict as *El Desastre de 1898*. As a result of the Treaty of Paris, which concluded the war, Spain renounced all sovereignty over their colonies of Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Philippines, and Guam and sent the Spanish nation into a period of mourning for itself and its continuing decline as a world power.

According to Álvarez Junco, although the disastrous event of 1898 in reality did not generate an economic or monarchical crisis, there was a serious perception of crisis from three perspectives, namely, existing political institutions, the ruling élites, and finally, the ideology or

the rhetoric used to validate the Spanish state. From the first standpoint, the Canovist parliamentary system, in particular *caciquismo*, received a serious blow and led to the adoption of a regenerationist theme in proposals to bring about changes. The second aspect of the crisis was the loss of prestige by the élite factions, which included not only the political and military, but also the clergy, who were held responsible for the loss of the Philippines. Likewise, the upper-class aristocrats and landowners, who succeeded in having members of their own family excluded from the ranks of those who fought in the military, were also impacted (74). However, none of this produced any significant commitment to changing the standing order of affairs. Silvela and Maura, who were representatives of the system, replaced Cánovas; however, Sagasta continued overseeing the governments until his death in 1903. Despite the regenerationist rhetoric of the traders and industrialists as well as the passionate cries from the members of the literary generation of 1898, no one chose to propose themselves as a suitable political substitute. As Álvarez Junco points out, “The 1898 crisis thus opened an abyss between the political élites and public opinion but it did not produce any political opposition able to put forward a program of reforms within an alternative strategy”(74-75).

A third facet of the crisis was ideological. While the rest of Europe was able to be more and more influential in determining the political fate of other countries, Spain was losing its power and demonstrating an inadequacy of stature when placed into a broader European political and cultural spectrum. Álvarez Junco states that after the 1898 defeat, “... a whole new genre of self-flagellating literature took off, creating a culture of pessimism which was epitomized by the playwright Ramón María del Valle-Inclán in his famous description of Spain as a grotesque deformation of European civilization” (75). As a result, peripheral nationalisms began to grow into political movements. For example, frustrated at the inability to regenerate the Spanish

administration, the people of Catalonia decided to try their hand at constructing their own administrative and political structure that was not received well by the rest of the Spanish nation.

### Post War Period after 1898

Antonio Maura led the first important regenerationist project after 1898. According to Álvarez Junco, this Conservative leader tried to rebuild the navy, stimulate the growth of national industry, limit administrative decentralization, and foster greater respect for law and order, which included the conservation of ties that customarily existed between the Church and state (76). Members of the new Republican generation that included Alejandro Lerroux in Barcelona and Vicente Blasco Ibáñez in Valencia, challenged Maura by rallying their supporters with anti-clericalism oratory. The result was the “Tragic Week” of 1909 in Barcelona where a general strike was called to protest the escalation of the Moroccan War. This episode ultimately led to the resignation of Maura, who had suffered severe criticism from the rest of Europe due to his authoritarian approach in punishing protesters after these events.

Another attempt at political restructuring was led by José Canalejas, a politician who had succeeded in unifying the Liberal Party after the detachments that resulted after the death of Sagasta. However, due to his strong-handed response to labor strikes, his popularity waned among members of the left and ultimately resulted in his assassination in 1912. During the next ten years, the two main parties became increasingly divided among divisions that had been formed based on personal allegiances as opposed to ideological dissimilarities. Spain remained neutral during the First World War (1914-1918), and because of this position experienced a positive trade balance for four consecutive years. This atmosphere of prosperity, however, led to increasing inflation and a resulting destabilization of the social structure. Unionization and

strikes became the order of the day, which subsequently resulted in significant increases in salary as well as increased membership in unions and workers' parties. Álvarez Junco notes that during the summer of 1917, "... Spain witnessed its worst political crises in forty years" and explains that three processes existed in the conflict (78). He states that the first was the formation of the *Juntas Militares de Defensa* where arguments as to the selection of the leadership (merit vs. seniority) took center focus. The government was unable to pacify the Juntas and ultimately this inability led to the end of the 1917-1919 period of Liberal rule.

The second crisis of the summer of 1917, according to Álvarez Junco, impacted the parliament. Due to the refusal of Prime Minister Dato to hold a meeting of the Cortes, representatives of the Catalan nationalist deputies proposed the city of Barcelona as a site for an alternative assembly, which was developed as a sort of quasi-constituent Cortes. The offer was accepted and the meeting held although, "The few deputies who dared to attend asked only for the formation of a transitory coalition government which would call elections to the constituent Cortes" (78).

To add further to the atmosphere of crisis, he finds a third conflict appeared in the form of a general strike called by both the socialist union UGT and the anarchist CNT in order to protest the rising cost of living (Álvarez Junco 78). The army assumed the role of enforcer and repressed the strike viciously, ultimately forcing the Dato government to resign. A coalition government was formed and García Prieto, a Liberal, was named prime minister along with reformist Republicans incorporated as members of his government.

Labor violence continued and resulted in the collapse of García Prieto's coalition rule. By threatening to abdicate unless a compromise was reached, King Alfonso XIII who had ascended to the throne upon the conclusion of the regency of María Cristina in 1902, averted

another political crisis with the establishment of the *gobierno nacional* with Antonio Maura as prime minister. Both Liberal and Conservative governments followed in the ensuing years and despite the negative perceptions by the public during this period, there was notable legislative work and fiscal reforms.

In 1921, Dato, who had been the most prominent Conservative leader after Maura and the one favored by the King, was assassinated followed by the death of 10,000 soldiers in the Moroccan War. Spanish citizens demanded an explanation for the death of these 10,000 soldiers and “ ... ‘la cuestión de las responsabilidades’ ... ” dominated the political atmosphere from then on (Álvarez Junco 80).

General Miguel Primo de Rivera successfully arranged a coup in 1923, and one of his aims was to try to avert the Cortes from hearing the report of the Commission on Responsibilities. Spaniards were open to hearing Primo de Rivera’s regenerationist rhetoric and acknowledging his rule as long as he demonstrated some effectiveness in bringing the country’s most important problems to an end, which included social issues as well as the Moroccan War. However, because of his ultimate inability to eliminate *caciquismo* from his administration, he began to lose favor among the people. By 1926-1927, his own military friends openly rebelled against his projected reform of the promotion system. Furthermore, Catalan nationalists objected to his prohibiting the use of the Catalan language and the popular intellectuals of the country did not hold him in much esteem. Primo de Rivera abandoned power in January 1930 and left Spain for Paris where he died three months later. General Dámaso Berenguer was subsequently given the task of forming a new government.

## The Second Republic

Since these attempts at forming a parliamentary monarchy and a military dictatorship were unsuccessful, the notion of a Republican government seemed viable. In fact, a Second Republic was voted in on April 12, 1931 despite questionable social support for it. According to Álvarez Junco, two projects of global reform became centerpieces of the regime, namely the modernization and above all the laicization of Spanish society and a radical reallocation of wealth (80). However, the Republicans themselves could not agree upon the degree of the reforms nor could they decide about who should be accountable for them or what tactics should be utilized in order to implement these changes successfully (Álvarez Junco 82). Other factions that co-existed with the Republicans were the anarchist *CNT*, who were powerful in terms of numbers of members but unstable due to internal power struggles, and among others, the segment of Catholic opinion that existed in the form of monarchists and the traditional right who rejected the new regime. Liberal Catholics such as Miguel Maura and Niceto Alcalá Zamora who were leaders in the provisional government and who had resigned during the constitutional discussion eventually joined this opposition also. They later returned, however, to the government that was being led by Alcalá Zamora in the position of president of the Republic in December of 1931.

The Socialist-Republican coalition had dominated the Spanish government for two years. According to Álvarez Junco, “In two years, the governments presided over by Manuel Azaña had managed to launch an ambitious schooling program, had approved labor regulations comparable to the most advanced in Europe, had managed to separate church from state, and had begun the devolution of powers to some of the regions with the Catalan Statute” (82-83). However, they were unable to bring about successful agrarian reform due to the lack of resources that were

made available to them and because of the many legal guarantees, which were put into place for the landowners. Consequently, this led to several uprisings among the peasants. These conflicts had been provoked by rival organizations but had been severely repressed by the government. This resulted in a growing unpopularity and an ultimate electoral defeat for the Azaña government in November of 1933.

The *CEDA* (*Confederación de Derechas Autónomas*), a Catholic coalition government operating under the leadership of José María Gil Robles, and Alejandro Lerroux's Radical Party were the victors in the election that defeated the Azaña government. According to Álvarez Junco, Alcalá Zamora, fearful of public reaction against Gil Robles, who was viewed by many as the future leader of Spanish fascism, appointed Lerroux as prime minister. However, because of the lack of a clear-cut leadership mandate given to any party, Lerroux could only function with Gil Robles's parliamentary support, which ultimately led to a condition of permanent instability (83).

During the first half of 1934, the new government attempted to weaken the trade unions, and after a ceased uprising by the anarchists and a general strike in June of that same year, Gil Robles exerted pressure on Lerroux for power that was more direct for the *CEDA* and less appealing to the left. In October 1934, Alcalá Zamora accepted three *CEDA* members in a new Lerroux government that the left faction considered a sign of the inclusion of fascist power. In reaction to this move, they called a general strike. A bloody rebellion of miners in the region of Asturias took place followed by a brutal repression. "The Asturian insurrection was considered a prelude to the Civil War, particularly by the right, who from then on relied only on the army as the last guarantor of the established order." (Álvarez Junco 84). Members of the left united to form a Popular Front followed by the establishment of the *Bloque Nacional* by the right. This was the situation prior to the new elections that were to take place in February 1936. The

Popular Front was victorious, and as a result, Alcalá Zamora was dismissed as president of the Republic. Manuel Azaña was elected in his place, and he in turn offered the prime ministership to Indalecio Prieto who was subsequently rejected by internal oppositions within the Socialist faction. Public disorder ensued, and on July 18, 1936, the military dissented with a *pronunciamento* that created the environment for the beginning of a prolonged civil war.

However, rather than present the Spanish Civil War as the result of the dialectical clashing of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, Nigel Townson presents the history of the Second Republic within a multidimensional context of “...socio-economic and cultural conflicts not only between, but also within, and beyond, the classes.” He states:

Thus the history of the Second Republic was not shaped by the struggle between the workers and the employers or that between the landowners and the landless labourers alone-central as these confrontations were to the regime’s trajectory-but also, for example, by those between Catholics and anticlericals, radical and conservative republicans, regional nationalists and centralists, the republican and non-republican middle classes, as well as between anarchosyndicalists and socialists. (223)

Thus, the war that broke out in July 1936 did not have only *one* established cause but was the result of a series of socio-economic, cultural, and political conflicts that ultimately resulted in military intervention.

The narrative above provides some of the background of the period(s) of Spanish history in which Eugenio Noel, the author being investigated in this study lived, and to which he reacted in his literary works. This period(s) was a time of significant unrest, transition, and turmoil in Spain that ultimately brought about the beginning of the Spanish Civil War. Nevertheless, some

prominent figures emerged and greatly influenced the thought and creative work of Noel. Perhaps no one was more significant to the formation of Noel's ideology than the Spanish intellectual, Joaquín Costa. As Andrés Trapiello points out, "Costa fue el único con el que de verdad llegó a identificarse Noel, peregrinó incluso hasta su tumba para hacerse junto a ella un retrato, cómo no, que diera fe de su ardor regeneracionista" (*Raíces* 1: 14). Ultimately, Noel embraced Costa's formula to inform his own plan for addressing the reforms and changes that he deemed necessary for the well-being of the country.

#### Joaquín Costa and *Oligarquía y caciquismo como la forma actual de gobierno en España*

Joaquín Costa was a noted thinker, intellectual, and writer about social themes during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Costa's written works included volumes in the areas of law, Spanish history, science, and the humanities. Carlos M. Rama describes his work in the following manner: "Su [Costa's] obra literaria alcanza los sesenta volúmenes y abarca el estudio del derecho, la historia española, las ciencias agronómicas, financieras, geología, hasta la geografía, la política, la pedagogía, la literatura o la técnica mecánica...trabajando sin mayores antecedentes nacionales en la materia, y prácticamente solo" (74). Costa was greatly committed to the regeneration of Spain, and like similar figures of the period was very much influenced by the intellectual movement of Krausism formed by the German philosopher, Karl Christian Friedrich Krause (1781–1832). The larger goal of the Krausists was to infuse a moral awareness and social responsibility into the social agenda of the country. As espoused by Sanz del Río and Giner de los Ríos, Krausism hoped to encourage the adoption of some democratic values along with a new moral and ethical behavior code that could find its way into the Spanish consciousness and resulting lifestyle. Because of their movement, the Krausists became

proponents of public education, freedom of thought, and the right to obtain information (Kern 20).

Even though Krause's difficult philosophy did not gain too many followers, his social and legal theories appealed to many Spaniards, and as a result produced many advocates. According to Rafael Pérez de la Dehesa, Costa's ideology stemmed from Krausism, and from this body of thought he formed his important idea of the primacy of society over the State. "En su pensamiento, todos los organismos intermedios: familia, municipio, region, asociaciones, tenían un valor sustantivo y autónomo, y debían ser el cauce normal de desarrollo de las actividades humanas" (*Prólogo* 9). With this ideology, Costa rebelled against the political arrangement of the Restoration government, which he felt regarded the State as being more important than human liberties. His goal was to form a political system and structure based on the character of the nation. He looked at the various traditions of the Spanish people and tried to incorporate these into a political and economic doctrine that would serve the people. "Estudió así Costa apasionadamente todos los aspectos de la realidad social española, promovió y dirigió estudios de derecho y economía consuetudinarios." (Pérez de la Dehesa, *Prólogo* 10).

During this period, Costa committed himself to the reform of Spain, and along with nineteen other members of the Cámara Agrícola, created a manifesto that appeared in the November 13, 1898 edition of the Madrid newspaper, *El Liberal*. In this document Costa affirmed the past splendor of the country, but also exposed its present state as giving the appearance of "... uno de los más ruines e incómodos arrabales del planeta" (*Reconstitución* 5). He attacked the *caciquismo* and oligarchical elements that dominated the Spanish government of the period in the manifesto as well. Luis de Zulueta offers the following testimony about Costa:

Joaquín Costa había profundizado en nuestra historia jurídica y política; había evocado el espíritu de la raza y hecho viva la mejor tradición española; había planteado el problema nacional en términos claros y vigorosos; había sacudido al país con palabras proféticas, y había procurado ardientemente levantarlo, con el consejo, con la plegaria, con el ejemplo, con el sacrificio, con la violencia, con la exaltación, con la amenaza, con la injuria ... (7)

Joaquín Costa's mantra for reform became his famous expression, "Escuela, despensa y siete llaves para el sepulcro del Cid." In order to accomplish this daunting task, he drew upon the work of Ricardo Macías Picavea and Gumersindo de Azcárate whose ideas about the Spanish government in terms of its oligarchical structure he both clarified and systematized. According to Costa, the framework that dominated the Spanish political profile, as well as the country's social structure during the Restoration Period was an oligarchical government combined with *caciquismo*. In 1901, a national conference was called at the Ateneo de Madrid in order to define *caciquismo* and oligarchy as well as to obtain a national cross-section of public opinion regarding improvements that could be made in the Spanish government. Costa submitted his *memoria* entitled *Oligarquía y caciquismo como forma actual de gobierno en España: urgencia y modo de cambiarla* with an accompanying questionnaire to some of the most important figures of the period, among whom were Miguel de Unamuno, Santiago Ramón y Cajal, Emilia Pardo Bazán, Gumersindo de Azcárate, Adolfo G. Buylla, José Manuel Piernas Hurtado and Francisco Pi y Margall. According to Pérez de la Dehesa, "En estas respuestas, excediéndose la mayor parte de las veces de los límites de las preguntas, expone su pensamiento sobre el problema de España casi todas las figuras intelectuales y políticas más relevantes del momento" (*El pensamiento* 140). At the end of their responses, Pérez de la Dehesa states that

“ ... Costa añade un informe en el que las estudia, clasifica y comenta, estableciendo sus propias conclusiones. Observa en él que todos los autores coinciden en la aceptación de la existencia y gravedad del mal, al tiempo que les separan grandes discrepancias con respecto a los restantes puntos de la encuesta” (*El pensamiento* 146).

In his essay, *Oligarquía y caciquismo como la forma actual de gobierno en España*, which served as the introduction to the *Ateneo de Madrid Conference Report*, Costa carefully defined this particular form of government, which he felt was the source of Spain’s problems. He describes the concept of oligarchy with an Aristotelian reference:

Define el gran filósofo griego la oligarquía por relación a la aristocracia, como la demagogia por relación a la democracia y la tiranía por relación al reinado o monarquía. Aristocracia (dice) es el gobierno ejercido por una minoría y se la denomina así ya porque el poder se halla en manos de los hombres de bien, ya porque su objeto no es otro que el mayor bien del Estado y de los asociados. La desviación o degeneración de esa forma de gobierno (añade) es la oligarquía, la cual no tiene otro fin que el interés personal de la minoría misma gobernante. (25)

Costa applies this oligarchical/*cacique* concept to the structure of the Spanish government which had evolved by the beginning of the twentieth century in order to define its current state. He writes, “Efectivamente, con ser tan simplistas la clasificación y las definiciones de Aristóteles, se adaptan perfectamente a nuestro estado político actual” (*Oligarquía* 25). He identifies three components of this type of government: 1) the oligarchs or residents of the center; 2) the *caciques* who are spread out in various territories; and, 3) the civil governors who serve as organs of communication and of instrument. He labels them as “parties” consisting of foreigners who are given power by such groups as ministries, *capitanías*, railroads, and the

armed forces. Their purpose was to impose and collect tributes and work for themselves as opposed to working for the nation. In writing about the *caciques*, Costa reports:

Si aquellos bandos o facciones hubiesen formado parte de la Nación, habrían gobernado para ella, no exclusivamente para sí; habrían cumplido por su parte los deberes que ellos imponían a la Nación y serían, efectivamente, una clase en relación a otras clases, componente con ellas de la colectividad nacional. Pero ya sabemos que, desgraciadamente, no ha sido así. (*Oligarquía* 29)

Javier Moreno Luzón further explains the concept of *caciquismo* in terms of its derivation from the Caribbean Indians by the conquistadors of America whereby native leaders (or *caciques*) were designated to serve as intermediaries between the indigenous communities and the colonial authorities. He states:

Desde mediados del siglo XIX, esta voz caribe comenzó a generalizarse en España para significar el predominio político excesivo de los notables locales en sus respectivas zonas de influencia, donde se decía que hacían y deshacían a su antojo, a despecho de la ley y sin más freno que su voluntad. (22)

Moreno Luzón points out that the *caciques*, by way of the power that they brandished, determined the composition of the Spanish Cortes through their support of government manipulation of elections. He also finds that *caciquismo* acquired additional negative connotations when groups of intellectuals looking to modernize Spain after the country lost its last colonies to the United States in 1898, used it as a term to characterize the regime of the monarchical restoration at the end of the 19th century (22). Joaquín Costa succeeded in uniting the word with the term *oligarquía* and subsequently created the definition of the type of regime

that was in place since the military *pronunciamento* of Sagunto and of the Constitution promulgated in 1876. Moreno Luzón explains:

El caciquismo superviviente de tiempos anteriores se reforzaba en opinión de Costa por la acción de la oligarquía gobernante, un cuerpo extraño formado por banderías políticas que ocupaban el Estado en su provecho exclusivo bajo la apariencia de un régimen parlamentario. Oligarcas y caciques, en contacto gracias a los gobernadores civiles, ejercían un despotismo sin tasa sobre el pueblo sometido a sus dictados, burlando de esta manera la soberanía nacional. (22)

According to Felipe Giménez Pérez, the *cacique* regime that was denounced by Costa was characterized as being an elitism of the worst kind because it prevented those who truly were intelligent and made contributions to the growth of the country from doing so (24). In addressing this point, Costa himself states: “... es la postergación sistemática, equivalente a eliminación, de los elementos superiores de la sociedad, tan completa y absoluta que el país ni siquiera sabe si existen ...” (*Oligarquía y caciquismo* 31). The regime supported the vilest members of society and repressed those who were in a position to promote development in important areas. In describing life for the typical Spanish citizen under the regime of the *cacique*, Costa concludes, “Somos esclavos de vivos y de muertos. Ciudadanos en el nombre, simples pecheros en la realidad. Esclavos de vivos, que se llaman caciques, que se llaman prohombres, oligarcas, con el séquito abrumador de jueces, magistrados, alcaldes, gobernadores, inspectores, agentes ejecutivos y demás turba de sayones” (*Los siete* 22).

Oligarchs were spread regionally across Spain and wielded political power in local areas. These political figures, according to Giménez Pérez, would subsequently meet in associations or in pockets of employment called *partidos* and deliberate in the Cortes that in reality did not exist.

It became apparent that political groups only responded to their own concerns and interests and did not seek to represent the country. Giménez Pérez states: “Las elecciones son organizadas por el gobierno para obtener el resultado electoral apetecido” (24). He further asserts that “En España hay dos gobiernos: uno fenoménico y fantasmal: el sistema de monarquía parlamentaria, con constitución y elecciones y otro el real, efectivo y esencial que es el caciquismo oligárquico” (24).

Another expected outcome of the aforementioned Ateneo conference was a national referendum that would set the country on the path of reconstruction. After the loss of Cuba and the Philippines, Spaniards were eager to begin the work of regeneration and reform. In the document entitled *Los siete criterios de gobierno*, Costa cites the continuing deterioration of the country after the losses of '98 and criticizes the lack of any change that has taken place on the part of the government. He states:

Nada se ha renovado; nada ha cambiado sino para peor; viejos los moldes y viejo el espíritu; ni un ensayo siquiera de reorganización en el Estado: el mismo régimen, los mismos hombres, las mismas rutinas, los mismos estériles aplazamientos a mañana, la misma creciente marea en los presupuestos, el mismo vilipendio en las elecciones, la misma ilusoria instrucción en las escuelas y en las Universidades, los mismos motivos personales en las crisis, la misma insolencia en los caciques, el mismo mortal colapso en el país. (20)

This “business as usual” attitude did not satisfy Costa in terms of improving the conditions of a country that was in dire need of overhaul. He held the government at that time accountable for the ongoing decline in the quality of the life of the Spanish people and criticized the institution for not providing the necessary leadership. He states:

El instinto popular lo viene diciendo desde hace muchos años, y ha pasado, por fortuna, la moda de reír el apotegma: “*Hace falta un hombre* al frente del Estado” (no dice al frente del Gobierno, que esto ya lo hay). Y no precisamente, entiéndase bien, un hombre “providencial”, adornado de cualidades extraordinarias, un “superhombre”, un “genio”, un “héroe”-(aunque más eficaz sería y más seguro para el efecto buscado, y habríamos de felicitarnos, si resultase que lo es),-sino uno tal como los conocemos: un Azcárate o un Salmerón, un Villaverde o un Silvela, un Federico Rubio o un Giner, un Maura o un Moret, un Canalejas o un Echegaray; en suma, un hombre en la plenitud de sus facultades, salido de la masa, empapado en su espíritu y en el espíritu y en las exigencias de la civilización, adiestrado en la labor mental y en los combates de la vida pública, dotado de carácter y de una gran elevación moral, prudente, discreto y bien orientado, proceda o no de los partidos, pero independiente de ellos, según es propio de la naturaleza de este poder; o si quiere, un rey Víctor Manuel como el piemontés o un Leopoldo como el belga, conforme al ideal del Sr. Canalejas en el artículo. En toda hipótesis, un hombre, *Arce parvulum!* (*Los siete* 16-17)

Costa, in response to this need, eventually called for *una verdadera política quirúrgica* that would extirpate *el tumor caciquil* from the healthy organism of the nation. As the leader of this political operation, this person was to be an “iron surgeon”-*un cirujano de hierro* who possessed similar virtues to those of Plato. He needed to understand the anatomy of the Spanish people, feel compassion towards them, demonstrate courage, be hero-like, and feel the need to have a country that feels indignant about injustice. In short, he needed to be a superior being who could regenerate the country (Giménez Pérez 24).

In addition to his stance that the eradication of *caciquismo* was central to the progress of the country, Costa also stipulated that Spain must europeanize itself and make itself resemble the cultures of England, Germany and France as opposed to the continued process of africanization which he saw taking place. The europeanization of Spain became a major focus of Costa's work and he always looked to these other neighboring countries for ideas and methods with which he could improve his own homeland. In addressing the issue of greater europeanization for Spain, he states the following with regard to this process:

Contener el movimiento de retroceso y africanización, absoluta y relativa, que nos arrastra cada vez más lejos fuera de la órbita en que gira y se desenvuelve la civilización europea; llevar a cabo una total refundición del Estado español, sobre el patrón europeo que nos ha dado hecho la historia y a cuyo empuje hemos sucumbido; restablecer el crédito de nuestra nación ante el mundo; evitar que Santiago de Cuba encuentre una segunda edición por Santiago de Galicia; borrar de nuestra historia la página infamante "París-1889", como Prusia ha borrado su congénere y homóloga "Tilsit-1807"- o dicho de otro modo: fundar improvisadamente en la Península una España culta y que piense, una España libre y que gobierne, una España fuerte y que venza, una España, en fin, contemporánea de la humanidad, que al trasponer las fronteras no se sienta forastera, como si hubiese penetrado en otro planeta o en otro siglo-; tal es la magna, tal la urgente e inaplazable, si tal vez no ya tardía, revolución que se impone para que la gran masa de los nacionales no acabe de confirmarse en la idea de una radical incompatibilidad entre estos dos conceptos: independencia nacional y libertad, independencia nacional y bienestar, independencia nacional y

buen gobierno, y no pasemos en breve plazo de clase inferior a raza inferior, esto es, de vasallos que venimos siendo de una oligarquía indígena, a colonos que hemos principiado a ser de franceses, ingleses y alemanes. (*Oligarquía* 38)

It is interesting to note here that Miguel de Unamuno, who said of Costa, “Fue un sentidor, un hombre de pasión arrebatada, un hombre a quien la patria le dolía. Tal su grandeza” (*De esto y de aquello* 254) and who referred to Eugenio Noel, the subject of this research, as “... un visionario medieval, un profeta” (*De esto y de aquello* 260), also wrote about this same topic of europeanization and its relationship to the regeneration of the nation. His narrative *Sobre la europeización* written in 1906 speaks about the modernization and europeanization of Spain, and contrary to the opinion of Costa, questions the merits of this process. He asks, “¿Somos los españoles, en el fondo, irreductibles a la europeización y a la modernización? Y en caso de serlo, ¿no tenemos salvación? ¿No hay otra vida que la vida moderna y europea? ¿No hay otra cultura, o como quiera llamársela?” (265). He believed that to become modern and European was to replace wisdom with science. Unamuno admits that there are many things present in the spirit and culture of modern Europe that “... nos conviene recibir en nosotros para convertirlo en nuestra carne ...” (*Sobre* 281); however, his ultimate assessment is that the process must be reversed, and that Europe should become more like Spain. He states the following about the issue with great conviction:

Tengo la profunda convicción, por arbitraria que sea-tanto más profunda cuanto más arbitraria, pues así pasa con las verdades de fe-, tengo la profunda, convicción de que la verdadera y honda europeización de España, es decir, nuestra digestión de aquella parte de espíritu europeo que pueda hacerse espíritu nuestro, no empezará hasta que no tratemos de imponernos en el orden espiritual

de Europa, de hacerles tragar lo nuestro, lo genuinamente nuestro, a cambio de lo suyo; hasta que no tratemos de españolizar a Europa. (*Sobre* 281)

Thus, it appears that Costa's position on this subject of europeanization provided an important reference point for other influential figures of this time who were also concerned with the same issue of regeneration, albeit from a different perspective. Pérez De la Dehesa notes the influence of Costa on the generation of '98 of which Unamuno was a member, "La influencia de Costa en la vida política intelectual española es fundamental. Lo fue en la generación del '98 (*Prólogo* 12). Other prominent figures influenced by Costa regenerationist themes included Azorín and Maetzu, and later on even Ortega y Gasset.

According to Costa, the entire process of regeneration would take place following a twelve step plan which would include the following measures that are outlined in *Oligarquía y caciquismo*: 1) a move from africanization to europeanization and the reorganization of public services including a revision of education, agriculture, pensions and monetary policies; 2) the reform of education including the construction of new schools where students and professors could study and immerse themselves in a European atmosphere and in modern pedagogy; 3) improvement of the irrigation system and making less expensive staple foods like bread and meat so that the yield could be greater; 4) improvement of roads with emphasis on local transport rather than highways; 5) the granting of land for farming to those who did not already have it; 6) the passing of social legislation that instituted regulations regarding work contracts and that social security measures and inspection of working facilities for women and children be established; 7) the re-establishment of the monetary credit of the country and europeanization of the currency as well as the agriculture, mining, commerce, education, public administration and politics in order to regain the confidence of the European people in the Spanish nation; 8) the

creation of a Judicial Power which would undertake a purge and reeducate current personnel and form a new group of workers who would respond to the ideals of the new state; 9) increase local self-government and public services such as “tranvías, teléfonos, alumbrado, baños, lavaderos, fuerza motriz, tahonas, carnicerías, hielo, etc.” (*Oligarquía* 44); 10) the renovation of the *liberalismo abstracto* which sought only to guarantee public freedom with an illusionary constitution, municipal and provincial laws and election laws, substituting them with “... un *neo-liberalismo* orgánico, ético y sustantivo, que atienda a crear y afianzar dichas libertades con actos personales de los gobernantes principalmente, dirigidos a reprimir con mano de hierro, sin piedad y sin tregua, a caciques y oligarcas, cambiando el régimen africano que nos infama por un régimen europeo de libertad y de *self-government* ...” (*Oligarquía* 44); 11) the immediate simultaneous implementation of the components of his program for regenerating the country; and, 12) the removal of anyone from any temporary government post within the previous four years, and the promotion instead of the renovation of the government of the last 28 years.

Costa, along with other similar regenerationist voices such as Ricardo Macías Picavea and Lucas Mallada, called for comprehensive action to remedy the problems that had seriously befallen the country. Their solutions spoke to the people because they directly affected them. The economic and educational nature of the actions, which they called for, brought the regenerationist movement to the forefront of Spanish politics. According to Pérez de la Dehesa, “El regeneracionismo se introdujo en todos los ámbitos de la vida nacional; sobre él aparecieron chistes; incluso en el Teatro Lírico se llegó a representar *La Regeneración*, de Fernández Palomero, con música de Calleja” (*El pensamiento* 170). Obviously, Spanish citizens heartily embraced his message, hoping that it would bring about changes that would once again revitalize the country and its spirit.

As part of his plan for the regeneration of the country, Costa also felt very strongly about the need for agrarian reform. At this period in time, agriculture in Spain was suffering greatly from neglect over the years in terms of the utilization of modern machinery and adoption of current methods for cultivating crops. Costa wished to see greater appreciation for the art of agriculture and have it raised to the level that it deserved in the national consciousness. He also wished to cultivate awareness of the important role of the *labradores*, “... clase que da hombres robustos y sufridos que defienden el Estado, que producen o hacen producir frutos y carne que le alimentan, animales y maderas que le ayudan y fomentan su comercio” (Costa, *Maestro* 2). He further states:

Por tanto, el Gobierno debería hacer un esfuerzo para que la Agricultura tome el grado de prosperidad y ocupe el puesto que le corresponde y de que es susceptible en clima tan vario y tan benéfico como el de España.

Para elevar la Agricultura al grado de esplendor que merece, y con el que la España podría llegar a ser la potencia más poderosa de Europa, hay un solo medio, sencillísimo por cierto, y que ocasionaría pocos gastos al Erario público, aunque para esto sea necesario el transcurso de algunos años. Y para quienes pongan en duda cuanto digo respecto de que un reino puede ser poderoso teniendo floreciente la Agricultura, que digan nada tiene que ver la Agricultura con el poder de una nación, les responderé únicamente con aquella antiquísima cuan verdadera máxima de “que sin el auxilio de la Agricultura no puede prosperar ni engrandecerse una nación.” (*Maestro* 2-3)

Costa saw within agriculture a potential opportunity for the country to flourish and identified the industry as a catalyst for growth in other areas as well. He also managed to connect the field of

agriculture to the process of europeanization seeing within this link the possibility of its having a positive impact on the improvement of other social conditions. He writes the following:

Urge, pues, que se europeice, que se haga Agricultura de su tiempo, dando un salto gigantesco de cuatro siglos, hasta duplicar y triplicar su producción actual por unidad de área o por unidad de trabajo; y para ello, que el Estado ayude, resolviendo sumarásimamente, entre otros, el problema de la primera enseñanza y de las escuelas prácticas de cultivo, el problema de los caminos vecinales, el problema del crédito agrícola y territorial, el problema del aumento de riegos y de los pastos de regadío y de secano, el problema de las economías en los gastos públicos improductivos, el problema de la justicia y de la autonomía local, el problema del servicio militar obligatorio... (*La fórmula* 108-109)

In order to gain assistance in accomplishing this important task of supporting and reforming agriculture in the country, Costa called upon the government to pass a law mandating agricultural instruction in the daily program of students. Educational reform was an important area for Costa to address. He declared, “La escuela y la despensa, la despensa y la escuela: no hay otras llaves capaces de abrir camino a la regeneración española” (*Maestro* 215). However, he reports a significant disparity in the educational system of Spain as compared with other countries since the manifestos of April and June of 1899 were promulgated. These documents were issued by the *Liga Nacional de Productores* and made the citizens aware of “... la necesidad de una revolución muy honda y radical hecha desde el poder ...” (Costa, *Los siete* 24). Unfortunately, they did not accomplish their goal in bringing about significant changes in areas such as education, public services, technical instruction, hygiene, and among others, irrigation. Costa notes the following with regard to education:

Así, por ejemplo, las 300 escuelas de niños que encontraron en Cuba en 1899 eran ya 3.300 seis meses después, dotadas de locales sanos y capaces y de maestros retribuidos como los demás funcionarios del Estado. En otras condiciones, Francia, después de Sedán, aumentó en 17.000 el número de sus escuelas. Nosotros, ¡ah, nosotros!, en la misma capital de la nación hemos sabido disminuirlas, acrecentando la proporción de niños que no pueden recibir del Estado las primeras letras. (*Los siete* 24-25)

The law which Costa wanted the government to pass would not only mandate agricultural education in the school on a daily basis, but it would also require the establishment of habitats for farm animals, fish and aquatic birds. Fruit trees would need to be available and a piece of land that could be cultivated had to be a part of each academy. There should also be instruction in botany, zoology, mineralogy and geology as well as the opportunity for families of students to purchase the food products that were produced by the students at half their value. Finally, any instruments that were invented to assist farmworkers would have to be purchased and demonstrated to the students.

An interesting note about Costa that relates importantly to Noel is that in addition to their mutual concern for the issues of the improvement of the educational system, the conditions of workers of the land, europeanization, and government reform, Costa, similar to Noel expressed a significant distaste for the national pastime of bullfighting. Both viewed the activity as a hindrance to the movement to europeanize the country, which they felt, was critical to its progress. According to Cirilo Martín-Retortillo, the anti-bullfighting or *antitaurismo* theme was a significant one during Costa's time. Costa, as a member of the intellectual body of the era,

adopted a hostile attitude towards this popular pastime, but public opinion could not be totally swayed in his direction. Martín-Retortillo states the following:

El tema de los toros apasionó en su época y sobre todo parecía que en algún momento el poder público, arrastrado por la campaña de los intelectuales particularmente por la posición hostil tan generalizada en la opinión extranjera, se llegaría a su prohibición. Mas lo cierto es que la afición taurina se mantenía muy arraigada y se frustró todo intento prohibitivo, e incluso en las revistas de aquella época se vertieron conceptos despreciativos para los intelectuales que propugnaban por la supresión de los toros en sus diversas manifestaciones de corridas, capeas, encierros, etcétera, tan generalizadas éstas incluso en los pueblos y pequeñas ciudades donde no se disponía de una plaza de toros en forma. (17)

According to Martin-Retortillo, Costa led an austere and simple life but managed to communicate his great displeasure with the *fiesta nacional*. He was greatly influenced in this regard by one of his popular compatriots, Alejandro Oliván of Aso de Sobremonte in the Valle de Tena, who, upon returning from political exile in France began a strong campaign against bullfighting to which Costa aligned himself (16). In commenting on the national pastime, Costa states:

Las corridas de toros son un mal inveterado que nos perjudica más de lo que muchos creen y de lo que muchos creen y de lo que a primera vista parece; desde la perversión del sentimiento público hasta el descrédito extranjero, hay una serie tétrica de gradaciones que nos envilecen.

Si el Gobierno tomara una decisión seria; si la beneficencia buscara caridad o de especulación que las plazas de toros; si las diputaciones inauguraran un buen

sistema de exposiciones agrícolas y pecuarias para sustituirlas por aquellas exposiciones de la barbarie más refinada; si la Prensa en todas sus fases y bajo todas sus fases y bajo todas las formas imaginables, desde el cuento hasta el discurso filosófico, clamara contra ese monstruo de impurezas espirituales; si el clero hiciera ver en el púlpito, con la lógica de la razón y el evangelio en la mano, los perjuicios enormes a que dan lugar en el orden moral, pronto, bien pronto los circos españoles pasarían al dominio del arqueólogo, y los toros con sus accesorios, vendrían a formar parte de las antigüedades españolas (*Ideario* 301-302).

Diversions such as the theatre were more to his liking than bullfighting and he encouraged teachers to spark an interest in this art form because he felt that students understood the explanations of their lessons better when they heard them rather than when they read them from a written page.

As previously mentioned, Costa, as a proponent of the regeneration movement in Spain, was greatly influenced by other pre-eminent regenerationists of the era, namely Lucas Mallada and Ricardo Macías Picavea. In contrast to Costa, Mallada extensively described the problems of Spain during this period in his book, *Los males de la patria*, from the perspective of a scientist. Mallada himself was a mining engineer, geologist, geographer, urban planner, and social and political commentator. He applied all of his scientific knowledge to his analysis of the Spanish condition. Francisco J. Flores Arroyuelo observes the following in his prologue to Mallada's book, *Los males de la patria*:

*Los males de la patria* presenta, como nunca se había hecho, un acopio fundamentado de problemas que España tenía y tiene que resolver. Aquí está el

problema de la pobreza de nuestro suelo, de lo que se llama “evasión de cerebros”, de la mujer española, del hombre español, de los ferrocarriles, de la especulación, de la minería, de la Administración Pública, de la Religión Católica Española, de la emigración, de la agricultura ... (10)

In *Los males de la patria*, Mallada first speaks about the poverty of the country stating that although many resources existed that could improve the land and address the needs of so many more citizens than actually live in the country, a large emigration was taking place. He identifies the reason for their decision to leave their homeland with the following explanation, “¡Por la pobreza de nuestro suelo, nada más que por la pobreza de nuestro suelo!” (16). Mallada further described this movement of emigration in terms of the lack of those agricultural resources that would assist the population in cultivation. He states:

Doquiera en este mundo hay fuentes de riqueza, allá acude en tropel una gran masa de habitantes ansiosos de disfrutarlas, y créase de seguida un centro de atracción; y donde, por el contrario, son escasos los productos o las fuentes se agotan, hay otro centro de dispersión que no cesa. En este segundo caso se hallan...muchas provincias de España. (16)

Mallada outlines the deplorable conditions of the land with the exception of a few areas and attributes its general poor condition to the climate, location, geological composition, and lack of vegetation. He states: “En su lamentable atraso, en su crasa ignorancia, los pueblos se interesan poco por el fomento de los árboles” (33). He proposes that greater attention be given to the revitalization of the regional forestry because this in turn would also improve the climactic conditions of the country. He observes, “Además de la riqueza inmediata que el aumento de árboles reportaría, las condiciones climatológicas de la Península mejorarían visiblemente” (34).

Mallada censures the Spanish people for the apparent defects in their national character and questions whether they are in actuality inferior to other Europeans both physically and intellectually. “¿Será posible que, física e intelectualmente considerados, seamos los españoles de notable inferioridad con relación a los demás europeos?” (36). He identifies four defects of all of the social classes of Spain with the principal one being *la fantasía*, whereby the people delude themselves with regard to reality. He states: “La patria de Don Quijote es un país de soñadores; ... estamos viendo visiones y en ilusión perpetua, sin despertar de nuestra modorra” (40). The second defect he lists is laziness or *la pereza*. “Tal es la pereza, fondo sombrío de nuestro modo de ser, que nos impide marchar a paso más rápido, por el camino de la perfección” (40). Spaniards must move from their apathy to greater action to create and obtain work. “¿Se quiere mayor desventura para un país que la holganza forzosa o voluntaria? ¿Hay nada que empobrezca más la sangre y aniquile más a un pueblo que la escasez de trabajo, o la poca afición al trabajo?”(42). He provides statistics based on the balance of trade in order to substantiate his call for the Spanish people to rise up from their apathy to greater action. “Triste es confesarlo; las consecuencias, al observar los datos de nuestra balanza, tienen que ser muy dolorosas” (45).

The third major flaw in the Spanish national character, which Mallada specifies, is the lack of patriotism. “La falta de patriotismo se ve por todas partes y en todas las clases sociales ... ” (46). This lack of patriotism manifests itself in the inability of the people to make sacrifices for each other and for the greater common good, for as he warns, “Ya veréis demostrado con toda evidencia que en España todos queremos vivir a expensas de los demás; ya veréis qué pronto el patriotismo *se localiza*. Pero ¿qué clase de patriotismo es éste? ¿Es verdadero patriotismo?” (46). The middle classes are corrupted by ambition, egotism, and arrogance seeking positions in public administration for their own personal benefit. Corporations

are placing the private interests of the group above the national good. The upper classes need to understand their role in helping to develop the country also. They could accomplish this not by offering charity but by promoting production, not by abandoning agriculture but by supporting its continued existence and growth, “... no mortificando las gentes de humilde cuna con aparatosos trenes, sino dando ejemplos de modestia y prudente economía en un país donde tan poca inclinación hay al ahorro”(48).

The last significant defect in the national character that Mallada identifies is ignorance, with particular criticism directed towards an inferior elementary education system. He describes the condition of local schools to be mediocre and substandard to those of the rest of Europe. He states:

Escasamente la cuarta parte de las escuelas se hallan alojadas en locales aceptables; más de otra cuarta parte se cobijan en lugares infectos, o entre paredes que amenazan constantemente ruina; el material de enseñanza es pobrísimo, y la tercera parte de los maestros, o sean 7.695, carecen de certificado de aptitud, cosa nada extraña si se atiende a que la inmensa mayoría de ellos no alcanzan la dotación anual de 500 pesetas. Mezquino y miserable pago para tan rudo trabajo, que exige mucha inteligencia, graves cuidados, y exquisita delicadeza. (52)

Mallada speaks about the inferiority of instruction that agricultural workers receive in contrast to that which artisans and factory workers receive. Furthermore, despite the progress of the middle class in receiving better instruction, much remains to be done. Science education needs to be improved and more up-to-date materials and resources be provided to centers of learning. Mallada proposes that “Más valiera que se contase menor número de centros de enseñanza

superior y que estuviesen mejor dotados de material, que no los que hoy existen, con pobres colecciones, con miserables gabinetes, con desvencijados modelos y con mezquinos laboratorios” (54). He also cites the inadequate education received by women of the middle class as a reason for the general decline of Spanish society and identifies the unsanitary conditions of urban educational institutions for women as a contributing factor to this condition. He also found that young women were the victims of inferior instruction and should be educated in art, theatre, politics, and literature.

Mallada speaks about the poor state of agriculture in Spain along with the decline of industry and trade. He also describes the immorality of the country and mentions its ineffective political parties. He states: “Por fortuna, o por desgracia, los partidos se presentan ahora tan fraccionados que no son verdaderas fuerzas de acción ni de resistencia; lo cual explica la continuación en el poder de esas cuadrillas turbulentas, ignorantes y ambiciosas que desde la muerte de don Alfonso XII todavía gobiernan” (209). Mallada is extremely critical of the Spanish political parties that have existed as well as their leaders. He states:

Fuera de contadas excepciones, las cualidades generales de los políticos españoles son las siguientes: la más crasa ignorancia en los fundamentos del difícil arte de gobernar; la osadía y la falta de aprensión proporcionales a esa misma ignorancia; el espíritu de discordia y rebeldía en relación con su inmensa soberbia; la veleidad y la ligereza en armonía con su aturdimiento; la ingratitude y la doblez indispensables para su ambición ilimitada (202).

He sees the future of the country as lying with Democracy or with the Republic and the leaders of this movement as being led by the next generation, which will replace the old and who have not experienced the disappointments and disillusionments of the past. He states: “ ... esa

juventud, que no querrá una patria empobrecida y sin aliento, se alzará con brío para regenerarla. Si para entonces los partidos monárquicos se hallan mejor organizados que ahora, esa juventud aclamará entusiasta la mayor edad de Don Alfonso XIII, y llena de patrióticas esperanzas, procurará días más gloriosos a nuestros sucesores” (222). If this youthful group does not succeed in reaching this goal, then the voice of *un caudillo* will sound and convince the masses to rally around the call, “¡Viva España con honra! ¡Abajo los explotadores de la nación! ¡Paso a la Revolución Española!” (222).

According to Fermín Solana, there was criticism of the country and talk of regeneration years before *el desastre* and the loss of Cuba. “Sin embargo, la historia del regeneracionismo no era reciente. Desde muchos años atrás una corriente del pensamiento nacional había venido insistiendo en la malaventura de nuestro carácter y en el hecho de la decadencia y necesidad de una reforma honda, o, como se diría luego, radical” (12). Among the voices of this earlier period were Jovellanos, Feijoo, Campillo, Ulloa, Larra, Sanz del Río and Giner de los Ríos. These writers and thinkers were the precursors to the regenerationist movement led by Joaquín Costa, Lucas Mallada, and Ricardo Macías Picavea.

Mas cuando al grupo heredero de Sanz del Río lo hallamos vinculado a estas ideas de salud moral del país, renovada o conseguida mediante una instrucción realista, el krausismo ha dejado de ser una filosofía hermética, propia de iniciados: en ese momento es ya *regeneracionismo*; es decir, y en un sentido muy amplio, la filosofía de la reconstitución de la España moderna. (Solana 15)

Solana goes on to identify Joaquín Costa, Lucas Mallada and Ricardo Macías Picavea as the leaders of this new school of regenerationist thought that made its greatest gains in the years after the Cuban War. Like Mallada and Costa, Macías Picavea was one of the major participants in

this school of criticism and reconstitution of the country. “Entre esos españoles desilusionados estaba Ricardo Macías Picavea, novelista de Castilla y pensador de la decadencia, que unió a unas ideas brillantes una expresión cargada de dureza y aciertos” (17). *El problema nacional* appeared in Madrid in 1899 and was at the time the most revelatory and the least partisan presentation of the regenerationist concept and plan. In writing his book, Macías Picavea followed a strict outline in his presentation of the material. He likened it to the plan of a doctor outlining in three stages his purpose in writing the text: *los hechos (la enfermedad)*, *las causas (el diagnóstico)*, y *los remedios (la medicación)*. Macías Picavea first describes the current geographical and psychological conditions of the country and its people (*los hechos*) and places these within an historical context. Within his discussion of this topic, he describes the geography of the country. He comments on the rainfall, climate and topography and their influence on the current situation of the country. He also discusses the Spanish population that he refers to as *la raza española* (60) and comments upon such characteristics as their physical constitution, energy, and individualism to create *el tipo español actual* (59). He sums up this section of *los hechos* very pessimistically:

Para componer el cuadro completo de la sociedad española en este aspecto político-geográfico, hay que juntar bien todos sus elementos: el carácter moral, ya descrito, de la raza, su educación imperfectísima y arcaica, su consiguiente mediana cultura, las desgracias históricas sufridas, la espantosa ruina nacional que fue su consecuencia, la pérdida de tantos bienes económicos, la desolación del suelo y del clima, la influencia, en fin, torcedora y deprimente a la vez, que tantos azotes y tragedias han de haber ejercido al través de cuatro mortales siglos en el alma del pueblo, deshabituándole de la reflexión y del trabajo, acostumbrándole a

la improvisación y a la aventura, endureciéndole la sensibilidad, agriándole el ánimo, extinguiéndole el gusto hacia humanas suavidades de la vida, indisciplinándole la voluntad, enrudeciéndole con los desamores juntos de una naturaleza esquiva, de una historia perpetuamente adversa, y de una pobreza siempre cara de hereje. El análisis de tales componentes dará en cualquier caso explicación satisfactoria del susodicho estado social geográfico. (67)

The next topic that Macías Picavea explores in the section entitled *Los hechos* is the historical background of the country, wherein he comments upon the culture, economy, moral, political, and religious elements of Spain, which form its anatomy. He concludes with an analysis of the role the Hispanic-American War played in raising the awareness of *el problema nacional*. In his remarks about education, Macías Picavea indicates that the state of education is that it is in ruins at both the elementary and secondary levels. In addition, “... la Universidad es una cosa muerta por dentro” (73). Cultural life is also weak with little initiative being given to new experiments in literature, history, the sciences, or law. He finds Spanish culture to be second hand in that it is assimilated from other European sources. The author states: “Como conclusión final puede, ciertamente, afirmarse que en la sociedad española quedan muy pocos hombres capaces de desempeñar hábilmente los altos menesteres y elevadas funciones propias de la civilización moderna en las artes políticas, científicas, técnicas y económicas ... ” (79).

Next, Macías Picavea discusses the country’s economic situation in terms of agriculture, industry, and commerce. He finds these areas to be in chaos also, given the fact that no one has been able to harness the nation’s resources properly. “España es, por naturaleza, rica, riquísima; por su estado histórico, pobre, muy pobre” (80). Inhabitants of farms utilize antiquated methods of agriculture passed along from one generation to another without the existence of any

agricultural capital or banks. Significant industry is for the most part limited to the cities of Bilbao and Barcelona, and the author observes the following:

Pero para formarse idea exacta de nuestra penuria industrial, no hay como consagrar un día a vistar y examinar (a hacer una revista general, como quien dice) los comercios, abacerías, tiendas y bazares de un gran centro urbano cualquiera: ferreterías, quincallerías, objetos de escritorio, maquinarias, lampisterías, bronces, porcelanas, artículos suntuarios... ¡hasta librerías! ¿Qué representación tienen allí nuestras industrias? ¡Apenas nada! ¿Qué representación tienen las extranjeras? ¡Casi todo! (83-84)

Commerce is in a similar condition with railroad and communications suffering significantly along with the nation's moral life where actions are taken before they are thought about- "... la carencia de actividades serenas, perseverantes, calculadas y hábiles, persiguiendo con paciente labor fines arduos y grandes ..." (89-90). In addition, Macías Picavea states that the population is suffering from egoism, ambition, and violence as well as from vices resulting from a lack of self-reflection and respect for justice.

With regard to religious life and its impact on the national profile, Macías Picavea finds the Spanish people to be the least religious and indifferent of all Europe. Even though religious sentiments were once one of the greatest vitalities of the country, Austrian infiltrators have corrupted them. He indicates, "En resolución: religión, Iglesia y clero andan entre nosotros en la misma postración, desmayo y torcimiento que la sociedad entera" (99).

In the political arena, Macías Picavea draws the following conclusions: 1) there exists an absolute break between the monarchy and the nation; 2) political interests serve the monarchy and not the people; 3) political parties do not exist for the good of the nation and scarcely

resemble political parties in other European centers; 4) the Constitution is mere fiction that does not exist for the people; 5) the courts are an additional deceiving entity that appear to align Spain with what is common in other European countries; and, 6) the Spanish Administration is an archaism similar to the absolute monarchies of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries.

He, like Costa and Mallada, goes on to speak about *caciquismo* and the major influence it exerts on the country's politics. He states: “¡Es que todas esas instituciones que de analizar acabamos son puro papel pintado, con paisajes del sistema parlamentario, y el caciquismo, la verdadera pared maestra de cal y canto, bárbara fábrica de nuestro habitáculo gubernamental!” (103). He finds *caciquismo* to be the negation of all rights, technology, science and principles of civilization. “Toda su finalidad, la finalidad de ese caciquismo, egoísta, intrascendental, casero, se encierra en estas dos inferiores aspiraciones: dominar, no gobernar; expoliar, no administrar...” (104). Macías Picavea describes the entire *cacique* structure in Spain, and graphically demonstrates how much the actual political structure based on *caciquismo* differs from the governmental structures established by the Constitution. He also outlines how it functions within the country. “Con semejante vasto mecanismo, complejo y fuerte, Estado, Iglesia, Ejército, Sociedad, la Nación íntegra, quedan totalmente copados y absorbidos bajo el poder de la más horrible oligarquía y fiero caudillaje, soberanos no, dueños y explotadores de España” (112). He describes the war with the United States as being an unpopular one except among the representatives of *caciquismo*. He asserts that it has served to worsen the national ailment as well. He finds it to be a scandalous defeat and articulates the reason for this tragedy in the following statement: “La causa de ese fracaso salta a la vista. Un país en ruinas, desorganizado, con una vista pública replete de hondas mentiras y ficciones, no puede por menos de ofrecernos con claridad las razones de la derrota vergonzosa” (115).

In the next section of the book, entitled *Las causas*, Macías Picavea outlines the causes of events that have led to the present condition: “... unos ofrecen el panorama presente; otros, el trasfondo de la decadencia” (44). He begins this section by outlining Spain’s history commencing with its early settlers and acknowledging the influence of the colonizing Hellenic, African and Oriental nations in bringing about the birth of “... una raza nueva ...” (119). Fermín Solana observes the regenerationists, with Macías Picavea at the head, dividing the history of Spain into two great sectors: the first ended in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and included events that led to the expansion and interior development of the nation. The second period corresponded to the decay of the country wherein “Los tres últimos Austrias dejaron caer sobre España las mayores calamidades, formaron un gobierno pésimo, arruinaron la economía nacional, desquiciaron el sentido religioso; y sin embargo, la vida artística en sus más variadas manifestaciones alcanzó entonces niveles de universalidad” (28-29). Macías Picavea himself traces the history of Spain in three stages beginning with the influence of the Roman Empire, which he describes as one of the greatest times of human spirit in history. He continues with the arrival of the Goths and Arabs and the subsequent appearance of “... la España luchadora, la España de los trabajos de Hércules, la España del temple increíble que supone una batalla de ocho siglos entre una raza y otra raza, entre una fe y otra fe ... hasta fraguar un tipo verdaderamente común árabe-cristiano” (122). The last stage began in the 16th century and witnessed a country that was *fuerte, enérgica, vigorosa*, and one that reached its *apogeo nacional* during the Renaissance period; however, this would all be destroyed with the onset of what Macías Picavea terms *austracismo*. He states: “De pronto en este camino de progreso y de libertad se interpuso un ‘cuerpo extraño’, que arrastró al país hacia una paralización progresiva, mortal. Este cuerpo extraño fue el austracismo, es decir, la gobernación del país por un férrea

dinastía extranjera que puso siempre sus intereses de familia por encima de la nación y los suyos” (124). According to Macías Picavea, Spain suffered from severe degeneration brought on “... con la importación del elemento germánico, es decir, el absolutismo de los Austrias” (Solana 27). Before the rise of *austracismo*, as he calls it, Spain was flourishing as a country economically as well as establishing a strong religious sentiment within its national fabric. However, everything began steadily to decline with the arrival of *los Austrias*, which according to Solana’s outline of Macías Picavea’s work, served to exacerbate the development of the more negative qualities of the Spanish people “... que existían en estado latente y que una buena organización social hubiera hecho imposibles, ...” (Solana 27). Within his text, Macías Picavea lists a series of twenty-two *enfermedades* that brought Spain to its present condition as a result of the Germanic element, which crept into the Spanish national life and eventually led to the overall development of the negative qualities of the Spanish people. These include: *cesarismo*, *despotismo ministerial*, *caciquismo*, *centralismo*, *teocratismo*, *universidad católica*, *intolerancia*, *militarismo*, *parálisis de la evolución*, *idiocia*, *psitacismo*, *atrofia de los órganos de vida nacional*, *olvido y suplantación de la tradición*, *pérdida de nacionalidad*, *desorientación*, *incultura*, *ideologismo*, *vagancia*, *pobreza*, *moral bárbara*, *irreligiosidad decadentista*, and *incivilidad regresiva*. Macías Picavea exclaims, “¡Qué transfusión tan portentosa! España ha perdido su nacionalidad, y se ha germanizado por todas partes. El flamenquismo es ola que nos invade de rechazo ... La tradición, en fin, nacional y castiza acaba por perderse, cual cosa vigente, en la vida, y pasa en forma de mito fabuloso a la literatura” (126-127).

In the final section of *El problema nacional*, (*Los remedios*), Macías Picavea outlines the work that needs to be done in terms of creating a therapeutic plan that will provide *remedios* to these *enfermedades*. This section is presented in three parts, namely, 1) a program of solutions;

2) the means, methods, and manner in which to function so that the remediation plan is productive; and 3) the people who are to apply these remedies (143). He calls for a restoration of the land, which includes improving the water systems along with agrarian reforms to cultivate land for forestry and farming. He recommends improvements in the national education program at every level in order to affect *la restauración de la raza*. Nationalizing the monarchy along with uniting it with the people in order to stimulate a national agenda is also critical. Army and navy military service needs to be re-examined as well as the institution of reforms. Political changes are important as well as social political reforms between the Church and State. Religious sects should be given freedom with the Catholic Church being supported by the government as the Church of the nation. The justice system should be overhauled and revised according to the following mandate: “... magistrados y jueces deberán interesarse con devoción, entusiasmo y *activamente* en el esplendor y triunfo de la Santa Justicia donde quiera, y no como hoy, *por cumplir y pasivamente*, siendo ideal de muchos entrar en el Tribunal a las once y media de la mañana y salir a las doce menos cuarto, cerrando las orejas y volviendo las espaldas a los horrores que en torno suyo pasan, a fin de no molestarse” (156). Macías Picavea addresses the question of reform in regional autonomy, recommending that “La autonomía regional no se decretará por patrón único, sino que se hará surgir por grados, según la preparación y situación presente de cada región, habiendo algunas, como el país Vasco y Cataluña, que podrán acaso ejercerla completa, o poco menos, desde luego; otras como Valencia, Asturias, Aragón, intermedia, en algo más o algo menos; otras, en fin, como Andalucía y las Castillas, sólo inicial” (157). He includes recommendations regarding industry, agriculture and technology as well as commerce and financial matters as part of his plan.

In terms of how these reforms should be implemented, Macías Picavea identifies the means, the methods, and the manner of accomplishing the plan. The means would be: 1) the national government; 2) a body of national inspectors; and 3) a national loan agency. The methods would be: 1) to find a director for the undertaking along with able-bodied workers; 2) to formulate a plan of action that will accomplish the reforms; 3) to suspend the current political machinery and in its place name executive bodies that will implement the reforms; 4) to form distinct representational groups of the country and unite them into a *Consejo Nacional*, an *ídem de las Comisiones regionales* and an *ídem de los Municipios* that will all function if even in a less than perfect manner; and finally 5) to actually implement the political-social reforms either in a linear plan or by combining parts of the regeneration program. The way to operationalize this plan would be for the leaders of the country to combine a driving force or will on their part with knowledge of what can be accomplished. He states: “También el modo tiene importancia dentro de la política de reformas: entendiéndolo como la fuerza o ‘voluntad’ que obra depositada en los nuevos dirigentes y el ‘arte’ de saber en cada momento qué es lo que puede hacerse” (175-176).

In the final part of *El problema nacional*, Macías Picavea discusses the type of person who should lead this great movement. He hypothesizes many possible leaders but dismisses them very easily, choosing rather “... su Hombre con H grande ...” (176) who needs to be able to assist a country that is lying down and can no longer straighten itself out. This person must be able to raise the country atop its shoulders and thrust it upon the world. He cites examples of persons who could serve in this capacity. They are “Alejandro, César, Constantino, Abderramán, Isabel de Castilla, Enrique IV, Cromwell, Richelieu, Gustavo Wasa, Pedro de Rusia, Federico II, Washington, Napoleón, Cavour, Bismarck...” (176-177). He rejects the Monarchy, republicans,

Carlists, *caciques*, the military, the clergy, and members of some social class as potential candidates because they are unable to accomplish the mission. He continues, “Sin él [Hombre con ‘H’ grande], en cambio..., ¡toda obra resultará incierta y precaria!” (178). The author reasons that in the event that this person does not emerge, it is still imperative that all groups work together in order to accomplish the aims of the reform movement. He cites as an example the *asambleístas de Zaragoza*, a reconstitution movement initiated by the *Cámaras de Comercio* and assisted by the *Cámaras Agrícolas* after Spain’s defeat by the United States. This was the only step forward after this dramatic episode and provides an example of what should be considered in selecting a leader of the reform movement. He states: “Lo mejor, absolutamente, para la dirección del movimiento restaurador de España es un Hombre histórico; lo mejor relativamente, dada la ausencia de esa gloriosa encarnación de la patria, es la cooperación de todos: todos los sanos y todos los sanables” (179). Macías Picavea finds that the only hope for Spain’s survival is through these reforms and encourages everyone to make saving the country their top priority, “... que el minuto apremia. Es la hora del *occasio preceps!* Y que todos lo sepan: o ahora..., ¡o nunca! (181).

The regenerationist ideas of Lucas Mallada, Ricardo Macías Picavea and most importantly, Joaquín Costa provide the background for the current study of Eugenio Noel. Noel acted much in the spirit of these 19<sup>th</sup> century reformists in order to promote his own ideas that anchored him to the regenerationist movement and that subsequently appeared in his writing and speeches.

## Chapter II

### Eugenio Noel, Joaquín Costa and the Regenerationism Movement –A Profile

Eugenio Noel, pseudonym for Eugenio Muñoz Díaz was born in Madrid on September 6, 1885 of humble origins. His father, Victoriano Muñoz was a shepherd, and later on in his life had his own barbershop that he eventually lost. His mother, Nicasia Díaz Cobos was the daughter of a shepherd and arrived at Madrid as a servant ultimately to work for the duquesa de Sevillano and condesa de la Vega del Pozo. According to José Esteban, “Fue mujer piadosa que influyó, y a veces decisivamente, en la vida del escritor y que hasta condicionó su profesión” (21). Noel’s first studies were in a private school followed by some time with the Escolapios fathers. Later on he was enrolled as a seminarian in the Colegio y Casa Misión de los Cartujos de Tardajos where his studies were sponsored by the duquesa de Sevillano. He realized that the religious life was not his true calling and subsequently returned to Madrid; nevertheless, he managed to continue his religious studies at the Seminario Conciliar de San Dámaso de Madrid while at the same time beginning a more amorous life-style.

Noel had a stay in Malinas, Belgium, also sponsored by the duchess, where he studied with Cardinal Mercier, magistral canon of Malinas, who instructed students in the areas of ontology, ethics, logic, and casuistry. In speaking of Mercier, Noel states: “Este era su fuerte, pues interpretó a Santo Tomás desde un punto de vista novísimo. Por las calles de Malinas paseaba el sabio sacerdote con nosotros” (*Diario íntimo* 1: 153). While in Belgium, Noel availed himself of the opportunity to travel to other European countries as well, in particular Germany, and ultimately returned to Spain, giving up any further interest in religious studies. According to José Esteban, Noel audited law classes for a short time in the university and began to take up social and political causes that subsequently informed his writing. Esteban reports, “Parece ser

que su primer artículo, titulado ‘La locomotora invencible’, trataba de defender las nuevas ideas socialistas” (21).

Noel began to work as a clerk for the journalist, José Zahonero who recognized in him the talent of a writer. In writing about Zahonero, Noel states: “Su juicio es que soy un gran literato, y en vez de amanuense me toma como amigo.” (*Diario íntimo* 1: 200). According to Noel, he and Zahonero were able to visit the director of the newspaper, *El Universo* who admired Noel’s poetry and gave him a column to write. However, Noel subsequently found himself without much money and, according to Esteban, “... sin ilusiones y a punto del suicido” (22). Noel’s parents had both died by now and he began living the life of a Madrid bohemian. However, within this alternative social circle, he was able to meet many noteworthy writers such as Villaespesa, Carrere, Ciges Aparicio, and the three brothers, Andrés, Edmundo y Pedro González Blanco. He also attended the *tertulia* at the Café Nuevo de Levante presided over by Ramón del Valle-Inclán. Noel writes about his bohemian life-style in the following manner:

Mi vida diaria: muy de mañana a la biblioteca del Museo Pedagógico; comer en “Berthol”, ir después al café de la Paz, pasear horas y horas por los altos de la Moncloa; cenar, escribir a la luz de una vela, acostarme aterido de frío. Escribo el *Prólogo*, versos, prosa...Ensueños de gloria y de felicidad en una buhardilla ideal, saboreando la vida intensa del recuerdo. Entusiasmo del alma ante esta bohemia extraordinaria. Voy hundiéndome voluntariamente en la soledad, ante mi propio asombro. ¿A dónde voy? ¡Y qué sé yo! (*Diario íntimo* 1: 204)

In 1909, Noel decided to enlist as a volunteer in the army that was fighting in the Moroccan campaign. That he should enlist was advice given to him earlier by Ortega y Gasset, who had once visited him and offered him work as a translator. According to Esteban, Noel

remained in Morocco for a year, and it was at this time that his biographers César González Ruano y Francisco Carmona Nenclares state that he had acquired “... ese horror por lo doloroso, esa flamencofobia que, en fin de cuentas, hay que sostener con un gesto superflamenco, porque de no ser inglés, el que se mete con los toreros es más torero que Belmonte” (37). Because of his stay in Africa and his article that appeared in the republican newspaper, *España Nueva* entitled *Notas de un voluntario*, in which he stated his views against the Spanish national cause in Morocco, Noel was imprisoned in 1909. He states: “*Las notas de un voluntario* me habían abierto las columnas de *España Nueva*, el periódico de Rodrigo Soriano, pero me abrieron también las puertas de la Cárcel Modelo” (*Diario íntimo* 1: 261). While incarcerated, Noel became quite famous and received many visitors to his prison cell. He states: “El político Canalejas había visitado la cárcel y había preguntado por mí. Cuando me llegó la libertad, aunque quedasen vivos los procesos militares, mientras seguía publicando artículos de la guerra, fuí recibiendo los halagos de la fama, que pudiera ser no sólo política, sino literaria” (*Diario íntimo* 1: 264). During this period, he came to know Amada, a Cuban who would be the love of his life, but he was once again imprisoned in 1910 for his article, *Ante la cuna de una infanta* in which he wrote objectionable remarks upon the birth of the Infanta Margarita. As a now famous writer, he attempted to begin a campaign against *flamenguismo* with the publication of the book *República y el Flamenguismo*, and in 1912 earnestly began traveling all over the country in order to promote his anti-flamenco ideas. He states: “1912 empieza para mí con indecisiones de cómo volver a la campaña anti-flamenquista. Sigo trabajando en el libro, y tratando de conseguir ventas de nuevos libros” (*Diario íntimo* 1: 272). Noel would speak to the people who inhabited the countryside in order to enrich his own style and expression and make his writing more credible. According to Joaquín de Entrambasaguas, Eugenio Noel “... tuvo también la pasión del viaje

que satisfizo cuanto pudo, visitando Francia y Alemania y sobre todo recorriendo incansablemente España y América de punta a cabo, en varios viajes, de los que solía descansar encerrándose a veces cerca de un año o dos en su casa de Madrid ...”(647). He also crossed the Atlantic four times in order to travel to Spanish speaking countries on the other side of the ocean. In 1918, he traveled to Cuba and in 1923 began his journey across Latin America visiting Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia. His third trip across the Atlantic was between the years 1927-1930, and his fourth and final one was from 1935-1936. He died days after his return in a Barcelona hospital as poor as he had lived.

While many researchers of this period have qualified Noel “... de claro epígono del 98” (Arias Solis, [www.Analítica.com](http://www.Analítica.com) 2), it appears that Noel was more aligned with the spirit and thought of the regenerationist movement whose members included such figures as Ricardo Macías Picavea, Lucas Mallada, and in particular, Joaquín Costa. José Luis Abellán clearly distinguishes between the voices of the generation of '98, whose nucleus he describes as including Azorín, Baroja, Ganivet, Antonio Machado, Maeztu, Unamuno and Valle-Inclán, and the regenerationists and modernists. He states:

En este ambiente y movidos por estas inquietudes se produce la obra de los hombres del 98, íntimamente ligada a otros dos movimientos literarios de los que, sin embargo, debe distinguirse: el regeneracionismo y el modernismo.

El primero se preocupa, sobre todo, de “los males de la patria” – según el título de uno de ellos, Lucas Mallada - y de la solución concreta a los mismos; los regeneracionistas llenan sus libros de datos, estadísticas, observaciones, pues su política consiste en la aplicación de los descubrimientos de la ciencia positiva a

los problemas nacionales. Los autores del 98 sufren casi todos la influencia regeneracionista en su primera época ... pero poco a poco se van desligando del mismo para ir marcándose un camino propio. ... En líneas generales, podemos decir que la generación del 98 siguió un camino medio o “tercera vía” entre el total esteticismo de los modernistas y el cientifismo sociológico y pedagógico de los regeneracionistas, aunque unas veces caigan de un lado y otras de otro, si bien la tónica general es la preocupación ideológica, filosófica e histórica, a niveles estéticos. (*Visión 11*)

Abellán decidedly distinguishes the literary and esthetic approach of the generation of 1898 from the more scientific and pragmatic approach of the regenerationists. The former begin with an initial mental preoccupation and concern over the steady decline of the country over an extended period, while the latter resolves to find remedies that will address the deficiencies that have contributed to this decline and go about trying to institute changes that will improve the condition of the country and its people. Each group speaks about the homeland, particularly Castile, trying to find the true essence of the inhabitants and evoke memories of a glorious past that people no longer recall. However, the generationists of '98 tend to take a decidedly more idealistic approach by describing the country, its geography, monuments, and classic literature within the context of the structure of their own vision rather than the true picture. As Abellán states: “Las notas comunes de esta generación, más que la preocupación por el problema nacional, que es algo compartido con otros grupos intelectuales, vienen dadas por su característica actitud ante dicho problema que es un esteticismo cargado de ideología y, por ello mismo, poco científico” (*Visión 11-12*). This is in contrast to the approach taken by regenerationists such as Lucas Mallada, Ricardo Macías Picavea, and Joaquín Costa. These

reformists framed specific plans for improvement and very often worked within the political machinery to promote them. They also traveled amongst the people to speak with them and observe the daily comings and goings in order to generate support for the reforms they felt would invigorate the country and create a stronger sense of national spirit. Noel himself states the following:

Los del 98 son todos hombres que cierran una época. Hombres broches. ¿Qué horizontes nuevos abren? Contribuyen a la anquilosis de la raza. Intelectuales sin dinamismo, Sentimentales. Seremos los novecentistas los que extirparemos el cáncer que está royendo la vitalidad de la raza.

Asisto por entonces al rotundo fracaso de ese gran viejo que se llama Unamuno. Se han agrupado en torno de él los escritores del 98, y le eligen para que concrete el programa a seguir. Todos concurren al teatro de la Zarzuela, donde esa noche no cabe un alma más. Se espera que de allí salga la resurrección de España. Unamuno debe rendir cuentas verdades. Pero entre el pueblo que asiste a la conferencia hay muchos militares que van a tomar ostensiblemente nota de lo que el recio escritor deba decir. Y Unamuno se calla... Desde ese instante fracasa como apóstol y hombre de acción. Ni lo es él, ni lo son los otros. Son hombres sin proyecciones.

Sólo hay uno que puede serlo. Joaquín Costa, quien, como los antiguos profetas que bajaban de las montañas para hablar al pueblo de Israel, hace tronar su voz noble sobre España. Pero no se le entiende, y llegará a morir triste, acongojado y paralizado este león prodigioso ... (*Diario íntimo* 1: 141).

Obviously, Noel viewed the literary figures of '98 more as men of thought rather than of the actions that he preferred to take in order to generate the changes, which were necessary for the country and for people to move forward. According to José Sánchez Reboledo, Noel, like Baroja and Azorín before him, considers this lack of will or action to be a great defect in the Spanish national character, only Noel expresses this feeling with constant restatement. Sánchez Reboledo states: “También para Noel el gran defecto español es la falta de voluntad, la abulia que postra en la inacción a los mejores espíritus ...” (156). In reacting to this perceived inaction, Noel made extensive trips across the country and crossed the Atlantic Ocean to the Americas. He observed his everyday compatriots and campaigned for the reclamation of the virtues of the Spanish culture in order to uncover *el alma de la raza* and create an awareness of the changes in the Spanish social order which he felt were necessary. Esteban writes: “La biografía ya, de aquí en adelante, se mezcla en Eugenio Noel con la bibliografía, pues vivía para escribir y viajaba para contarnos, con su particular lenguaje, sus aventuras, siempre, siempre, siempre, con un afán reformador, digno, repetimos, de mejor causa”(25). Themes about which he spoke primarily dealt with an *antiflamenquismo/antitaurismo* sentiment and the regeneration of Spain. Like Joaquín Costa, Noel held the position that *la fiesta nacional* or bullfighting was at the root of Spanish degeneration. He viewed the activity in the past as one that contributed to the deteriorating cultural climate in the country because of the *flamenquismo* that it produced. He explains:

En primer lugar era necesario darse cuenta del problema, huyendo de sentimentalismos y de los procedimientos de pobre protesta moral, que caracterizó a los que en otros años denigraron las corridas de toros. No se trata de las corridas sino del flamenquismo que producían; una *sífilis del alma*

verdaderamente horrible, que todo el mundo creía independiente de esas fiestas canallas de simulación y barbarie. (*Piel* 24)

Noel observed a connection or relationship between the two areas of *flamenguismo* and *taurismo* because of the deleterious influence that the latter exerted on the former. Noel believes that no one in the past had the courage to confront *taurismo* and “...quitar las fiestas del alma del pueblo antes que se quitara en la realidad” (*Piel* 24). As a result of this failure to address the problem, the *fiesta nacional* has wielded an adverse impact on the culture and civilization of Spain. In describing the national pastime, he laments:

He demostrado millares de veces, con peligro de mi vida, con nobleza que llegó a conmover muchas veces, que ir a esas fiestas es ir contra el País y la Raza, es retardar el triunfo de la cultura. Se negará, se pondrá en duda o en caricatura, mas la fiesta de los toros agoniza en el alma de la Raza. Se sabe ya que es una enorme mentira, que no trae bien alguno, que devora muchos millones, que causa la chulería y la ineducación, que es la escuela de las mayores degeneraciones, que es un baldón, un lazareto de lepra moral, una letrina y un foco de infección. (*Piel* 25)

As previously stated, Noel traversed the Spanish peninsula as well as crossed the Atlantic ocean four times in order to promote his campaign against what he saw as a great national evil that stalled the country's progress. However, he came to believe that the people ultimately were ready for a change and that the *fiesta nacional* would eventually be removed from the national fabric. He also believed that the citizens of his homeland were behind him in this campaign. He writes: “Y esto [quitar las fiestas del alma del pueblo] se ha conseguido; el pueblo ya no cree en ella; el pueblo da a ese insignificante, pero decidido joven [Noel], la razón. Y tener razón y

hacerla confesar es el principio del fin” (*Piel* 24). Noel promised to extirpate the *fiesta nacional* from the Spanish race. He declares, “He jurado arrancarla [la fiesta nacional] de la raza. Hay necesidad de que no exista para conseguir el triunfo absoluto de la cultura” (*Piel* 26).

Conversing with people in all parts of Spain and in the New World was one of the primary methods that Noel utilized in order to transmit his message of change to the local citizenry in hopes of regenerating their spirit as a unified nation. This campaigning was a major part of his plan of action. He writes,

Solo, enteramente solo, más solo cada vez, cada vez creo en la victoria más. He sabido denunciarla con palabras que no se olvidan tan fácilmente. Ha sonado mi voz hasta en los pueblos más pequeños. Informaos y os dirán que he convencido a miles de personas. Mi nombre se ha unido inseparablemente a estas fiestas, y mi nombre bromará esas fiestas con la paciencia y la energía de los insectos.

(*Piel* 26)

Even in his conferences in the Americas, Noel would speak about Spain, its customs and glorious historic past. In *Diario íntimo*, he writes, “Yo marchó sin dinero, muy sano de corazón, a ver esa América que fue nuestra, a ver si es algo mejor que mi Raza” (2: 230) J. García Mercadal describes the nature of Noel’s conferences in the New World in the following manner:

Concilió una unanimidad de pareceres en las diversas capitales de nuestros antiguos dominios, por ser España el tema constante de sus conferencias, y las cosas de aquélla, sus costumbres vivas, la descripción de sus bellezas naturales, de sus monumentos, de su glorioso pasado histórico, de su actualidad palpitante, de sus virtudes y hasta de sus defectos, expuesto todo ello ante sus auditores en un viril alarde de honrada sinceridad, algo capaz de sorprender, de hechizar y de

arrebatado, revelando en el conferenciante de paso un pleno conocimiento de su patria, adquirido paso a paso y día tras día, con un desgaste de sus energías físicas, un derroche de elocuencia desbordada igual si describía los paisajes y monumentos de su patria visitada por él, que si exponía su ideario político-social, traducido en programas de extensión cultural, de redenciones democráticas para las clases subdesarrolladas y proyectos para estimular el progreso de los pueblos. (15-16)

In describing the ideology of Noel, Ángeles Prado notes also that his thought lies in the spirit of Costa rather than the men of '98 even though she herself prefers to classify Noel as being an epigone of the group. She states: “Ya quedó indicado que, aun en el estilo, sigue la línea regeneracionista de Joaquín Costa, y también dijimos de él que pese a su insistencia en ser un novecentista, debe más bien calificársele como epígono del noventa y ocho” (Prado 147). According to González-Ruano and Carmona Nencalares, two basic elements that Noel shares with the members of the generation of '98 are *el patriotismo* and *el amor al pueblo* (49); however, the two authors separate Noel from these writers by citing his passion and resolve for completing his mission. They state the following:

Todos los nombres citados hasta aquí son, como sabemos, los nombres que esgrimió la generación literaria surgida después de nuestra hipotética guerra con los Estados Unidos. Noel, separándose y separando en esto a todos los escritores que coincidieron con él en aquella fecha, se acerca a la vida profunda de esos nombres de una manera inquieta y desmedida. Se perfila como romántico, violento, apasionado y febril en el horizonte que recortan las figuras sombrías de Baroja y de Unamuno. Pone tanto entusiasmo en sus actitudes de amor hacia lo

eterno que encontró en la misma eternidad de las cosas, que hoy todavía no se ha agotado en él la llama de la inquietud excesiva que le acercó a la hoguera. Se nos aparece en la actualidad, alto y enérgico, pronunciando las mismas palabras y amando las cosas como en 1898. En cambio, Baroja se ha perdido en estólicas novelas donde lo profundamente humano, que es el amor y la muerte, deja lugar a inacabables charlas sobre motivos de antropología. En cuanto a Unamuno, agoniza como un enano bajo el peso de una montaña, de la misma montaña que él, piedra a piedra, fue levantado. Noel no es un solitario maniático como Baroja, ni un fracasado para sí mismo como es Unamuno. Es solitario por haber elegido la soledad, pero no lo es por recurso, y en cuanto al fracaso no le siente ni llega la conciencia de que pueda existir para quien vive constantemente en vértigo luminoso de la lucha contra todo. Por ello se nos muestra Noel como superior a la generación de donde ha surgido. (51-53)

These two biographers of Noel express very adamantly the need to separate Noel from the group of writers of the generation that preceded him. Even though the latter may have launched him in his campaign to revive the spirit of the country, González-Ruano and Carmona Nenclares very interestingly declare him superior to these figures because failure in his work was not an option for Noel. Whereas other intellectuals discussed and lamented the fate of their Spanish homeland primarily through their literature, Noel chose to continue in his relentless campaign to regenerate the country and recover the national spirit via both his writing and his travels. “Necesario es que cambiemos en los procedimientos y que, sea como sea, salgamos a las plazas y hablemos claro” (*Pan y toros* 90). He states in the preface to his book *Nervios de la raza*, “Creo contribuir al estudio del alma nacional con estos dibujos a la pluma hechos entre los azares sin nombre de una

activísima campaña ... ” (30). This active campaign consisted of observing, conferencing, and engaging in literary activity, which brought him directly in contact with the Spanish people. He provided the following explanation with regard to his intentions:

Hasta ahora los temperamentos literarios se han dejado manejar por sus nervios, por sus gustos, por sus iniciaciones; no ha sido una raza lo que ellos han descrito y profundizado, sino las cosas que ellos mismos veían en esa raza. ¿No es día ya de cambiar de procedimientos? Todos se quejan de falta de originalidad, de novedad, de sinceridad; luego es palpable que el porvenir es la verdad pura y simple. Hay en la literatura contemporánea nacional una insoportable monotonía de asuntos en poesía, la vulgaridad es espantosa; en la novela, se buscan los temas de la indecencia, en el teatro, se copian unos a otros sus pobres engendros, y para defenderse se amparan en un optimismo ridículo. Todo menos genio, menos audacia creadora; cuando se busca la verdad se sufre mucho, y no es el nuestro un tiempo en el que se pueda soportar el frío que acoge toda renovación profunda. (*Piel* 114-115)

According to Prado, what Noel was seeking to accomplish through his new literature was to outline the psychology of the Spanish people by way of scientific methods within the current social psychology that was dominating Europe. She states: “Los libros a que se refiere representan el intento de establecer por vías científicas la psicología del pueblo español dentro de la corriente de psicología social que entonces predominaba en Europa. Se trataba de una continuación en dirección distinta de la preocupación obsesiva por la esencia nacional de España, que por caminos intuitivos había inspirado la obra de los noventayochistas” (*La literatura* 144). Noel forcefully believed in the power of books to create a portrait of a nation and its people and

therefore utilized them as part of his campaign or plan of action for bringing about change. He states: “Los libros manifiestan mejor que otra cualquiera prueba el estado íntimo de un país, y no hay como ver qué se escribe para saber qué grado de esplendor tiene una nación” (*Piel* 113). In describing his own plans to create a new body of literature distinct from that of the generation of writers that preceded him, Noel calls for honesty and truth by enabling people to see things the way they actually are and not through the eyes of sentimentality, which he claims, had been done by writers in the past. Not only does this statement confirm his desire to be separated from the writers of the generation of '98, but it also gives direction to the role literature was to play in his action plan to recover *el alma de la raza*. He explains:

Los libros nuevos, nuestros libros, son ante todo obras liberadoras. España está sumida hasta el cuello en un ambiente de chabacanería por falta de genio creador, de concepción, de iniciativa. Y nuestros libros, los libros de la generación nueva, pretenden modificar ese ambiente insostenible de mentira, de escándalo y de risa. Claro está que los libros son obras de arte más o menos grandes, y que revelan un temperamento, una naturaleza; pero estos nuevos libros entrañan, además, una acción enérgica contra el medio. Sin discutir si esta misión hace daño a la obra de arte o no, lo esencial es saber que los nuevos libros intentan sanear el espíritu nacional. ¿Cómo? Con cultura y audacia, huyendo de sentimentalismos huecos, que han podrido las raíces de la virilidad de un país, atentos solamente a que resplandezca la verdad, cueste lo que cueste. (*Piel* 113-114)

Noel is obsessed with replacing what he views as a smoke screen covering up what really lies behind the state of current affairs with the truth about events and situations that are part of the country's actuality. Providing this accuracy via his literature was part of his overall action plan.

He claims that the greatest attribute of this new literature is the fact that it uncovers the veracity that was heretofore being masked in the poetry, drama, and narrative of former generations of authors. In describing the conditions and situation of the country as they actually existed and not how they were being falsely portrayed in years past, his desire was to reveal the deception that was allegedly being propagated by these writers. Speaking of the achievements of this new body of literature, Noel declares:

Los nuevos libros no tienen miedo a ese frío; cuentan con él como en ese otro aliado singular que llaman por ahí conspiración del silencio. Su triunfo no está en la acogida resonante, en el éxito clamoroso; su triunfo está en ellos mismos, puesto que son portadores de verdades, de realidades soterradas durante muchos años por generaciones de mentirosos deslumbradores y pintorescos. En estos libros nuevos sus autores no tienen miedo más que a no estar bien documentados.

(*Piel* 115)

Ultimately, Noel's statements with regard to his purposes in creating his collection of literature reveal the overall central focus of his entire campaign to reclaim *el alma de la raza*. In reality, the truth that he was trying to generate via his literature and travels is the truth he was trying to uncover for the Spanish people so that once again they could rediscover the richness of both their country and culture and regain a position of honor and grandeur in the world. He advises that "En los libros nuevos la verdad no tiene por qué ir desnuda, vestida y bien vestida va; pero, sobre todo, es ella, la verdad. Cuesta mucho trabajo encontrar ese tesoro, y mucho más trabajo arriesgarle, pero no hay otro remedio, la situación de nuestra Raza lo exige" (*Piel* 116).

As a member of the generation of writers from which Noel wished to distance himself, Azorín has these comments to make about Noel's ideology. Not in total agreement with the

Noel's affirmations, he believes that the author could have expressed his passion and pungency (without being hypocritical) via a more measured and flexible approach in his choice of words (1114-1115). Azorín sees Noel as both loathing the national pastime as well as recognizing the energy that it releases among the people. In speaking about this dichotomy, he writes: "De un lado, la inmensa incultura, la deplorable pasividad de una gran masa social en lo atañadero al problema de su bienestar y de su conciencia de la vida; de otro, formidable caudal de energía, de iniciativas y de riqueza, gastado, derrochado espléndidamente en un deporte cruel. Agreguemos a esta visión social una visión complementaria de la palingenesia de España tal como la concibe Joaquín Costa, y tendremos esbozado el pensamiento de Noel ... " (1111).

Noel, in separating himself from the generation of writers that preceded him, referred to himself as *un hombre de acción*. His perception of the lack of action on the part of these other writers may be explained by his adoption of a different epistemological approach in arriving at knowledge of the condition(s) that plagued the Spanish nation. The members of the generation of '98 chose to follow a more scholastic route in explaining the shortcomings and defects, which they observed within Spanish society and nation. The body of literature, which they produced, was intellectual, reflective and in its own manner, brought to the people issues that they believed were contributing to the decline of Spanish influence in the world. On the other hand, Noel, in a style similar to that of Costa, elected to pursue a more anthropological/ethnographic approach in probing the same conditions as those, which the figures of the generation of '98 identified. Through actual physical contact with people and places via his travels, conferences and rhetoric, he sought to activate a campaign or plan of action that would change the course the country was taking in order to regain its former prestigious past. Herrero observes:

El viaje que Noel realizó a través del conocimiento de la antropología de la raza española era, como el de Costa, de ida y vuelta. Primero intervenía el conocimiento, el análisis, para, posteriormente, dictaminar la forma de atajar el mal. Ciertamente había entre ambos autores algunas distancias a la hora de objetivar las soluciones. Costa fijó sus esfuerzos en la política, la economía y las ciencias jurídicas; Noel, por su lado, se obstinó en criticar un conjunto de tópicos que los españoles habían interiorizado como rasgos positivos y diferenciadores.

(10)

In describing their framework for ethnographic studies, Hammersley and Atkinson list the following attributes:

- 1) People's actions and accounts are studied in everyday contexts ... research takes place 'in the field'.
- 2) Data are gathered from a range of sources ... including documentary evidence of various kinds, but participant observation and/or relatively informal conversations are usually the main ones.
- 3) Data collection is, for the most part, relatively 'unstructured', in two senses. First, it does not involve following through a fixed and detailed research design specified at the start. Second, the categories that are used for interpreting what people say or do are not built into the data collection process through the use of observation schedules or questionnaires. Instead, they are generated out of the process of data analysis.
- 4) The focus is usually on a few cases, generally fairly small-scale, perhaps a single setting or group of people. This is to facilitate in-depth study.

- 5) The analysis of data involves interpretation of the meanings, functions, and consequences of human actions and institutional practices, and how these are implicated in local, and perhaps also wider, contexts. What are produced, for the most part, are verbal descriptions, explanations, and theories; quantification and statistical analysis play a subordinate role at most.

(3)

Examined within this anthropological/ethnographic structure, Noel's decision not only to create literature, but also to conference and travel among the people qualifies him as the *hombre de acción* that he claimed to be. As a man of action, he sought to bring about change and the reclamation of the *alma de la raza* through his active observation and interactions with the *pueblo* that he loved. "En Noel, la verdadera religión estaba en el trato diario con el pueblo. Los dichos, los nombres casi perdidos de las cosas, el trato amable y cercano, compartir una comida con unos pastores y arrieros..., he ahí la verdadera religión. Solo de ella se podía sacar un aprendizaje provechoso" (Herrero 11). In making these obsessive peregrinations part of his action plan, Noel responded to his self-imposed mandate, which was to acquire knowledge of the people and their conditions. He states: "Quisiera saber de qué graves preocupaciones se distrae mi pobre Pueblo" (*República* 14). In order to fulfill this mission, which he established for himself, he proceeded to gather information through the ethnographic process of directly meeting and observing the people and subsequently reporting his findings via his conferencing and literature. Within his literature, he would share the details of his first-hand experiences among the people of various provinces and small towns and expose conditions that he felt were deleterious to the ongoing advancement of Spanish society. "Va de pueblo en pueblo, queriendo despertarle mediante el conjuro de su palabra" (González-Ruano and Carmona Nenclares 50).

In addition, Noel was not afraid to confront governmental institutions and speak out against policies and actions that he felt were unjust and ultimately led to his two incarcerations. As mentioned earlier in this research, his first jail sentence in 1909 was handed down to him for criticizing the poor treatment, which soldiers who were engaged in the Moroccan war were receiving from the Spanish government. His second incarceration occurred in 1910 because of an article he wrote on the occasion of the birth of the Infanta Margarita. The piece was entitled “Ante la cuna de una infanta” and in it he pleaded with the newborn Infanta to have her father, the King of Spain, commute the sentence of *seis reos del crimen de Cullera*. In the narrative he exclaimed, “¡Detén la mano de tu padre en el momento de escribir la horrible sentencia! ¡Detenla, por tu vida! Porque si no lo haces, un día llegará en que por razón de Estado los republicanos tengamos que hacer lo mismo contigo, y entonces...” (*Diario íntimo* 1: 269). Noel reports, “El rey, entusiasmado con la primera parte, conmutó la pena por la de presidio, pero por la segunda me volvió a meter en la cárcel” (*Diario íntimo* 1: 270).

This preferred method of direct intervention in the lives of the Spanish people was part of Noel’s overall plan to act on behalf of the Spanish nation and people. Similar to Costa, these activities provided him with the opportunity to proceed in a more anthropological/ethnographic manner rather than adhere to the more scholastic and intellectual approach of the generation of ’98 in order to accomplish the task of saving the Spanish nation and people from further decline. In discussing this difference in approach between the two groups, Prado writes:

Identificándose con ese pueblo procurará llevar al terreno de la práctica sus ideas para promover la redención de la raza que él considera degenerada y oprimida.

Se recordará la crítica que él dirige contra los intelectuales y, en particular, contra los miembros de la generación del 98 en el sentido de que carecen de energía y

valor para la acción. Sea justa o no esta crítica, lo que nos importa aquí es señalar la inclinación de Noel a actuar directamente sobre el público, y la frecuencia con que de hecho se enfrentó con el orden establecido, ocasionando, y aun provocando, incidentes que le pondrían en conflicto en la España oficial. Sus obras están llenas de ataques a esa España oficial que reproducen en su nivel las ideas de Unamuno acerca de la casta y la tradición históricas. La destrucción de esos falsos valores (“capullos casticistas, jugo seco y muerto del gusano histórico”) representa en el pensamiento de Unamuno una fase previa para preparar la regeneración de España, que terminará por incorporarla a Europa. Para Eugenio Noel, con un modo de pensar mucho menos complejo que el de Unamuno, el acceso a la cultura europea constituye una posibilidad inmediata y directa que identifica con los valores de ciencia, cultura y progreso. (*La literatura* 149-150)

With his own words, Noel unmistakably identifies himself as a disciple of Costa. He also clearly informs the reader that he has taken on the latter’s work and has made it his own. In a passage from his book, *Pan y toros*, Noel describes the calling he has received via a dream in which Costa himself appears to him and commands him to continue his regenerationist campaign as the *cirujano de hierro* for whom the country is calling. He writes:

Soñé que estaba sentado en las raíces de aquel árbol viejo del camino de Graus, donde Joaquín Costa apetecía descansar...

Y aquel hombre, en cuyos sesos todo el genio secular de Aragón había labrado el porvenir de España, levantó la piedra de su tumba y erguido en ella me habló así: “Necesitamos un cirujano de hierro. Vete por toda España gritando esas

palabras, únicamente esas palabras. Si te oyen le pedirán. Si no te oyen les escupes. Yo tenía la médula mala. Este cuerpo mío no podía vestirse de torero. Tú, en cambio, puedes ponerte el traje de luces, habar con él, mover las caderas y escupir por el colmillo. Es preciso hablar a España en flamenco, tener los gestos de Prim; el talento de Aranda, Floridablanca o Jovellanos, estéril es sin la pupila del Paquiro o Cúchares y la sal de los brazos de Reverte.” (224-25)

In a further comparison of the two reformers, Jesús Vicente Herrero observes an obvious similarity between Costa and Noel in terms of their proclivity towards travel as a method of campaigning for the modernization of Spain. He states in his article:

Joaquín Costa necesitó viajar por Europa para recoger los avances de la modernidad y trasladarlos a una España atrasada. Su viaje cobró sentido dentro del afán analítico de la Institución Libre de Enseñanza. Igualmente, el bohemio Eugenio Noel continuó la labor de Costa en sus personales viajes por España, aunque su regeneracionismo fue la concretización del artista rechazado por la sociedad de su tiempo. (5)

In 1867, Costa traveled to Paris as a worker sponsored by the *Diputación de Huesca* in order to attend the Universal Exhibition and absorb the functions of a modern city that had become quite progressive. While in Paris, he particularly noted the educational system, architecture, culture, and politics of the French capital, and considered how all of this could be transferred to his own homeland. In reflecting upon this action, Rafael Pérez de la Dehesa states the following:

El viaje a París fue para él una revelación. El contacto directo con la gran ciudad llena de riqueza, centro de la cultura europea de su tiempo, abrió ante sus ojos un

mundo nuevo, unos horizontes antes insospechados. Fue una impresión de asombro a la que pronto siguió un sentimiento de dolor: la clara y punzante conciencia del atraso de España. Pero de ese dolor nació una firme vocación: dedicar su vida a intentar disminuir el desnivel entre España y Europa. (*El pensamiento* 16)

Upon his return to Spain from the Universal Exhibition, Costa wrote his first book, which was entitled *Ideas Apuntadas en la Exposición Universal de 1867 para España y para Huesca* (Huesca, 1868). In it, he described some of the reasons for Spain's failure to maintain the same level of progress as the rest of Europe. According to Pérez de la Dehesa, these included "... la indolencia de los españoles, producida por el clima y el territorio, y por la falta de interés en el progreso de las clases pudientes" (*El pensamiento* 17). He also lists the nation's preoccupation with political questions as a reason for this condition. Pérez de la Dehesa cites some of Costa's suggestions for moving the Spanish nation forward that appear in his book. A good number of these included some form of education in terms of military and agricultural instruction as well as assistance from the clergy in moving the country forward. He reports, "Propugna la creación de un 'cuerpo de instrucción militar', e incluso la propagación de obras educativas a través de los ciegos que cantan romances en los pueblos." There should also be instruction in agriculture, "... pretendiendo su extensión a los seminarios, y la creación de 'granjas militares', así como su propaganda a través de periódicos, exposiciones, etc." (*El pensamiento* 17-18). Instruction should take precedence over mechanization and instead of constructing canals whose cost would prove significant, he suggests the development of Artesian wells. An exchange of products and ideas could be promoted through the development of roads and exhibitions, and in order to address the disenfranchisement of the working class, he suggested that wealth be shared among

the citizenry so that everyone's daily needs could be met. He goes on to attack the national pastime of bullfighting in his *Ideas apuntadas (El pensamiento 19)*.

In speaking of Costa, Cirilo Martín-Retortillo also notes his [Costa's] pleasure in traveling and observing the people of the countryside in order to understand them and their environment in detail. It was not until his physical condition impeded his travels that Costa ceased this practice. According to Martín-Retortillo, "Costa fue un hombre esencialmente dinámico y hasta que los achaques físicos se lo impidieron viajó sin cesar para comprobar los antecedentes de las instituciones jurídico-políticas que estudiaba, procurando siempre pasar inadvertido, entregado únicamente a sus estudios e investigaciones" (19).

According to Herrero, his association with the *Institución Libre de Enseñanza* with which he had a long and substantial relationship formed Costa's views of travel. Herrero finds that "En el joven Costa el viaje fue una fuente de conocimiento directo" (6). Costa's relationship with the *Institución* also provided him with a background in krausist doctrines and helped to form his views on the role of the University as well as on teaching (7). Giner de los Ríos, founder and director of the *Institución Libre de Enseñanza*, writes the following about Costa as a teacher and his adoption of travel as a method of instruction:

Era asiduo excursionista con los alumnos a museos, fábricas, instituciones públicas, sin faltar los miércoles a presenciar los juegos escolares del puente de San Fernando, y acudiendo con igual puntualidad los domingos a los paseos campestres de los alrededores de Madrid o a las excursiones a ciudades dignas de ser visitadas, desde el punto de vista pintoresco, arqueológico, histórico, industrial, etc. (311-312)

Costa saw in these opportunities a chance to observe the troubled areas of the country and to offer solutions and suggestions for improving the life of the Spanish citizens. Whether as an orator in the public plaza, tribunes of the Ateneo de Madrid or in the Academies, Costa always spoke of his same obsession, which was to find remedies for the poor living conditions of the people in order to improve their lives (Martín-Retortillo 25). Similar to Noel, he acquired his knowledge of the world directly through these travels and his ideology was based on studies in Krausist and historical school philosophies. Pérez de la Dehesa offers the following outline with regard to Costa's interactions with his social and intellectual environment. His philosophy was not rigid but open to current intellectual ideas. He investigated Spanish intellectual tradition and always sought in it the seeds of new ideas as well as solutions to current political and economic problems. He studied various entities such as customary legal and social institutions along with poetry, folklore, and language in order to obtain reliable knowledge about the reality of the situation that existed in the country. He attempted to combat the *doctrinarismo* “... en el que englobaba a todos los partidos que colaboraron en la Restauración ...” (*El pensamiento* 230) and managed to demonstrate with his information about *Oligarquía y caciquismo*, the hollowness of the social structures upon which the Restoration Movement was based. Costa states the following:

España, he dicho, es un *río-seco*; y todo lo que hay que hacer es transformar a España, de *río-seco* en *río vivo y corriente*, en río de verdad, fresco, cristalino y caudaloso, donde la civilización llueva sus dones y la política sus cuidados; que apague la sed de agua que abrasa los campos, y la sed de saber y de luz que padecen los cerebros, y la sed de consuelos y de ideal que sienten las almas, y la

sed de justicia y de libertad que padece el pueblo, víctima de un caciquismo opresor que deshonra y arruina ... (1900-I-169.) (*Ideario* 40-41)

Joaquín Costa placed himself in front of every important political activity that impacted the Spanish nation that included agrarian reform. He was greatly involved in raising the standards of education in the country and making sure that *la escuela y la despensa* were priorities. His political activity was based on serving the *burguesía y pequeños propietarios* who hopefully would bring about a revolution that would change the political, social and economic structures of the country. Costa states the following:

Me causa una repugnancia invencible el cuadro vergonzoso, humillante y desconsolador que presenta nuestra vida pública, testimonio patente de que si España ha perdido el pulso, es porque no merecía vivir; en lo alto, los culpables de la caída, deshonra y ruina de la Patria, apoderados todavía de ella y de su patrimonio, gozando las ventajas y los esplendores del poder; abajo, de rodillas ante ellos, la víctima, orando, incensando, suplicando, impolorando cobarde y lacrimosamente como una gracia, revolución en los presupuestos, reforma de las Escuelas y Universidades, autonomía municipal, policía de abastos, soberanía de la opinión, sufragio universal, elecciones honradas, servicio militar obligatorio sin redención, retraimiento de Marruecos y de Marina, etcétera, cuando lo que cumplía es que la cuitada se alzase, por fin, altiva e indignada, y tomase por propia mano lo suyo, que es todo eso, y castigase a los detentadores en toda la medida de su merecimiento. (1908-XXXXIII-273) (*Ideario* 39)

Costa not only reached out to the people through his conferencing and traveling, but he also managed to become active politically by organizing such entities as the Liga de Contribuyentes

de Ribagorza in 1891 and the Cámara Agrícola del Alto Aragón in 1892. Both of these organizations served to initiate an important campaign to formulate a plan to construct an appropriate hydraulic system in Alto Aragón. With regard to Costa's ideology, Pérez de la Dehesa sums it up in the following manner:

La ideología de Costa era básicamente liberal, si bien de un liberalismo profundamente diferente del doctrinario al uso. Un neoliberalismo basado en un renacimiento de la vieja democracia municipal y regional española y, al mismo tiempo, en una adaptación de las Corrientes ideológicas y políticas del mundo occidente, eligiendo aquéllas que, huyendo del extremismo, pudieran llegar a ser aceptadas por extensos sectores de la sociedad. (Como siempre en Costa “apertura a Europa y chapuzamiento en pueblo”). Hay, sin embargo, en su programa aspectos peligrosos tales como el llamamiento mesiánico a un cirujano de hierro. (*El pensamiento* 231)

Similar to Costa, Eugenio Noel was also messianic in his crusade to reform Spain and reclaim *el alma de la raza*. He also found value in reaching out to the people and observing them and their country through the first hand contact that traveling and conferencing provided. For both of these men, traveling was a means of gathering data in order to formulate an articulated and focused plan of action rather than just holding on to a silent and inert personal ideology. Herrero also observes that Noel adopted a regenerationist theme in his work that succeeded in reigniting the spirit of Costa. He states: “Al igual que Costa, Eugenio Noel recuperó el empuje regeneracionista en muchos de sus trabajos. Con toda posibilidad fue el escritor que, durante el primer tercio del siglo xx, mejor resucitó el alma del pensador aragonés” (7). Noel accomplished this deed by speaking and writing about the problems of Spain, which he

witnessed firsthand through his extensive travels both within and outside of the country. Furthermore, as a member of the bohemian class, Noel brought a unique perspective to the understanding of Spain's problems, basing his vision on the theories of Costa and his identification with the disenfranchised people of his country, and writing as a person who suffered the indifference of the official legal establishment. Herrero states the following:

Sin existir una diferencia social de base, ya que ambos escritores provenían de clases humildes, Noel recogió, de este modo, los sustratos de un amplio número de artistas obligados por las circunstancias finiseculares al desarraigo. Esta situación proporcionaba un nuevo punto de vista sobre el estado de la nación, pues sobre la base teórica de Costa, Noel proyectaba los problemas de una España descrita por aquellos que habían sufrido en sus carnes la indiferencia de los estamentos oficiales. (7-8)

The regenerationist themes that Noel promoted when visiting other cities and countries sought to engage people in understanding the enduring values of the Hispanic culture and the transience of its present deficiencies. Noel wrote about these topics in his short novels, newspaper articles, and essays. Entrambasaguas states:

Durante sus viajes por España e Hispanoamérica, desarrolló Eugenio Noel una serie de campañas de exaltación de los valores hispánicos en miles de conferencias cuya lista abrumadora, que se conserva, con lugares y fechas, causa tanto asombro, como que, en realidad, fueron la continua glosa, en fácil y ardiente expresión, de un solo tema: lo perdurable de España que había de defender y lo transitorio, no sujeto a sus raíces, que había que eliminar. (648)

In his literary works, Noel drew upon Spanish traditions in order to rally the people around an attempt to revive what was good about Spain. In both volumes of his *Diario íntimo*, Noel recounts not only the significant events of his life, but also the details of his travels across Spain and the Americas. He traveled to almost every major city in Spain either to give a conference or observe the people of the area. In the chapter entitled, “Veraneo de aquí para allá”, Noel outlines his travels during the summer of 1913 that included visits to Valencia, Barcelona, and Lérida, where Noel informs the reader, “Doy en Lérida una conferencia sobre la Guerra, con éxito enorme de gentío. Por las calles, mi nombre en carteles amarillos destaca como un símbolo, y medito ante ellos. Después de la conferencia vuelvo a Barcelona ... y el 2 de agosto salgo para Tarragona ...” (*Diario íntimo* 1: 372). Noel continues to describe the conferences which he gave in other cities such as Tortosa as well as his visits to Reus and Madrid where he attended a bullfight and was photographed with *el Gallo*, and then finally in Córdoba. The substance of his conferences typically promoted his passionate stance against *flamenquismo* in which he spoke against the national pastime of bullfighting, which he believed to be at the root of all Spain’s problems, and negatively influenced the national identity. In his narrative, *República y flamenquismo*, the reader is able to get a sense of the vehemence, which Noel directed towards this particular element of Spanish society. He ascribed to it an endless list of negative connotations that ultimately held *flamenquismo* accountable for so much of what had gone wrong for the Spanish people and nation. He writes:

Por eso, porque el flamenquismo es una peste, una plaga; porque arrasa el genio de la estirpe, como la langosta los campos; porque ha entronizado el espíritu torero hasta hacer desaparecer todo otro mérito, industrial o artístico; los intelectuales emprendemos la cruzada contra el vicio funesto, sin importarnos su

universalidad y transcendencia. Y como queremos sus extinción absoluta, decimos al Pueblo sano, al Pueblo que sufre y quiere liberarse: “Sólo una cosa es necesaria: que desprecies el torerismo de tal modo que antes que ver una corrida te dejes sacar los ojos”... nosotros le confesamos que es un crimen la diversión [bullfighting] cuando ha de trabajarse sin cesar en la regeneración de una Raza que se pudre roída por la sarna. (26-27)

As Andrés Trapiello states in his prologue to his two-volume compilation of Noel's works, *Raíces de España*, Noel was relentless in his efforts to eradicate what he viewed as being an unquestionable blight upon Spain and its citizens:

Fue infatigable. Por dondequiera que iba exponía su programa con arrebatos: los toros de lidia estarían mucho mejor en filetes para los pobres o uncidos a un yugo: la gente no empeñaría sus colchones para ir a ver a El Gallo; no se degeneraría la raza en los colmados, donde las mujeres propagan la sífilis y los hombres reblandecen la médula; con los caballos que se destripan en las plazas se podrían roturar no sé cuántas hectáreas; con el dinero que se juega en la lotería y que la gente pierde cada año podrían levantarse innúmeras escuelas; con las vidas que se podrían arrebatar a las lagunas infectadas de mosquitos podría formarse una tropa de aprendices de oficios muy productivos. Y así con toda la vida nacional, meticulosamente revisada en todos y cada uno de sus apartados, por insignificantes que fuesen. Noel había pensado en todo. (1: 16)

Noel would travel to casinos, theatres, or ateneos in order to speak about his *antiflamenquista* feelings. The usual sequence of events after his arrival in the city or province was to make a

call to the local reporter and then speak about the principle points of his program. According to Trapiello, these included the following:

[S]upresión de las corridas de toros y su sustitución por el box, cierre de los colmaos flamencos y aperturas de ateneos, sustitución de la guitarra flamenca, sicalíptica y disolutora de las ternillas del alma, por la guitarra viril de Tárrega or Pujol, redención de las prostitutas y escolarización general, derrocamiento de la monarquía e implantación de una república laica, restricciones para el género ínfimo y promoción de la música de Wagner, restricciones en las procesiones religiosas y de la superchería clerical...(Raíces 1: 17).

Participants in his conferences included “ ... las fuerzas vivas de la ciudad, los caciques, los señoritos, los ilusos, los gandules de casino, la mayoría con enormes ansias de preparar un gran escándalo y jugar al pim pam pum con el conferenciante ...” (Trapiello, *Raíces de España* 1: 17).

These conferences not only provided him with the opportunity of conducting a live forum where he could publicly express his ideas, but they were also a source of income for him. Javier Barreiro states the following:

A través de las páginas de su *Diario íntimo* es posible reconstruir los numerosísimos itinerarios viajeros de Eugenio Noel ... Por él sabemos que Andalucía fue uno de sus destinos más frecuentes, casi siempre en busca del dinero que le deparaban sus conferencias. Allí mismo nos dice que en noviembre de 1921 había impartido quinientas cincuenta y dos, y, a finales de 1924, eran ya setecientos seis. Pero también motivaba sus viajes esa persecución de la esencia de lo ibérico, que constituyó su obsesión y razón de vida, y alcanzar la oportunidad de inmiscuirse en la raíz de lo popular, con una capacidad de enlazar

con lo auténtico y primitivo que no se dio en ningún otro escritor de su tiempo (56).

It is interesting to note that Noel was not the only intellectual of the period to adopt an *antiflamenquismo* sentiment that he held in addition to his *antitaurismo* crusade. Angel Acosta reveals the following with regard to the topic of intellectuals and *antiflamenquismo*:

No hay que negar que en algunas de sus críticas reflejan parte de la historia del flamenco y de los flamencos: es cierto que el flamenco se movía muy cerca del mundo del hampa y de la marginación, de ahí que la delincuencia, la prostitución, las reyertas, formaran parte del ambiente flamenco de finales de siglo; pero desde luego, los antiflamenquistas, fueron profundamente miopes al no darse cuenta de la riqueza artística, literaria y humana que las manifestaciones flamencas encerraban, por más que, en los espectáculos públicos, muchos de esos valores pudieran estar muy matizados.

Lo cierto es que a finales del s.XIX lo flamenco adquiere tal dimensión, sobre todo, en Madrid, que los intelectuales empiezan a ocuparse de él de manera casi obsesiva, identificándolo con la decadencia moral de España.

([www.huespedes.cica.es/aliens/gittcus/angel.html](http://www.huespedes.cica.es/aliens/gittcus/angel.html) 2)

Acosta continues to identify the people who were part of the group who felt that *flamenquismo* was responsible for the problems of the country. Among these intellectuals was Gaspar Núñez de Arce, who in 1887 as President of the Association of Writers and Artist halted a public flamenco spectacle, which had been organized as part of a celebration for the Congreso Artístico y Literario Internacional. Pío Baroja often included flamenco scenes in his novels, but generally criticized them within the text. Azorín cites the work of Clavijo y Fajardo, Jovellanos,

and Cadalso in the area of *flamenquismo*. He states: “Clavijo y Fajardo, Jovellanos, Cadalso, describen el señorito flamenco, con todas sus consecuencias, tal como hoy le vemos circular por nuestras calles; Noel no va más lejos en sus pinturas, ni en sus anatemas, de donde han ido estos insignes pensadores” (1111). According to Acosta, other writers who were critical of *flamenquismo* in Spain were Clarín, Palacio Valdés, Emilia Pardo Bazán, Unamuno, and Ortega y Gasset. However, Acosta distinguishes him from the other aforementioned intellectuals because of his knowledge of flamenco and bull fighting. He views Noel’s position as an obsessive love/hate relationship between the two. He states:

Noel no fue el primero ni el único anti-flamenquista, pero sí se diferencia de otros muchos en que era un profundo conocedor del flamenco y de los toros, ... Esto nos lleva a pensar, como quiere ver Félix Grande ... <sup>2</sup>, que en el caso de Noel el anti-flamenquismo es una manifestación de un sentimiento contradictorio, un amor-odio obsesivo por el flamenco y por los toros.

([www.huespedes.cica.es/aliens/gittcus/angel.html](http://www.huespedes.cica.es/aliens/gittcus/angel.html) 4)

Azorín is also perplexed by Noel’s *amor/odio* of *flamenquismo* and *taurismo*, which he feels the writer clearly demonstrates in his narratives. He interprets Noel as seemingly extolling these two elements in his writing rather than trying to denigrate them in hopes of purging them from society. He observes:

Nadie duda que Eugenio Noel es un adversario acérrimo de los toros y el flamenquismo. Mas la lectura de sus trabajos, a las veces nos produce el efecto de una exaltación de lo que se trata de deprimir y condenar. No sabemos cómo explicar esto; pero el hecho es exacto. Si fuéramos amantes de los toros, acaso

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<sup>2</sup> The book, which Acosta cites as the source of Félix Grande’s assessment, is Félix Grande, *Memoria del flamenco* 2 vols. (Madrid: Espasa Calpe, 1979) 454.

encontráramos, leyendo los libros de Noel, más gusto que encontramos siendo adversarios. Noel sabe menudamente todo lo referente a los toros: historia, bibliografía, biografía de toreros, gestos de toreros, dichos de toreros, andanzas de toreros. No hay nada que se le escape. Nadie como él nos informa tan bien de las cosas y lances del flamenquismo. Nadie ha descrito con más entusiasmo, con más exaltación los bailes de una popular danzarina. Sus meditaciones ante la estatua de un torero pueden colocarse por encima de las que dedica al *Pensador*, de Rodín. ¿Qué sortilegio es éste? Veníamos a buscar una triaca contra la ponzoña taurina y no encontramos con una morosa delectación. En verdad, en verdad que son algo peligrosos estos libros contra los toros y el flamenquismo. (1115)

However, despite Noel's questionable portrayal of these two cultural elements, he still took his campaign a step further than some of these other writers and forcefully led his rhetorical crusade not only with news articles and essays but also with endless conferences across the country and the Americas. Azorín characterizes Noel as "... un hombre joven que recorre España en perpetua y caliginosa predicación contra el flamenquismo ..." (1109). Ángeles Prado describes him as "Apóstol, médico, científico, intelectual, hombre de acción ..." (*La literatura* 134), and given that he assumed each of these roles, he distinguished himself from others who professed similar beliefs but expressed them in a less vigorous and dramatic manner.

While Noel is known most famously for his strong campaign against *flamenquismo* and *taurismo*, he did hold opinions about other social issues that were not limited to these two topics. Although his *antiflamenquismo* threw him into the limelight and garnered him public attention, he managed to take up other causes as well in hopes of regenerating his homeland. Prado states the following about Noel, "Antes de consagrarse a la batalla antitaurina, este fustigador

pintoresco e impertérito se había asomado ya a la vida pública, para denunciar otros aspectos de la realidad española” (*La literatura* 135). As mentioned previously, his criticism of his experiences as a soldier in the Moroccan war ultimately led him to incarceration initially for two months and then again for a second time in 1910 for his controversial article criticizing the death sentence of six criminals at the time of the birth of the Infanta Margarita. However, as a result of this second incarceration, Noel was able to begin a “... campaña periodística sobre los horrores de la cárcel” (*Diario íntimo* 1: 270). His articles about the horrors of jail had appeared in such journals as Bilbao’s *El Liberal*, Barcelona’s *El Poble Catalá* and *La Publicidad* and also in the very important *Los lunes del Imparcial*. Furthermore, he managed to procure the support of groups of workers who visited him during this second incarceration as well as the attention of America. He writes, “Intento varias veces que se me conceda la libertad condicional, sin conseguirlo; en cambio, me muestran su adhesión grupos de obreros, que acuden a visitarme, y los señores Angulo, Azcárate e Iglesias. Conozco en ese tiempo los primeros ecos de América...” (270). About his conferencing in America, Noel states: “Admirable gradación de mis conferencias desde que comencé a darlas, desde el flamenquismo, republicanism, arte y demás, hasta hacerlas extensivas a las modernas cuestiones sociales, problemas de la cultura, genio de nuestra Raza y alma de América” (*Diario íntimo* 2: 338).

In addition to his popular presentations against *flamenquismo*, Noel speaks of a political conference he delivered in a *Centro Instructivo Republicano* and another where he spoke about feminism (*Diario íntimo* 1: 314-315). Furthermore, as a commentary, he strongly criticized the institutions and cities of the country hoping to stimulate reform. He states:

¿Hay, por ventura, en España, alguna institución que no esté podrida, que no se caiga a pedazos? Si nosotros viéramos lo contrario, ¿seríamos tan miserables y

tan poco amantes de nosotros mismos, que conculcáramos la verdad y perdiéramos únicamente el tiempo? ¡Qué ciudades, estas ciudades de España, abandonadas a sí mismas, viviendo como las arañas de una corta tela que ellas mismas tejen para poder vegetar en un rincón polvoriento!...Ciudades que se engalanan para recibir a los reyes o a los caciques o a sus diputados, y caen luego abrumadas en la hojarasca de su esfuerzo; ciudades por las que pasan los cómicos o los políticos sin poder dejar aquellas ciudades que parecen situadas, por su falta de vida, en los extremos del Universo....(*Diario íntimo* 1: 315)

In speaking of the government, Noel condemned the Spanish parliament and refers to them as “...esa Menagerie de calamidades...” (*Piel* 61). In a chapter of *Piel de España* entitled “El parlamento de España”, he includes a ceaseless list of unflattering criticisms which he directs at the politicians of the governing body (*Piel* 62-66). In addition, in “Cánovas y su estatua”, Noel harshly condemns the former leader while he is standing in front of a statue that was raised in his honor. In directing his attention towards Cánovas, the statue, Noel sarcastically queries,

“Queréis creerme, ¡oh discípulo del buen ‘Solitario!’ , que ignoro la razón o razones por las que os colocaron tan alto, sobre una columna truncada, emergiendo de un tiesto de flores de invernadero? ¡Si al menos esa matrona que os entrega una corona de mirto y laurel me dijera los grandes problemas que resolvisteis, los enormes peligros de que librasteis a mi patria!...Aquí estoy, cerca del Senado, y os contemplo como aquel a quien no se le alcanza el mérito o la historia de lo que sus ojos observan. Porque, vamos a cuentas: o yo no sé una palabra de historia contemporánea o vuestra gestión de hombre de Estado no pudo ser más bochornosa, más desgraciada, más infamante para mi Patria. ¿Por qué en

el zócalo, ahí donde dice ‘Cánovas’, no ha amasado el escultor una mujer desnuda, retorciéndose, poseída de los siete demonios de la Magdalena, violada, furiosa, ebria de vergüenza y escarnio? (*Piel* 73-74)

He goes on to ridicule the former Prime Minister by describing the many ways in which he feels the politician failed to serve the country and its citizens. He is unforgiving in his attack against Cánovas and his alleged deeds, which he feels were committed contrary to best interests of the people who he was supposed to be serving. Obviously, Noel did not restrict himself to the topic of *flamenguismo* and *taurismo* in his campaign, but also addressed other areas of social importance in his efforts to move the country forward in a regenerationist mode. Those topics will be presented in the following chapter using examples of his literature in which he contextualizes the issues.

### Chapter III

#### The Literary Works of Eugenio Noel and the Regenerationism Movement

Eugenio Noel's literary corpus includes a variety of genres, which he utilized as venues to articulate his regenerationist platform. Through his narrative texts that include short stories, newspaper articles, essays and novels, he communicates to the reader a desire to reinvigorate Spain by addressing the intellectual, economic, and moral issues that would move the country and its citizens forward in a progressive plan of improvement. Noel's intention was to remind the citizens of the past glories of the Spanish nation and in doing so unite them in a spirit of regenerating and revitalizing their own homeland. In studying Noel's narratives that are presented in this research, the reader will clearly see, as mentioned earlier, how the author significantly differed from the *noventayochistas* or the group of intellectuals that immediately preceded him. This difference lies in Noel's systematic anthropological/ethnographic approach to addressing the problems of the Spanish nation and its citizens in an effort to bring about positive and progressive action. Miguel Pardeza in his article, "Vindicación de Eugenio Noel" explains this dissimilarity between Noel and the members of the generation of '98 in the following manner:

Herederos del 98 si se admite la existencia de dicha generación, no mero epígonos ni mucho menos divulgadores, como algunos han pretendido ver, llevó su apostolado a un extremo donde aquéllos no llegaron por mor del escepticismo y pesimismo típicamente generacional. Eugenio Noel abre con su arriscamiento reformador vedas hasta entonces no frecuentadas por un escritor hispano. Los Unamuno, Azorín, Baroja, al igual que sus inmediatos antecesores, sufrieron el frenazo insuperable ante la acción. Noel, después de acusar a éstos de haber

traicionado los postulados regeneracionistas y de no haber completado sus pronunciamientos con la movilización, se arriesga, por su parte, a trasnochar por los no asendeados y sí abigarrados vericuetos de la intrahistoria ibérica. ...  
 Hombre sin generación, si llevó sus pies a compromisos nunca pisados por los del 98, se quedó al margen del refinamiento y academicismo que caracterizaron a los novecentistas. (181-182)

Many authors have written about the adherence that Noel held to the themes of the members of the generation of '98. Some of these writers have been Rodrigo Fernández Carvajal, Miguel Pardeza, Andrés Trapiello, Joaquín de Entrambasaguas, Eugenio de Nora and Ángeles Prado. However, in addition to the fact that he himself expressed his own disassociation from the group, his writings will demonstrate how he connected himself to the work of the regenerationists instead. By choosing to extend his mission beyond the boundaries soul-searching rhetoric that largely characterized the style of the *noventayochistas*, Noel renounced membership in the group who he believed had not completed their journey. As Ángeles Prado explains it:

Ya quedó señalado que en los pensadores de la generación del 98, la problemática del ser esencial de España suscitó meditaciones tan profundas como dolorosas. Si habían comenzado por asumir una actitud que enlaza con la tradición del regeneracionismo, se retiran pronto de la intervención directa en la vida nacional y del propósito de promover reformas, dedicándose más bien a la especulación filosófica y a la creación artística. Como bien dice de sus miembros Laín Entralgo en su estudio sobre esa generación: “Pronto juzgarán tarea mucho más importante conocer la verdad de España y darla a conocer a los españoles, que embarcar a éstos en los quehaceres domésticos de la regeneración. (*La literatura* 95)

Noel's mission was the regeneration of his country, which as Pardeza points out, was unfinished by those who preceded him. While Noel adhered to and incorporated similar themes into his writing as those of the generation of '98, the formation of those themes appeared more of a starting rather than an ending point for him. Pardeza explains:

Fue mérito suyo colmar, con lo que le supuso de sacrificio tanto para su obra como para su vida, una tradición de dolientes de la patria; fue singularidad notable suya bajar de las comodidades burguesas del Ateneo hasta el amplio río del pueblo; allí donde con todo realismo y truculencia naufragaban, confusos, difusos y profusos, los ejemplos y los tipos de tantas teorizaciones y sistemas abstractos. (182)

Noel's goal was to communicate these ideas to the people, operationalize them via a prescription of remedies, and subsequently promote their adoption through an energetic campaign of conferences and articles that appeared in newspapers and *antitaurismo* journals. Ultimately, these actions would lead to progressive reforms in the nation. Sandra Álvarez describes Noel's regeneration platform in the following manner:

En effet, ce “franc'tireur de la Culture”<sup>3</sup> se sentait investi d'une mission: la rédemption intellectuelle, économique et morale de l'Espagne. Le but de sa campagne était de venir en aide à la patrie, et son programme était en parfaite harmonie avec la volonté des intellectuels de soigner au plus vite un pays qui allait mal et dont on avait honte. Cette lutte qu'il menait se faisait au nom de nouvelles valeurs qu'il souhaitait inculquer aux masses: “La révolution intellectuelle, la pureté des coutumes, la santé, l'hygiène du coeur, l'austérité, les

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<sup>3</sup> Álvarez provides the following source for this phrase: José Alfonso, “Eugenio Noel”, in *ABC*, Madrid, 8-II-1962: “Aquel francotirador de la Cultura”.

grandes vertus républicaines, le civisme, la gymnastique, les bains, l'avenir, l'Europe.” (599-600)

In addition to his narratives and conferences, histrionics also played an important role in Noel's campaign. He attended bullfights, received a bull's ear from *El Gallo* who was a famous bullfighter at the time, and as a gesture of gratitude for this “trophy”, promised the latter an article in his journal *El Pueblo*. In the meantime, Noel had “re-gifted” the treasured trophy to some local cats. Prado reports, “... que al día siguiente arrojó a los gatos el preciado trofeo, es decir, la oreja del toro” (*La literatura* 102). He was also photographed in full bullfighter dress alongside *El Gallo* himself. “Otra vez encontramos aquí que el gusto de la exhibición histriónica se combina con una finalidad práctica relacionada con su programa de reforma social, puesto que ese disfraz transparenta un deseo de poner la caricatura en acción” (Prado, *La literatura* 103). Caricaturizing his intended targets of criticism via this exaggerated behavior was an important strategy that Noel would adopt as a part of his plan for action. However, this type of histrionics was just one element in Noel's regenerationist campaign. As Prado informs the reader, “Estas campañas, para cuyo realce puso a contribución tales técnicas, se llevaron adelante a través de la conferencia, el artículo de periódico, las revistas antitaurinos y hasta, al parecer, una obra de teatro que dice escribió y no fue representada por temor a la reacción del público flamenco” (*La literatura* 103-104). Noel's campaign was very comprehensive in its manner of execution and insured that his ideology and platform would be brought to the people in multiple contexts in hopes of changing the course that the country was taking.

In the following chapter, the reader will observe not only how totally committed Noel was to regenerationist ideology and spirit, especially that of Joaquín Costa, but more importantly, to the overall regeneration of his homeland. Issues, which Noel addressed, such as

the importance of education and health care for citizens, the need to europeanize Spain, economic growth and advancements in the field of science were all issues of significant importance to Costa and other regenerationists as well. Moreover, similar to Costa, Noel did not deal with these issues solely from the perspective of a philosopher. In order to promote the necessary remedies to the problems the country was facing, he undertook in an anthropological and ethnographic manner an extensive traveling itinerary observing the men and women of his native land and bringing his campaign to the people of Spain through conferences which he gave all over the country and in the Americas. In addition, he also kept them informed about conditions through the many narratives, which he composed and published as a result of these activities. Just as Costa used his travels to broaden his own knowledge and bring back to Spain the ideas that he collected in his travels to other European nations, Noel, followed a similar course of action. Álvarez, in explaining Noel's strong identification with the ideology of Costa, states the following:

Néanmoins, bien qu'il ressentît une profonde admiration pour Costa et qu'il partageât le même élan de régénération, le désir de moderniser le pays et de le réveiller de son assoupissement intellectuel, il tenait à se démarquer de ses contemporains. Leur point de départ et leurs intentions étaient semblables, mais l'orientation que prenait Noel différait sensiblement de la leur, en ce qu'il mettait plus d'emphase et de passion dans son combat, et qu'il y consacra plus de temps et d'espace dans son oeuvre. (600)

In order to understand Noel's ideology in terms of its relationship to regenerationist policy, particularly that of Joaquín Costa, it is helpful not only to examine their respective platforms, but also to study the manner in which each of these figures promoted their agendas.

Costa's plan for the regeneration of Spain, which has already been discussed in this research, sought to address the political, economic, and social issues that were contributing to the gradual decline of the country. Like Costa Noel tried to accomplish similar goals based on former's ideology, but went about campaigning in a different manner. Jesús Vicente Herrero states that although the bohemian Eugenio Noel sought to continue the work of Costa, his own regenerationist campaign " ... fue la concretización del artista rechazado por la sociedad de su tiempo" (5). If the ideology of Noel for regenerating the country were examined next to that of Costa, it would clearly be seen that Costa's program formed the basis for what Noel was trying to accomplish; however, their choice of methods for reaching these same goals, although similar in some respects, was also somewhat different in others. Herrero offers this explanation:

El programa de Noel se vertebró alrededor de la dicotomía tradición *versus* tradicionalismo. A pesar de ello, en el pensamiento de Costa siempre hubo la esperanza de trasladar este enfrentamiento a las instituciones políticas. Sin embargo, la intención de Noel consistía en mostrar las virtudes y los vicios de la raza. El objetivo de su pensamiento era crear la idea de una nación progresista. En definitiva, Noel utilizaba el sustrato ideológico de Costa, pero su compromiso con la bohemia definió otra manera de exponer su programa. La descripción realista de sus experiencias tuvo como finalidad facilitar la labor del "hombre capaz" que buscaba dar forma a la conciencia colectiva positiva, única manera de construir una patria en común. (5)

In order to understand the relationship of Noel's ideology to that of other prominent regenerationists, in particular Joaquín Costa, it is important to explain the dichotomy about which Herrero speaks, namely, *tradición vs. tradicionalismo* which was at the core of both

Costa's and Noel's respective platforms. The *tradición* element of their policies is defined by the need for the people to identify qualities and characteristics of their national heritage and culture that contribute to their achievements in different fields and to their greatness as a Spanish nation. These *tradiciones* might be long-held values, beliefs, legends, customs, or statements that emanate from the people and their culture. They are part of the inheritance passed on from one generation to subsequent ones. *Tradicionalismo* is a style that systematically tries to maintain a customary manner in addressing current issues based on the "traditional" methods of past generations. Instead of mobilizing their energy and resources to stand behind values that had contributed to the distinction of their culture by searching for modern ways to address problems, the Spanish people chose to adhere to their "traditional" ways of dealing with issues that were contributing to the country's decline. *Tradicionalismo* is often seen as doctrinal or the only acceptable method of completing a task, solving a problem or achieving a goal. This approach is often in direct opposition to a more modern or contemporary approach or plan. Rather than focusing on maintaining and promoting proud traditions or important values, which served them well in the past through more contemporary and challenging programs, the people of Spain were undermining this effort by clinging to methods, solutions, and a way of life that no longer served the country and its citizens in their attempts to move forward. For example, in his narrative, "Los caballistas de Arroyo del Puerco", Noel provides an example of this strict adherence to the behaviors of *tradicionalismo* in his account of the planned introduction of the automobile to the small village of Arroyo del Puerco (today known as Arroyo de la Luz) in the Extremadura region of Spain. The townspeople are informed of the possible arrival of the automobile to their area and Noel reports their reaction to this news with the following account:

¿Automóviles?... ¡Y ellos que vinieran! Un día se corrió la noticia de que venían.

Aquello era inaudito e insoportable. Se establecieron sombríos diálogos.

-Que vengan.

-No vendrán.

-Los trae el cacique para quitar el pan a los pobres.

-Vendrán; pero no saldrán.

Y ni vinieron ni salieron. El pueblo se puso de uñas y la empresa o lo que fuera, se atemorizó. Eso de viajar cómodamente y de prisa no reza con nuestra sobriedad celta. Es toda una epopeya el trabajo de sustituir los peatones y los coches-correos y el que se atreviera a escribir su historia revelaría en absoluto el estado actual de nuestra civilización. Las gentes miran agresivamente el coche de motor; su estrépito conmueve los nervios; le tiran piedras, ponen trampas, le insultan. Semejantes a sus perros corren detrás ladrando. Que el correo llega antes y oportunamente y a horas fijas...y eso ¿qué significa?... ¿Qué importa recibir las cartas antes o después? Que la velocidad y el confort traen visitantes... ¿y para qué? ¿Para reírse de ellos? Que traen novedades industriales, muestras, corredores de comercio..., pues lo mismo venían antes, aunque tardaban más, es claro. (*Nervios* 67-68)

Obviously, according to this account given by Noel, the people of Arroyo del Puerco seemed quite reluctant to embrace change even one that may have improved the quality of their lives. This episode provides evidence of the lingering spirit of *tradicionalismo* that prevailed among the population and demonstrates how such a strong negative reaction to new ideas can stifle any kind of movement of the country towards modernization. In their desire to uphold the

status quo or the way things were done in the past, they are not willing to embrace any kind of change that might improve the future life of the country in terms of having a positive impact on economic, social, and political progress. Noel states:

El caso es conservar lo viejo, lo que se ve y se usa todos los días, lo que pasó a ser hábito y se consustanció en el instinto, lo que se hizo ley a fuerza de ser costumbre, lo que se convirtió en maneras, tradición, leyenda y gestas. Porque así no se discurre ni hay necesidad de violentar el destino, ni hay que preocupar los sesos con problemas. El pan nuestro de cada día...dánoslo hoy, Señor..., y, mañana, tú dirás..., mañana será otro día..., a cada día le basta con su cuidado. En Arroyo del Puerco sucedía lo que en toda España: triunfan siempre los timoratos, lo débiles, los zurupetos...Y, como necesitan justificarse a sí mismos las barbaridades, tienen el talento de universalizar su egoísmo que, siendo colectivo, es ley. (*Nervios* 68)

Noel's assessment of the situation is quite clear - the Spanish population is eager to maintain the traditions of their ancestors but not interested in adopting any new practices in order to insure their continued presence in a modern society. However, according to Herrero, even though Costa and Noel themselves began at the same starting point in that they shared the same respect for upholding the important traditions of the national past, each recommended a different path for the Spanish citizens to follow in hopes of their regenerating these traditions to move the country forward. Noel, who was living as a bohemian writer, had been widely influenced by other artists who suffered the same disenfranchisement by the mainstream society as he did. This fact had great impact on the plan of action he developed in order to address the issues that he felt were contributing to the country's decline. Herrero concludes that "... sobre la base

teórica de Costa, Noel proyectaba los problemas de una España descrita por aquellos que habían sufrido en sus carnes la indiferencia de los estamentos oficiales” (7-8).

Noel adopted Costa’s ideology as his theoretical base and subsequently layered his own thoughts and ideas about regenerating the country on top of this in order to form a blueprint for change. Furthermore, he needed to place this ideology into the context of the society in which he was living so that it could become an active working policy. Herrero explains, “Teniendo en cuenta la traslación de la carga ideológica de Costa al ambiente en que Noel hubo de desarrollarse, resulta más comprensible su evolución y particulares caracteres” (8).

Herrero states that one of the strategies that Noel adopted from Costa was to become acquainted with *lo popular*. What in Costa was an expression of a collective spirit was for Noel an attempt to examine this same spirit more deeply in order to understand its roots and the specific causes of behavior. Costa saw within the people’s literature, particularly their poetry, the opportunity to understand their ideas about the political, juridical and economic systems of their times. Herrero writes:

Uno de los aspectos más interesantes que Noel recogió de Costa fue el estudio y conocimiento de lo popular. Había, sin embargo, un matiz que los diferenciaba. Lo que en Costa era expresión del espíritu colectivo, manifestado a través de la poesía popular, en Noel fue siempre un esfuerzo destinado al intento de penetración en ese espíritu (8-9).

Pérez de la Dehesa observes that Costa’s study of literature was greatly influenced by both Krausist philosophy and the doctrines of the Escuela Histórica Alemana. The latter held to the belief that literature was an expression of the collective spirit and through this collective spirit the reader is able to come to know more about the political, juridical and economic conscience of

the people. De la Dehesa also emphasizes that *el poeta popular* is not only the gatherer of the collective spirit, but is also its carrier and voice. He states:

Las ideas de Costa sobre la literatura están, al igual que todo su pensamiento, fuertemente influidas por las doctrinas de la Escuela Histórica Alemana y por el Krausismo. Según la Escuela Histórica la literatura es una expresión del espíritu colectivo; por los especiales caracteres de esta forma de expresión podemos encontrar en ella las manifestaciones de la conciencia política, jurídica o económica del pueblo ... El poeta popular no es solamente un recolector del espíritu del pueblo, sino que es también su oráculo y su portavoz. (*El pensamiento* 51-52)

He also identifies Costa as the preeminent investigator of past juridical and political systems who used literature as his source of information. Pérez de la Dehesa states that Costa utilized the information gathered from his investigations to assist in collecting data about Spanish history and culture and subsequently implement social reconstruction in the country based on his findings “.... el verdadero iniciador de estudios de este tipo en España es sin duda Joaquín Costa. Estas investigaciones se encuentran en varios lugares de su obra; principalmente las utiliza en sus trabajos sobre la antigüedad española como fuente de reconstrucciones sociales ...” (*El pensamiento* 53-54). Just like Costa, Noel also examined the traditions of the Spanish nation and identified the many important characteristics of the people that allowed the culture to flourish in hopes of ensuring its continued growth in the future. Herrero adds that “... en Noel lo hacía la búsqueda del conocimiento, de los hilos primitivos que habían movido a España a adoptar una particular idiosincrasia” (Herrero 9). Although both Noel and Costa anchored their platforms to traditions of the past, they expected these traditions to be transferred to present-day

society by non-traditional methods that represented current practices and thinking. Their expectation was to incorporate such elements as scientific investigation and educational, social, and political reforms into a modern society.

Unlike Noel, Costa was fortunate to have access to the sponsorship of the *Institución Libre de Enseñanza (ILE)* that had been established by Francisco Giner de los Ríos in 1876 to support his efforts. Julio Ruiz Berrio explains that in its desire to exert strict control over education, the monarchy's Ministry of Public Works had dismissed a large group of teachers (3). In response to this action, Giner de los Ríos, who was outraged by this move, established the *ILE* as an "... experimental teaching center and the driving force of his reforming work" (Ruiz Berrio 3). The *ILE* sponsored Costa's excursions within Spain and to other countries of Europe, which in turn allowed him to make his assessments of conditions that were either contributing to the decline of his homeland or that could help improve it. Having access to other European cities such as Paris where he attended the Universal Exposition in 1867, enabled him to study neighboring cultures in order to try and lessen the gap between Spain and other European communities in terms of adopting a more modern way of life. Herrero states that "Joaquín Costa necesitó viajar por Europa para recoger los avances de la modernidad y trasladarlos a una España atrasada" (5). Because of his travels through Spain and other countries of Europe along with his association with the *ILE*, Costa was able to collect the information that was so important to his regeneration campaign. As Herrero points out, "En Costa había una doble vía de acceso hacia estas realidades. Por un lado, el recuerdo armonioso de su tierra natal, y por otro, la esquematización que la Institución Libre de Enseñanza otorgó a las excursiones" (9). The researcher describes the structure and comprehensiveness that the *ILE* imposed on Costa's trips. Not only were descriptions important, but a careful analysis that included all of the sciences, e.g.

geology, zoology, and botany in addition to anthropology, ethnography, sociology, and culture needed to be completed in order to fulfill their requirements. All of these areas were expected to be addressed in the plans that were made for these excursions. “En ellos la labor descriptiva se aúna con la analítica en un intento de integrar todas las ciencias. De este modo, a la geología, zoología, botánica, etc, se suman aspectos antropológicos, etnográficos, sociológicos, culturales de toda índole” (Herrero 9).

In contrast to Costa’s methods to obtain information, Eugenio Noel relied on his own means to gather knowledge about the past traditions and idiosyncratic characteristics of the Spanish population. “Sin llegar a tal especialización, Noel incidió de manera especial en los retazos de vida antigua. Todo ello sin incurrir en lo tradicional, algo que ya había adelantado Costa al pedir que el Cid fuera guardado bajo llave” (Herrero 9). However, like Costa, Noel also acquired much of his knowledge of the Spanish people and their traditions through traveling, speaking, and walking amongst them to observe the daily routines. He crossed the Spanish peninsula and observed the population and the conditions of their existence, analyzed this information and subsequently created a plan for addressing perceived deficits or need for change. Noel made four trips to the Americas in order to speak to the people about the values which he felt were part of the Hispanic culture and which he wanted the people of his own native country to reclaim. These values represented “... lo perdurable de España que había de defender y lo transitorio, no sujeto a sus raíces, que había que eliminar” (Entrambasaguas 648).

While Costa made his recommendations for reform from a legal, political, and/or economic standpoint, Noel, on the other hand, chose to criticize fiercely the character traits in the Spanish people that he felt contributed to their own degradation from his own perspective as fellow compatriot. Costa not only sought the power of the written word to bring about change,

but he also worked through the political system. Noel primarily used rhetorical tools such as severe verbal and written censure in order to try to remove the vices that he believed the Spanish people had unfortunately incorporated into their lives. This was done because the people mistakenly believed that these qualities were positive elements that distinguished their culture from others.

As mentioned previously, the overall intent of both Costa and Noel was to cultivate a collective spirit in Spain with citizens rallying around values and traditions that were such an important part of the country's past history with hopes of reclaiming them for the future. However, Costa wanted to realize this formidable goal by sacrificing the individualism of the people, whereas Noel saw in their respective regionalisms the only means by which a collective spirit could be revived. His desire was to harness this collective spirit and convert it into a national virtue. Herrero explains:

La exaltación de estas formas de vida en la literatura de Noel mostraba la evolución del pensamiento de Joaquín Costa. El intento de este había sido generalizar el espíritu del pueblo hacia la nación y la raza, eliminando a su vez la individualidad. Noel, aun intentando ese empuje colectivo, vio que la única solución era exaltar los regionalismos como medio de llegar al sentido universal histórico. No deseaba, sin embargo, la extensión de unos caracteres regionales hacia la nacionalidad que pudiera hacer “tabla rasa”, sino que el espíritu general que habitó en estas creaciones pudiera recuperarse como virtud nacional de raza.

(12)

Both examined the current problems of the country within the context of its history in order to construct a program that would serve to provide appropriate remedies that were suitable

for the present. Costa had the sponsorship of the *ILE (Instituto Libre de Enseñanza)* to support his studies while Noel (who had adopted some of these same principles) used the means of communication which he knew best which was to speak to the people through conferencing and utilizing such literary forms as essays, novels, newspaper and magazine articles. As a virtual outcast of mainstream society, these were the instruments of transmission that he had at his disposal, and therefore, could utilize to address the conditions that he found to be contributing to the deterioration of Spanish society.

[A]mbos escritores incorporaron de la Institución la importancia de la vida, del conocimiento, la pedagogía y el amor por la naturaleza y el paisaje. (Herrero 15)

El programa de mejoras de Noel se diferenciaba del que utilizó la Institución Libre solo en la forma. Más inclinado al artículo periodístico o al ensayo, literaturizó en muchas ocasiones sus andanzas por las regiones de España. Por ello sus soluciones siempre aparecían en contextos que permitían localizar en un mismo nivel los problemas de fondo. Su estilo conformaba ambos extremos, sin que por eso debamos hablar de actitud maniquea. Eran, más bien, pequeñas muestras, hábiles pinceladas donde se describía un universo totalizador. Pero cuando Noel acudía a lo popular y alababa sus costumbres ancestrales, en realidad estaba recuperando aquel derecho consuetudinario de Costa donde se avalaba la verdad de la raza. (Herrero 16)

Select narratives which Noel created for transmitting his message of regeneration are the texts that will be examined in the present chapter in order to understand more clearly the platform for change that Noel had promoted in his desire to have the Spanish citizens reclaim *el alma de la raza*. Through his literary works, Noel called upon the people of Spain to act

progressively in ways that would build upon the virtues and traditions of the past and transfer them to the present in hopes of regenerating the country and its citizens. His desire was for them to carry these traditions forward, but in ways that moved the country as well towards future achievements. As previously stated, Noel did not wish to see the country locked in a *tradicionalismo* mode that stifled growth by encouraging things to be done as they had always been done in the past. He challenged the people to achieve reclamation of their esteemed traditions within a society that so desperately needed to be reinvigorated, and to do so by adopting more modern and progressive methods. Through his travels, rhetoric, conferences, essays, books, and articles he undertook this mission on behalf of the country he loved so much.

In her article, *Eugenio Noel "l'anti-torero, aussi flamenco qu'un torero"*, Sandra Álvarez constructs an outline of Noel's *oeuvre* but notes the difficulty in compiling a definitive bibliography because some of his works remain unable to be found, and information, which appears in his two volume biography, *Diario íntimo* that relates to this task is not verifiable. In addition, Noel would very often change the title of his narratives from one book to another or place the same written work in different books with different dates. Álvarez explains:

Les biographies d'Eugenio Noel et les études critiques sur son oeuvre ont dû affronter la complexité d'un étrange personnage dont les mémoires, son *Diario íntimo* – dans lequel il fournit un certain nombre d'informations difficilement vérifiables - , n'apportent pas forcément les éclaircissements nécessaires à la construction ordonnée d'un parcours assez chaotique. Cette tâche biographique est rendue plus ardue par une bibliographie difficile à établir, puisque certaines de ses oeuvres demeurent introuvables, alors que celles qui sont accessible offrent des mélanges d'articles et de chapitres communs à plusieurs de ses livres. (600)

Because of these limitations, Álvarez finds that Noel's literary production represents a hybridization of genres "...sa production littéraire était caractérisée par une hybridation de genre..." (600). For example, his books of essays, *Las capeas*, *Nervios de la raza*, and *Raza y alma* also contain chapters that are written in narrative form and therefore reaffirm the challenge that categorizing or classifying Noel's work presents to the researcher due to the presence of a mixture of styles present in one volume.

In assessing Noel's literary production, Abelardo Linares states that Noel offers the reader "... un mundo literario poderoso y verdadero, una penetrante intuición para extraer todo su zumo a paisajes y personajes, un estilo "visual" pletórico de sangre y nervios, un pulso admirable para graduar el interés y dar el dramatismo, el "tempo" adecuado, a cualquier escena más o menos novelesca" (23). Various attempts have been made to compile a definitive list of Noel's works which include Linares' (1988) bibliography that lists thirty-four novels and essays by Noel including his only *novela larga* entitled *Las siete Cucas*, and thirty-one short *novelas periódicas* all listed in chronological order. As part of his introduction to a 1992 edition of *Las siete Cucas*, José Esteban includes a bibliography of only those works of Noel that were found in the *Biblioteca Nacional*. Esteban also lists the titles of works which Noel claims to have either published, edited or intended to publish and explains how Eugenio de Nora (1958), in an effort to establish boundaries in order to classify the narrative works of Noel, identifies three main directions in which Noel's works went. The first direction was to express "... un volteranismo anticlerical-nada inesperado nos dice, en un ex seminarista rebelde y autodidacta-expresado en relatos irrealistas y fantásticos" (29). The second group included "... narraciones de fusión equívoca, aprendida de la promoción modernista precedente, de sensualidad y falso misticismo estetizante, erótico y religioso" (29). The last group of narratives addressed the topics which

were of interest and concern to the members of the generation of '98, “... popularistas y críticos contra la ironía y agria realidad nacional: anti-héroes de voluntad pulverizada, picaresca “flamenca”, chabacanería y brutalidad escudadas en la “afición” taurina y el inevitable crimen rural, cargado de localismo y ruda significación simbólica, entre otros muchos” (29). This division of Noel’s narratives into three main thematic categories places a certain structure around a body of work that otherwise might appear confusing and somewhat disorganized.

In another effort to provide an exhaustive list of Noel’s works, Francisca Escudero Vidal (1995) acknowledges the work of both Linares and Esteban, but states that it was her own desire to create an even more comprehensive bibliography that would correct previous errors and omissions. In commenting on the efforts of Linares to compile a bibliography of Noel’s works, Escudero Vidal states:

Hace unos años, Abelardo Linares elaboró una bibliografía que quizás sea la más completa realizada hasta ahora, pero existen en ella algunos errores y le falta, además de algunas reediciones, una serie de datos, tampoco reseñados en ninguna de las anteriormente mencionadas, que creo necesario subrayar, pues forman parte .... del sistema de publicación que Noel empleaba. (603-604)

In addressing Esteban’s efforts to include a bibliography of the works of Noel as part of his introduction to a 1992 edition of *Las siete Cucas*, she states that “La bibliografía que aparece en la edición que hace José ESTEBAN de *Las siete Cucas* (Madrid, Cátedra, 1992) se limita a reseñar las obras de Noel que figuran en la Biblioteca Nacional” (604).

Thus, in response to the stated limitations of the bibliographies of Linares and Esteban, Escudero Vidal created her own bibliography in which she first divides Noel’s literature into two main parts, namely, 64 first editions of his works and 26 volumes of re-editions. She then

subdivides all of the narrative works, which appear as part of the first editions section into 32 short novels and one long novel. She also includes in this first editions section, nine volumes that contain various short novels which Noel had published previously, but in which he inserted additional new works. In this same first editions section, Escudero Vidal goes on to identify 23 volumes of Noel's essays or miscellaneous works. Literature that had been written during Noel's lifetime, but was not published until the year of his death (1936) or afterwards is also included in this section of the bibliography.

The re-editions section includes 22 volumes and 4 anthologies containing previously published work. In her article, Escudero Vidal reminds us that Noel was also the editor of two weekly newspapers, *El Flamenco* and *El Chispero*; however, a large number of the articles, which appeared in these two journals, also appeared in one of his narrative works, *Escritos antitaurinos* that is included in her bibliography in the first editions section.

In summation, Escudero Vidal offers this description of her bibliography of Noel's literary contributions:

Por todo lo expuesto hasta aquí, será una bibliografía en gran parte “comentada” la que presente, que revelará no sólo la “necesidad” que tenía Noel de hacer rápidamente un libro, echando mano muchas veces de escritos anteriores, sino también, y quizás sea esto lo más importante, su concepto de los géneros literarios, o mejor tal vez, la falta de una delimitación clara de los mismos, como comprobamos leyendo su obra y las afirmaciones, que en ocasiones hace a lo largo de las misma, acerca de la Literatura o de la obra literaria. (606)

In a later attempt at compiling a bibliography of Noel's works, Javier Barreiro (2001) created an alphabetical bibliography based on the chronological one compiled by Linares (1988),

but Barreiro adds four additional works that had not been located by Linares at the time that he completed his compilation. Barreiro also included the titles of re-editions of Noel's works that were published subsequent to the completion of Linares' original bibliography.

The current research will now examine select texts of Eugenio Noel in order to demonstrate his strong alignment with the regenerationist movement, particularly his self-professed connection to Joaquín Costa who was its foremost representative. As previously stated, much of the writing that Noel accomplished was based on his extensive travels across the peninsula. These excursions not only afforded him many opportunities to meet his fellow Spanish citizens but also provided him with the opportunity to propose solutions to them that would attack the problems of the country in order to regenerate it. The many journeys which he made throughout Spain and the Americas allowed him to interact with the people who were most affected by the country's inability to revive and transform itself into a more dynamic entity, and therefore, attempt to promote change based on his first hand observations of both the people and the nation.

In the 1924 work *España nervio a nervio*, the reader travels with Noel across the Spanish peninsula to small towns in the region of La Mancha, to Andalucia, Alcalá de Henares, to Benicasim in Castellón, Barco de Ávila in Castilla, and among other places, Yecla in Murcia, Soria, and Madrid. In the chapter entitled "La agonía de los molineros de Criptana", Noel tells about his visit to the village of Criptana in La Mancha. He laments how the windmills there, which may have been the inspiration for Cervantes in his composition of Don Quijote, have been allowed to deteriorate. He asks, "¿Fue aquí donde le ocurrió al Quijote su aventura de los molinos?..." (*España nervio* 21). The two dozen or so Criptana windmills either have disappeared or remain in a state of significant disrepair. Noel writes:

De esos veinticuatro molinos solo quedan nueve; de esos nueve sólo cinco son cromos exactos de molinos; de esos cinco sólo dos marchan; y esos dos no tardarán en ofrecer al viandante sentimental una brusca lámina de ofensa y desolación (*España nervio 21*).

Pero ¿es que importa a alguien anden o no anden, muelan o no muelan, se conserven o se pudran?...Ahí cerca, en Alcázar, y allá no lejos de aquí, en Socuéllamos, se discute ferozmente sobre un Cervantes alcalaíno o un Cervantes alcazareño, sobre un defertero Miguel, acuchillador de figura, o un estudiante en Salamanca acomodando doctos revoltillos y congruentes averiguaciones, desconcertamientos o urdiduras de hechos con recevecas obstinaciones o inocentes guadramañas. Y, entre tanto, los molinos de Criptana agonizan; se desmoronan los adorables conos legendarios que copiaron los mejores artistas del mundo; se rompen en el azul del cielo de las estepas las líneas encantadoras de las aspas; o se hunden los capirotos en el fondo purvulento del telar (*España nervio 21-22*).

The author interprets this lack of concern for preserving these iconic structures to be a sign of indifference on the part of several constituencies. He criticizes the government for its inaction in saving the windmills and cannot understand how structures so significant to the Spanish culture can be neglected, “Sólo resta al Molino, de sus entrañas y órganos, el palo de gobierno, aún fijo en el fraile y en uno de los hitos” (*España nervio 22*). Noel perceives in these windmills a history that recalls Cervantes’ character, Don Quixote who is such a central figure in Spanish heritage and who he feels is not being given proper respect. He states:

¿Por qué no conservar estos molinos? No otra cosa dicen que la escena de aquel día. Ríen, ríen, aún. Y su risa, en la tragedia de su agonía solitaria, es como la propia risa de Cervantes, tan viva, tan llena de lágrimas. Nada comparable a la emoción de ver andar esas aspas que maltrataron la triste figura del Caballero de los Leones (*España nervio* 23).

Through his account of the deterioration of the windmills of Criptana, Noel calls attention not only to the need for protecting these important symbols of Spanish culture, but also to the need for action that will preserve these structures and nurture the collective national spirit that is so important to regenerating the country.

Another example where Noel uses his travel excursions to articulate his social agenda is in the author's account of his visit to the city of Vitoria that appears in *España vieja* which is part of his 1915 work *Castillos de España*, Noel presents the city as having a contrasting character. On the one hand, it is home to rich industries, a well-cultivated countryside, comfortable housing and a desire in the people of the lower class “... de que el espíritu de la ciudad no sea como su clima, lluvioso y nublado” (*Castillos* 317). However, despite all of these positive elements, Noel observes among the citizens of Vitoria an inability or lack of initiative to move forward and act in a more modern or European way. This was a concern and priority of other members of the regenerationist movement as well. He proclaims, “...la vida cívica de nuestras villas es nula” (*Castillos* 318), and views the people as negatively responding to the demands and character of the present day preferring instead to remain passive. Noel makes the following comment upon his arrival to the city of Vitoria that attacks this disturbing atmosphere of inertia:

Al entrar en la ciudad recuerdo su escudo; del fondo de un barranco sale un largo brazo armado de una más larga espada, entre un león rampante furiosísimo y un

pacífico castillo de ajedrez. ¿Será éste el carácter de la ciudad...? Pero nada más inexacto que el escudo de armas cuando del carácter de una ciudad se trata.

Vitoria es un inmenso y sombrío monasterio. Jamás sucede allí nada de extraordinario. (*Castillos* 317)

The author goes on to explain the reason for his strong criticism. Although he endorses some of the city's commendable features, there are still those elements present in Vitoria that thwart any attempt at bringing its inhabitants into a more modern way of thinking and behaving. One is the attitude of the ruling classes who wish to maintain things as they are because of the comforts that this mindset permits them. He states:

El campo es rico y no mal cultivado. Las clases poderosas retraídas hasta la exageración tienen la idea siguiente de progreso: "No se vive mal así". Y realmente no se debe vivir mal detrás de aquellas inmensas paredes de cristales. La ciudad vegeta y engorda; es una de esas ciudades españolas que "echan tripa". Como Logroño, atesora un género mixto de liberalismo aristocrático. Indudablemente hay allí libertad y muchos buzones de la "buena Prensa". No os comerán crudos por ser republicanos; pero os llamarán protervos, desgraciados herejes, o sandios. (*Castillos* 318)

The element in Vitoria's culture that Noel finds to be the most unsettling is its strong acceptance of *clericalismo*. He states very critically how the people of the city have hidden so much of their money and are not putting it to good use. He cites the example of a woman who has spent 100,000 pesetas in order to have daily mass said in perpetuity in the new cathedral of the city. In his discussion of this situation, Noel explains, "España es un país desgraciado por estas causas; hay mucho dinero pero este dinero yace en los sótanos de los cerebros fanáticos y no sale sino

para convertirse en iglesias, fundaciones y asilos” (*Castillos* 318). Noel continues to criticize the city for its strong ties to *clericalismo*, the church, and people of the past as well as its tolerance of the bullfighting that he abhors, thus preventing any progress in moving forward towards modernizing the country. He states:

Mi éxodo por Vitoria es triste. La lluvia incesante y la visión de una ciudad entregada al clericalismo; las muchas iglesias; su característico aspecto de ciudad de grabado en madera; la enorme plaza de toros y el club taurino; aquellas silenciosas calles altas que aún conservan el nombre de los gremios que un día las habitaran y hasta los escaparates a guisa de entonces; la melancolía que causa la ciudad y se filtra en los huesos. (*Castillos* 318)

Another feature of *clericalismo* that Noel passionately attacks is the people’s decision to build a new cathedral in the city. Noel sees no purpose behind this construction other than to appease the high-ranking clerics who are able to persuade the people and royalty to provide the funds for the structure. He states that a city that is lacking in its number of schools and modern buildings has still chosen to support two cathedrals, an old and new one, with no suitable reason for the existence of the latter. Noel writes:

Después de examinarlo bien y someterlo a mi entendimiento, sin prevención alguna, sin sectario prejuicio antirreligioso, yo me he preguntado: ¿Por qué Vitoria, tan pobre de escuelas, tan escasa de edificios propios de una ciudad moderna, emplea sus energías y su dinero en construir una catedral semejante en todo a las catedrales antiguas? (*Castillos* 320)

In responding to his own question, Noel compares the construction of the new cathedral in Vitoria to a similar situation that he observed in Madrid, a city also in need of schools and home

to a new cathedral as well. According to Noel, neither cathedral in either city possesses the rich heritage of its older counterpart and is not being constructed with a spiritual desire to promote the people's faith. He explains:

La respuesta puedo ofrecerla yo mismo también, puesto que soy madrileño. Hela aquí: en Madrid, donde hay todavía treinta barrios sin una sola escuela y quince con una sola, o sea, ochenta y cinco mil niños sin colegio, estamos construyendo una catedral, y la construimos piedra a piedra, céntimo a céntimo, penosamente, con una constancia tan inverosímil como inútil, y van gastados en ella sendos millones sin que pueda fijarse para su conclusión un plazo menos largo de sesenta años; pues bien, después de tanto gasto ignoramos por qué se construye. Una catedral debe ser, ante todo, obra colectiva, y obedecer a una necesidad del espíritu provincial. ¿Y por ventura ignoramos que falta ya ese sentimiento?  
(*Castillos* 320)

With his own explanation, Noel makes a strong social statement about the value placed on education in these two locations as well as an indictment of the clergy with regard to their questionable motives for the construction of the cathedrals. He cites a lack of religious commitment of certain factions in the cities and the absence of a sincere desire to promote a veritable religious spirit through the construction of these churches. He states: “¿No sabemos que nuestras generaciones de ricos y de nobles más se precian de la ostentación o de la influencia política que del verdadero espíritu de la religión, que, por cierto, y en su perjuicio, es esencialmente popular?” (*Castillos* 320). In direct criticism of the clergy, Noel explains that the new cathedrals were built to exert the power of the latter at the expense of the faithful people.

The words that he uses are very direct and would be considered far from politically correct in today's government and social circles. Noel writes:

La Almudena y la catedral nueva de Vitoria no tienen razón de ser. Son, porque el clericalismo español quiere alardear de su poder indiscutible; pero estas piedras son demasiado blancas, excesivamente, para decirnos esas historias que cuentan las piedras de las verdaderas catedrales. ¿Qué historia tienen las nuestras de hoy? Pues sencillamente que a un obispo rico se le ocurrió erigirse un gran sepulcro en piedra de la ciudad; pidió y obtuvo la ayuda de un pueblo católico; los reyes, invitados, vinieron a poner la primera piedra, y dos arquitectos trazaron la planta en un amén: eso es todo. (*Castillos* 320-321)

He contrasts the sentiment that existed behind the construction of the older cathedrals with the sentiment that exists behind the more recently constructed ones. He views the former as having been motivated by a sincere desire to establish a place of prayer rather than to construct a plagiarized version of it that the new cathedral represents. He laments, “El arquitecto...ha plagiado con gusto” (*Castillos* 328), and continues with the following extolment of the ancient structures:

Antiguamente los pueblos sentían la necesidad de esas grandes casas de oración, sus “Casas del Pueblo” de entonces, y los reyes otorgaban donaciones especiales y espléndidas; legiones de artistas soberanos acudían de todas partes en peregrinación y, lentamente, sin prisa, durante siglos, con fe profunda, cincelaban en la piedra las crónicas de la región y ofrecían a su Dios, en el que de veras creían, convertidos en joyas de arte, los misterios de aquellas grandes almas

constreñidas a vivir en sí mismas, y la viva originalidad de aquella existencia varia, rica en matices y en trajes, en epopeyas y delirios. (*Castillos* 321)

Noel questions the public's priorities and with an eye towards regenerating the country sees a greater value in educating the people of the city rather than providing them with something unnecessary and inferior to what is already in existence, "Se necesita mucho talento y energía para llevar a cabo catedrales como ésta. ¿No sería mejor emplear esa inteligencia en la construcción de alguna universidad? (*Castillos* 323). Noel's remarks not only undermine the well-entrenched factions of the city, but also call upon them to make choices that will address the needs of its citizens and in turn support greater growth and change in the overall economic and cultural climate.

Another interesting example that Noel offers in his criticism of Vitoria that reveals his social agenda for regeneration of the country is his account of how children playing in a local park mistreat the swans that are there. They feed the animals crumbs mixed with potentially harmful ingredients. Like other regenerationists crying out for more europeanization of Spain, Noel contrasts this behavior with what he believes to be a more civilized approach in a neighboring European country. Noel claims that in contrast to their Spanish counterparts, the children of Belgium plan a ceremony every year where they purchase birds and subsequently grant them their freedom as part of the celebration. As the children are performing this freedom ritual, musicians offer a concert in the background. He cynically states that Vitoria's answer to the misdeeds of their children is to build more plazas for bullfighting. This example is obviously an attempt to show how the people of Spain must become more like those in the rest of Europe if they are to regain their stature as a world leader. Europeanizing Spain had been an important

element in both Noel's and Costa's platform for the regeneration of the country and the example cited above calls for the people to act once again in a more civilized manner.

El parque es bonito y muy pequeño. En el estuario hay cisnes preciosos. Había muchos más; venían los niños y, para distraerse, metían en las migas de pan que les regalaban, alfileres y cabezas de cerillas con lo que no han dejado sino unos cuantos. Contra esto hay un remedio: levantar muchas plazas de toros. En Wallonia, a las puertas de Stavelot (Bélgica), los niños compran todos los años centenares de pájaros y los dan libertad mientras las músicas entonan alegres conciertos; pero esto son costumbres de niños tontos; lo marcial, lo flamenco es matar cisnes, patos y ánades por el procedimiento descrito. (*Castillos* 318)

In another collection, *Piel de España*, in the narrative entitled *El acero militar de Trubia*, Noel talks about this simple town and how it exists only as a home to the workers of the local munitions factory where cannons are manufactured. The author uses his visit to Trubia to write about the conditions of the workers as well as the poor treatment that the government extends to them and the town. What is remarkable about Noel's account is his ability to describe in detail what he observes there and to provide the reader with an extremely vivid description of the setting, the people and his own feelings and observations that ultimately build to a climax. He writes the following:

El cañón demuestra una de estas dos cosas: o que los hombres aguzan más su entendimiento cuando se trata de hacer daño, o que el miedo al daño que pueden recibir los pone tan fuera de sí mismos que inventan monstruos incomprensibles. Nada menos comprensible que un cañón. (*Piel* 174)

This passage serves to introduce the centerpiece around which the narrative is constructed, namely, the cannon. In this account, Noel will introduce multiple themes. Rather than directly informing the reader about the town's background, the people, and the factory, he chooses instead to reveal incrementally this information as part of the narrative. After his comments on the cannon, he writes:

[A]guardo la salida de los obreros. La puerta principal de la fábrica de Trubia es una sencilla verja, empotrada en dos edificios al final de un puentecillo de hierro sobre el afluente del Nalón. Las dos barandillas del puente se abren al llegar cerca de la verja, formando una pequeña explanada que adornan los imprescindibles bustos de los dos oficiales del Arma, famosos por sacrificar el bien del pueblo la ley férrea de las Ordenanzas. Lluve. Llovió toda la noche, toda la mañana. Pronto serán las doce, y el cielo es un inmenso nubarrón gris, del cual caerá agua durante un año. Gracias a eso, los montes de Trubia son de una soberbia belleza forestal. (*Piel* 175)

At this point in the selection, Noel begins to describe the actual workers and the dismal conditions under which they have had to perform their duties due to the lack of concern on the part of the government. Noel expresses his great respect for them, their knowledge, and their skills; however, he claims that they have been virtually ignored by the Spanish Government. He identifies some of the positive elements of Trubia but cynically states that the appearance of these features may have been the result of actions of another government other than that of Spain. He writes, “Un gran Gobierno, un Estado que no fuera español, hubiera convertido Trubia en una factoría riquísima, en emporio universal ...” (*Piel* 175). However, he offers the following encouraging assessment of the workers in the local factory:

Pues bien; con todos estos elementos, a los que hay que añadir unos obreros competentísimos, nuestros Gobiernos han constituido una fábrica pobre, que sostiene con grande penuria 1.500 hombres, y tiene parada las mejores y más costosas máquinas, y un pueblo enano, muerto, sin vida propia, como ahogado en el barranco de las montañas. Y es que nuestros malditos hombres públicos, sea porque les conviene para sus intereses personales, sea porque no viajan si no es oficialmente y no saben una palabra técnica de nada, sea porque su patria les importe un tornillo, encargan los pedidos a las fábricas extranjeras. (*Piel* 175-176).

Noel infuses into this narrative his themes of governmental indifference toward the common worker and the need to regenerate not only the economy of the region and country but also the spirit of the people. The writer supports his appeal with first-hand observations combined with statistics and facts that make the reader believe that he has the knowledge of a skilled munitions worker. His is not a philosophical statement in the style of the *noventayochistas* but a call for reform in the manner of a committed regenerationist making an informed plea based on fundamental facts and information rather than just engaging in introspective soul-searching. In addressing the work of the writers of the generation of '98, Pedro Laín Entralgo observes the following: “Pronto juzgarán tarea mucho más importante conocer la verdad de España y darla a conocer a los españoles, que embarcar a éstos en los quehaceres domésticos de la regeneración” (381). As stated previously, this decision on their part not to undertake any other meaningful action is in direct contrast to the proactive manner in which Noel responds to these critical issues facing the Spanish nation through his rhetorical campaign of conferencing and writing.

Noel finds it particularly disturbing to observe how so much of the work that the men of the munitions factory in Trubia are capable of completing is being given over to foreign countries. Through his accounts of the workers' feelings of dejection and low morale, Noel reveals himself to be greatly discouraged by the lack of respect that the government has shown to these artisans. The latter appear deeply affected by the government's indifference towards them and the absence of any recognition for their knowledge and skills. Realizing that officials have decided to entrust the manufacture of munitions to the labor forces in other countries, Noel is bewildered by this decision. He writes:

Hay muchos viejos, de cara interesante; son los maestros, estos maestros de Trubia que podrían ser profesores de la Academia de Arma. Me señalan jóvenes de talento, y, efectivamente, hay inteligencia en aquellas caras; pero hay también ira reconcentrada, pena muy honda. Lo inevitable en España: preferencias que no se explican, pretericiones que entristecen, olvidos que restan energías. Los obreros pasan por un largo aprendizaje, teórico y práctico, y ganan muy poco; a pesar de ello, como he podido observar, como lo sabe España entera, menos el Gobierno de tanda, los maestros similares del extranjero podrían enseñarles todo menos su oficio. (*Piel* 176)

As stated previously, Noel, like other regenerationists including Costa, places his descriptions of the munitions factory within the context of science. He describes the factory in significant detail using words like laboratory and scientifically related workshops to identify areas within the workplace. These descriptions make his narrative appear more objective rather than subjective, thereby validating his account via the adoption of a more scientific rather than personal perspective in his presentation. The material is presented more from the standpoint of a

person knowledgeable in the scientific aspects of the work rather than from the perspective of a casual observer who is offering a personal account of their visit to the factory.<sup>4</sup> He explains his observations in the following manner:

Observo desde el primer momento que la fábrica es muy grande, que los talleres son muy largos y, asimismo, que todo está muy junto, muy aprovechado el terreno. Mirada la fábrica en conjunto desde la casita del laboratorio, entusiasmo que pertenezca a nuestra patria aquella serie interminable de edificios sencillos. Son vastos talleres científicamente relacionados entre sí; agrupados según su destino; abiertos como puentes de navío; agujereados de lucernas, ventanas, paneles, luceras, arcos de luz protegidos por vidrios; algunos descienden a relativa profundidad y otros ascienden un poco monte arriba....Como los marinos distinguen desde la costa por el color del humo la clase de carbón que el barco quema, así me explican los obreros, por el humo que arrojan, el servicio de los talleres de los que las chimeneas surgen. Humos blanquísimos; negros, densamente negros; parduscos; violáceos, con resplandores de llamas; amarillentos, con livideces que se funden en tintas anaranjadas y rojos cereza; tonos grises de ceniza, de plomo, de zinc; violentos matices de bronce, de asfalto, que salen rígidos hasta gran altura, como salomónicas columnas, para inclinarse a merced del viento y descolorarse en el agua, que cae implacable.

(*Piel* 177)

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<sup>4</sup> Prado speaks about Noel's ability to catalog information and believes that he also demonstrates a propensity towards superficiality in his knowledge. This superficiality, along with his desire to boast about his knowledge, "... tiene no pocas veces consecuencias funestas en su obra literaria" (*La literatura* 132-133). Nevertheless, she feels that he engages in this information cataloging in order to present a more scientific and empirical synthesis of reality. She states, "Pero conviene destacar este rasgo suyo-la mentalidad de catálogo-porque ha de manifestarse una y otra vez, en su procedimiento creativo" (*La literatura* 132-133).

As part of his “scientific reporting”, Noel also provides information about the materials and the brand names of the machinery that are being used in the manufacture of the products. He points out that much to his dismay, much of the machinery is foreign-made and communicates this waste of local talent in not having the workers in Trubia assume a more active role in the production of these munitions products. Space is underutilized and machines are either not working or not in use, thus contributing to the erosion of the town’s economy and the spirit of its workers. He reports the following:

Hay máquinas grandes, complicadas, muy fuertes, que sujetan sin esfuerzo aparente los más enormes bloques de acero. Hay otras muy hermosas, que tienen estructuras minuciosas y os obligan a deteneros hasta que os enteráis de su funcionamiento rápido, constante y sencillo. Todos los sistemas pueden construirse allí. En el museo de modelos hay ejemplares de todas marcas, de tierra y de mar: Canet, Rimailho, Saint-Chamond, Maxim, Schneider, Hotchkins, Nordenfelt, Sarmiento, Armstrong, Hontoria, Ordóñez. Podrían construirse aquí todos esos cañones alemanes indicados técnicamente por una letra, todos los franceses, los que se nombran por milímetros y pulgadas. Las Fábricas de Creussot, de Krupp, de Châtillon-Commentry no tienen otras ni mejores máquinas para construir los famosos modelos que imponen a todos los Gobiernos del mundo.

...¡Qué máquinas tan admirables!...Desgraciadamente, casi todas son extranjeras. Motores, laminadoras de carriles, y de planchas, forjas, martillos, pilones, prensas hidráulicas..., todo es de marca extranjera...Los talleres son muy amplios, hay mucho sitio vacío, muchas máquinas paradas. La grandiosa prensa

hidráulica con su adjunto motor gigante no funciona. Causa pena ver al mastodonte de la moderna maquinaria polvoriento e inmóvil...En una explanada se hallan abandonadas veinticinco o treinta cureñas muy grandes; son los célebres obuses de Ordóñez. En Trubia los veis por todas partes, y es extraño que no anden tirados por las calles de la ciudad. Hace muchos años que se paralizó la construcción de estos gigantes, y la muerte del inventor dejó al Estado este remanente cuantiosísimo. Debe ascender a muchos millones el dinero tirado así, porque he visto en todos los talleres bloques, piezas y cureñas de este modelo, ya inútil o abandonado por no sé qué razones. En el Parlamento no estaría de más preguntarlas. (*Piel* 179-180)

Noel compares the continuous growth of the Krupp munitions factory in Essen, Germany to the factory of Trubia, describing the former as very impressive, “... asombra, y en detalle, maravilla” (*Piel* 181) and the latter as a barracks, “Trubia, más que fábrica parece un cuartel” (*Piel* 181). Once again, he criticizes the government for not being more proactive in generating life into a failing enterprise. He states: “Ahora, cuando la disparatada construcción de las dos escuadras, podía llevar a los talleres de Trubia un movimiento insólito y pujante, nuestros Gobiernos no confían a la fábrica que tanto adulan si no es una pequeñísima parte” (*Piel* 181). Noel very interestingly ends his chapter about the munitions factory of Trubia with a more philosophical rather than inflammatory statement on the intrinsic value of cannons and munitions. He comments, “Realmente no hay razón para admirarse de lo que veo en Trubia; más el corazón sufre observando este andamiaje de la muerte que he sentido tan cerca” (*Piel* 182). The author does not single out Trubia alone as a partner to war, but attacks the idea of war in general and the death and destruction that it brings about. In contemplating his upcoming

meeting with the workers of the factory, he ponders: “Además, además..., odiando la guerra... ¿cómo hablar de la paz a estos buenos obreros que de la guerra viven? ¿Cómo decirles que este acero militar ha de odiarse?” (*Piel* 183) In a contrasting manner, he ends this chapter on Trubia by informing the reader that he is leaving the city with the vision of the factory in his mind and soon arrives at a more tranquil location that is the sea. According to Noel, “Llego al mar. Y con la serena visión del mar se va del cerebro, como un mal sueño, la imagen de la fábrica de la muerte” (*Piel* 183).

Noel has not only succeeded in bringing the plight of the workers of Trubia to the attention of his readers, but he also has managed to incorporate into the narrative, a larger, more philosophical question on the purpose of war as well as its aftermath. The economic realities of not utilizing local human resources and the decision to import so much of the machinery that is used (or not used) in the factory have both contributed to the economic downturn the village has experienced. This is seen not only in its decreased revenues but also in the prevailing low morale that Noel claims to have observed among the workers. Proactive intervention on the part of the government to address these issues can bring added prosperity to the region not only in terms of monetary benefits but also in terms of revitalizing the spirit of the town’s citizens. Perhaps the latter may even be the more desired outcome since promoting self-esteem among the native inhabitants has the potential to generate longer lasting effects than the unpredictable time period of reaping financial benefits.

It should be stated at this point in the research that the centerpiece of Noel’s campaign for the regeneration of Spain was his vigorous stance against *flamenquismo* and *taurismo*. Noel obsessively fought against these two elements in the Spanish culture that he believed to be the

greatest causes of the country's problems. In the words of Noel, "Nada más inmundo que nuestro flamenquismo. Fermento de la descomposición de un pueblo ..." (*República* 9).

According to José Esteban, Noel began his fight against *flamenquismo* and *taurismo* with the publication of *El flamenquismo y las corridas de toros* (Bilbao, 1912), *República y flamenquismo* (Barcelona, 1911), *Pan y toros* (Valencia, s.a.) all leading up to the publication of the key work of his campaign which was *Escenas y andanzas de la campaña antiflamenca* (Valencia, 1913), a "... serie de ensayos y apuntes, donde aparece lo novelesco, y, en general, de gran interés: "Una visita a la tumba de Costa, Una capea en Medina del Campo, La oreja del Amargoso, Ante una imagen de Nicolás Salmerón, La torre de Hércules en la Coruña, etc." (Esteban 27).

In this particular collection of narratives, Noel presents his case against these two perceived scourges of Spanish society. As mentioned earlier in the discussion of Noel's histrionics, in one of the selections, *La oreja de 'Amargoso'*, he relates to the reader how after killing a bull, the famous *lidiador*, *Gallito*, sent him the bull's ears as an expression of good will. Noel, upon receiving this "gift" felt it necessary to respond to his gesture in kind. He sent *Gallito* a rather cynical note in return. Noel describes the episode in the following manner:

Ayer, un lidiador famoso llamado el *Gallito*, excitado a ello por las imprecaciones de diez y ocho mil almas, o cosa parecida, se quitó delante de mí su montera negra, me habló en un lenguaje que no entiendo, y después de matar un toro me envió la oreja del pobre animal. Entonces yo, correspondiendo a su obsequio, le arrojé una tarjeta con este extraño escrito, que debía conservarse para edificación de flamencos: "Vale por un artículo en *El PUEBLO*." ¿Y qué otra cosa podría yo ofrecer a un torero si no es uno de esos artículos míos en los que burla burlando

doy a mi padre patria el secreto de su degeneración? ¿Qué podría, en mi forzada miseria de intelectual español, regalar al torero célebre que en el término de dos horas gana seis veces mil pesetas? (*Escenas 18*)

In this short paragraph, Noel's *antitaurismo* position is clearly articulated to the reader. Throughout his travels, in his conferences and in his narratives, Noel adheres to this ideology whereby he felt that all of Spain's problems could be attributed to the people's attachment to this national pastime. He is greatly disillusioned by the fact that the only time the Spanish people demonstrate any level of energy, which in reality is useless energy, is when they are discussing, applauding, or yelling at a bullfight. Furthermore, a country that is clearly in significant monetary debt is paying these bullfighters an exorbitant amount of money in order to compensate them for their appearances. Noel obviously believes that these sums of money could be better spent in areas that will have more of a positive impact in regenerating the country. For Eugenio Noel, bullfighting was a vice of the people that needed to be eradicated, and his essay is replete with what he believes to be rational explanations for doing this. It is interesting to note that his call for action in this piece echoes the cry of Joaquín Costa who was in search of a *cirujano de hierro* who could accomplish such a task. As mentioned previously, Noel himself felt this calling and it is in response to it that he undertook this campaign to eradicate this perceived scourge of the Spanish people. He describes the situation in the following manner:

La hiperestesia del espíritu nacional ha llegado a extremos espantosos. Mujeres y hombres se estrujan en las Plazas de toros, gritan, discuten, aplauden, injurian, se agitan y es el único punto en que manifiestan alguna energía, la vana energía de las masas que imponen por su número y hacen reír por su infantilismo grosero y hueco. ¿Qué creería dar con su oreja el buen pueblo que tiene doce mil millones

de pesetas de Deuda y no puede pagarlos? ¿Qué batalla creería haber ganado el pobre pueblo del barranco del Lobo? *Gallito* debía saber, si ese joven leyera, que los públicos que le aplauden, le miman y hasta van a presidio por defender una faena suya, están muy enfermos de una enfermedad que sólo pueden curar los cirujanos de hierro. ¡Los cirujanos de hierro...! España se ha creído que esos hombres cuando aparecen son tan débiles que fracasan ante la burla o el escarnio. Ignora la desgraciada España que se la ama tanto más cuando más se convence la inteligencia de que tal país está imbécil de remate. (*Escenas 21*)

Noel concludes his essay by rationalizing his displeasure at receiving such a crude and tasteless gift from *El Gallito*. According to Noel, it would have been better if *Gallito* had sent him his own ears because “... las orejas que yo deseo son las suyas, no las de los toros” (*Escenas 20*). Noel in an internal conversation goes back and forth with himself in justifying his sentiments. He continues his tirade about the total futility of receiving the ears of the bull; however, despite his indignation, he is ready to move forward to continue his campaign to regenerate the country and the people because he feels that “... serán necesarios muchos trofeos de esos para que yo me convenza de que mi patria está irremediabilmente perdida” (*Escenas 22*). It is with that sentiment of hope that Noel continues his journey as the self-appointed *cirjuano de hierro* that Costa stated was so urgently needed.

In a change of topic, Noel addresses the problem of emigration in his essay, “Ébano vivo” in *Escenas y andanzas de la campaña anti-flamenca*. He informs the reader that he is in the port of Coruña observing the ship *Alfonso XII* that is flanked by other boats waiting to transport emigrants from Spain who for the most part will be travelling to America or Jauja, a mythical country of ideal happiness. Noel believes that the port itself is reflective of the emigration

problem in that it [the port] is “... muy grande, profundo, hermosísimo y tan mal aprovechado, tan pobre, tan descuidado, que da pena el verlo” (*Escenas* 102). Noel continues to describe the setting of Coruña and in particular the people who are working there. He writes, “... camino despacio... fijándome... en el trabajo rudo de estos sufridos hombres” (*Escenas* 102). He mentions the boats that he sees and the maritime activity that is taking place; however, unlike the boats that travel to Bilbao to transport iron, no modern boats come to Coruña for purposes of commerce. They only *arrive* to transport people to Jauja. He observes, “Así como en Bilbao se llevan el hierro, vienen aquí por hombres. Los enormes buques modernos no descargan aquí mercancías; se tragan almas y se las llevan lejos, muy lejos, a Jauja” (*Escenas* 103).

Noel makes mention of the poorly paid woman workers, “Mas tarde vi a una de estas mujeres de carga, cuyo sueldo es de una peseta, comer con una mano mientras con la otra sostenía a su hijo, que mamaba” who despite their working conditions, manage to complete the various tasks that have been assigned to them. He describes them as exploited individuals, “Los que van en busca de trabajo a América no sufren más que estas mujeres. Unas y otros son ébano vivo, nadie hará sino explotarlos” (*Escenas* 105) with little concern being paid to their well-being.

All of Noel’s scenic descriptions of the port of Coruña, the boats and the plight of the people lead up to his renouncement of the emigrants who are tearing apart the very fabric of the country and leaving behind little hope for it to move forward in a positive direction. The emigration situation now becomes part of Noel’s agenda also, for how does one regenerate the country without its greatest resource, namely, its citizens? Without their will, determination and power to re-build, very little can be accomplished. He describes the situation in the following manner:

Las barcas de los emigrantes Cruzan delante de mí. Hacinadas en ellas van familias enteras. Llevan en la mano los emigrantes una maletilla y una hamaca, todos igual. En los sollados de los barcos ocurren escenas repugnantes y macabras. Pero no hay que apiadarse de ellos, porque ellos lo quieren. Se van cobardemente: huyen de su patria. Se les explota, se les mancilla. ¿Y qué?...El sentimentalismo huero puede presentar como victimas a estos hombres que nadie expulsa. Pocos me supieron decir por qué se iban. No saben por qué se van. Con la energía que necesitarán para triunfar en lejanas tierras podrían cambiar los tristes, los muy tristes destinos de su Patria, pero no quieren. Se van a Jauja, luego se quejan. (*Escenas* 107)

Thus, with this essay, Noel informs the Spanish people and government of the gravity of the emigration problem and adds this issue to his regenerationist campaign in hopes of making the Spanish population and government aware of its impact upon the future of the country. His concern is very much like that of Lucas Mallada, another regenerationist who also lamented the emigration of Spanish citizens to other nations that he attributed to the poor land conditions of the country.

In another acknowledgement of the influence of Joaquín Costa on the country's future and on Noel's own ideology, the latter writes about the many times Costa addressed the nation and urged its people to be proactive citizens in addressing its problems. In his essay, "Oración fúnebre por Joaquín Costa", Noel interestingly refers to Costa as "... aquel europeo nacido en Graus ..." (*Escenas* 181) emphasizing Costa's ties to the rest of Europe. As stated previously, the europeanization of Spain was central to the regenerationist campaign and its proponents had frequently emphasized its importance. Noel outlines the specific times when Costa called the

people to action; however, according to the author, these calls went unheeded, which he feels, contributed to *el desastre de 1898*.

He begins by identifying November 13, 1898, as the day when Costa “... pronunció el programa-manifiesto de la Cámara Agrícola del Alto Aragón” (*Escenas* 180-181). The *Cámara Agrícola del Alto Aragón* was an organization founded in 1892 that promoted regional agricultural reform particularly through the State sponsorship of irrigation projects. Costa was its first president. Noel remarks that after Costa’s pronouncement in 1898, “España se conmovió un poco” (*Escenas* 182). He comments that Parliament was not to blame for Spain’s problems, but the blame was to be found in the countryside, “Hasta los más idiotas comprendieron que el problema ibérico no estaba en el Parlamento, sino en el campo” (*Escenas* 182). Noel then enumerates the specific dates of the many occasions when Costa addressed the people and called upon them to act on the country’s behalf. He offers the following specifics:

Quien así hablaba, con voz y gestos de león, apelando al genio de la raza, había dicho lo mismo en 1868, deslumbrado por el espectáculo de la Exposición Universal de París; en 1880, en el paraninfo de la Universidad Central, con motivo del congreso nacional de Agricultura; en 1882, tratando del comercio español y la cuestión de Africa; en 1883, en un discurso prodigioso acerca del provenir de la raza española; en 1884, en una oración pedagógica, y en el discurso del mitin sobre política de España en Marruecos; en 1885, en tres discursos pronunciados en congresos agrícolas de Madrid: en 1885, en el Círculo Aragonés de la corte y en un mitin sobre Reforma de los Aranceles de Aduanas; en 1887, en los artículos colosales de la *Revista de Geografía Comercial*; en 1892 y durante los seis años siguientes, en todos los sitios, en todos los periódicos

y en todos los discursos. El programa-manifiesto de la Cámara Agrícola fue refrendado con dos obras maestras: *Colectivismo agrario en España y Reconstitución y europeización de España*, y mantenido en Febrero de 1899, al constituirse la Liga Nacional con dos discursos que dejaron maravillados a quienes habíanle oído en el Salón de Actos de Padres Escolapios, en la Plaza de toros y en el teatro de Barbastro el 7 y el 8 de Septiembre de 1892 y el 8 de Septiembre de 1893 en la plaza de la Constitución de la ciudad del Vero. (*Escenas* 182-183)

On all of these occasions, Costa offered the Spanish citizens the opportunity to inform themselves about the problems facing them and their country in the hope that they would try to seek remedies for them. Furthermore, as Noel very sadly points out, “Como el pueblo español no tiene memoria, no recordaba nada de esto” (*Escenas* 183). He goes on to identify Costa as the only person who at the time was prepared to address the crisis that resulted from *el desastre* and fortunately, the people, left with no other alternative, began to listen. He observes, “Pero escuchó [el pueblo español]; no hubo otro remedio” (*Escenas* 183).

In an interesting presentation, Noel goes on to challenge the Spanish people in a more philosophical discussion of their own culture, identity, and history at the time of the event. He writes, “¿Teníamos, por ventura, algún fin, objeto o ideas? ¿Sabíamos verdaderamente quiénes éramos, dónde íbamos, qué deseábamos? ¿Existía entre nosotros determinada orientación, fuera cual fuese?” (*Escenas* 183). He questions the ability of the people to be able to respond to the important questions facing them in terms of their identification as a nation that would validate their inclusion in the overall landscape of the world. He asks, “¿Cuál sería el partido político y qué clase de política la suya que realizara las ideas sociológicas y etnológicas meditadas y

resueltas?” (*Escenas* 183). Noel discusses their reluctance to embrace science and machinery as well as their unwillingness to become more a part of Europe. He states: “Hablábamos de las máquinas como de espantos y maleficios, y creíamos de buena fe que la ciencia es una cosa que se improvisa, y que el cálculo genial brota como los hongos” (*Escenas* 184). However, he doesn’t fail to mention in the narrative all of the positive qualities of the people that are present in their history including their ability to engage in military action, “Nuestros soldados eran los más valientes del mundo: prueba Lepanto” (*Escenas* 184), the existence of great men, “A Goethe oponíamos el Cid ... ” (*Escenas* 184) and their possession of some of the richest land in the world, “Nuestro suelo y subsuelo eran los más ricos del mundo, y testimonio de ello daban los extranjeros que venían por las primeras materias” (*Escenas* 185).

Noel claims that the Spanish people have succeeded in deceiving themselves with their fictitious ideas about their culture, values and history and that they themselves were responsible for their defeat in the war of 1898 that eventually exposed this void. He chastizes them, “Cuando llegó la Guerra, traída, provocada y preconizada por nosotros mismos, todos los valores, ficticios, todos los falsos asignados de la cultura, hicieron explosión” (*Escenas* 185); and even though everything appeared to them to be going in their favor, Noel concludes that “En efecto, la noticia de la catástrofe nos cogió en el jolgorio ... Nuestra incultura era tan honda, que el balance del desastre acusó la descomposición total” (*Escenas* 186).

In his final words and in a tribute to Costa, to whom he aligned himself in terms of his ideology and agenda for the regeneration of Spain, he admonishes the people for not heeding the many warnings that Costa offered them and for doing little or nothing to address any of the problems that were confronting them. Noel states:

Y mientras los indígenas gesticulaban, pintando campamentos con vino; mientras los mismos causantes de las derrotas discurseaban para explicarse lo inexplicable, un hombre de genio, un hombre silencioso, trabajador, cauto, avisado, sobrio y entero, lloraba de vergüenza y confusión sobre los grandes libros suyos, que, leídos a tiempo, hubieran evitado la hecatombe. (*Escenas* 186)

As stated previously, Noel's *antitaurismo* and *antiflamenquismo* stance was central to his agenda. He wrote several articles for *El flamenco*, which was a weekly *antiflamenquista* periodical, as well as for *El Chispero*, which was a similar type of publication. These articles appeared in 1914, have been compiled into a volume entitled *Escritos antitaurinos*, and included works that communicate the strong feelings that Noel held against these two elements that he felt plagued Spanish society.

In the article, “¡Oh, El arte de los toros!”, Noel writes with a great deal of sarcasm about the Spanish people's misplaced adulation of their national “heroes”. He begins by calling upon the ghosts of *Cúchares* and *Costillares*, two famous bullfighters, and thanks them with cynicism for saving the Spanish empire. He writes:

Estamos conmovidos, España vuelve a ser grande y se halla en vías de que no se ponga el sol en sus dominios. ¡Manes de *Cúchares* y *Costillares*, España os debe inmensa gratitud! Si decayó nuestro poderío, espiritualmente lo vamos reconquistando, o al menos nos hacemos la ilusión, que no es poco. (*Escritos antitaurinos* 104)

Throughout the article, he maintains this tone of cynicism in his writing and tells how the people of Spain have adopted bullfighters as their idols while discarding the need for any other elements in their lives. He writes:

La torería, lo castizo, el vaho de la sangre y el calor de la arena, la refulgencia de los alamares, la vistosidad de las sedas, el arte de los *Gallos*, la fenomenalidad de *Belmonte* y las estocadas del *Machaco* son el desideratum de la raza.

Estos días son de gala para España; deben colgarse los balcones e iluminar los edificios. Belmonte, ese astro nuevo que hace palidecer las rutilantes estrellas de la torería, tuvo su apoteosis en Sevilla. El pueblo de los heroísmos trágicos lo abrazó, lo estrujó, lo alzó en hombros, y la muchedumbre, alzándolo en lo alto, lo transportó triunfalmente a su domicilio, vociferando hasta enronquecer... El pueblo estalla de contento de vivir, y sólo tiene manos para instrumentar ovaciones y bocas para modular estentóreos vítores. ¡Gran país! (*Escritos antitaurinos* 104-105)

Noel identifies cities that have hosted bullfighting events as well as the bullfighters who were engaged there. These places included Madrid, where government figures were highly visible, to see *el fenómeno Juan Belmonte* and his *consagración definitiva*, Seville and Córdoba.

According to Noel, the Spanish people felt that they were in need of nothing else but these “heroes”, and universities were unimportant as well as any achievements made in the fields of science or literature. Noel, in his anger at the population’s lack of ability to prioritize their needs as well as those of the country, continues his invective against them. He angrily writes the following:

No necesita más España. Tiene toreros a quienes aclamar, y todo lo demás, ¿qué importa? Lo indispensable es hacer un plantel de ídolos para que sean sustituidos los que se esfuman en el ocaso. ¡No más universidades! ¿De qué sirven? Sobre que nuestras glorias de la ciencia y de la literatura son unas babuchas al lado de

los Astros coletudos, justo es reconocer que existen en nuestros centros docentes ilustres profesores que estarían muy en su lugar entre los revuelos del capote de Belmonte. (*Escritos antitaurinos* 106-107)

His final plea to the reader is to enroll in the *Escuela Taurina* in Córdoba. Like someone who has finally lost all patience, he sends the people off to the “school” where “Matadores, banderilleros y picadores en embrión encontrarán allí las enseñanzas teórico-prácticas necesarias para asaltar el alcázar de la popularidad ... ¡A matricularse in Córdoba todos!” (*Escritos antitaurinos* 107). Mockingly, he suggests that the bullfighting spectacles that take place in the arenas be allowed to spill out into the streets of the cities so that these thoroughfares can also become part of the spectacle. He calls upon all workers and professionals to flee to Córdoba where money and fame await them:

No más hombres de ciencia, benedictinos de laboratorio, a quienes nadie conoce, mientras que “llegando al morrillo” se gana notoriedad y dinero.

Gobernantes profesionales de la política, asilados de ministerios y oficinas, literatos, autores y actores, periodistas, obreros de la fábrica, el taller y el campo, desesperados que huyen de la patria, mendigos y hampa: ¡a Córdoba!, ¡a Córdoba! Esta es la frase cabalística, el “sésamo” que abre las puertas de la opulencia y de la gloria. (*Escritos antitaurinos* 108)

The reader can easily detect the strong sentiment of censure with which Noel addresses the topic. Though his words appear to promote bullfighting as the venue for Spain to rise once again to greatness, he expresses his displeasure at the entire episode with obvious sarcasm. In reality, he bemoans the country’s lack of initiative in pursuing educational opportunities that will promote achievement in science and literature as opposed to training bullfighters who only

contribute to the country's downward spiral. Suggesting that the Spanish people find their way to Córdoba is in reality sentencing them to continued cultural deterioration.

Another interesting work by Noel that also appears in the collection, *Escritos antitaurinos* is one entitled *Al público* which was an editorial from the first issue of *El Flamenco* which appeared on April 12, 1914 and “... redactado casi exclusivamente por Noel” (19). Noel explains that he wishes that the Press would come to the aid of the country in order to serve its culture. He creates a bond with Cervantes and his character, Don Quixote in a quest for change inspired by a love of country. The author writes:

Desocupado lector: Sin juramento no podrás creer que quisiéramos que esta Revista, como hija del entendimiento, fuera la más hermosa, la más gallarda y más discreta que pudiera imaginarse. Y no a humos de paja imitamos la obra inimitable de Cervantes, pues si no en el estilo, al menos en el espíritu queremos seguir las huellas de aquel ingenioso Caballero de la Mancha...Nosotros pretendemos, embrazando el arma formidable de la Prensa, venir en auxilio de la Patria, el alma puesta en el ideal de su porvenir, la intención colocada en servir su cultura. (*Escritos antitaurinos* 19)

Noel states that a plan is in place that will inform the Spanish people of their vices and subsequently describe them. However, the contents of this plan will also advise the reader of Noel's prescribed platform for change and regeneration of the country with the operative word being *acción*. As stated previously, Noel claims to have differed from the members of the generation of '98 in this area. Although these writers may have been mindful of the overall illness, they did not seek to apply any specific remedies to alleviate it with the same passion and

commitment that Noel did. For example, Noel very clearly articulates the elements of his campaign and his plan for accomplishing its goals in the following passage:

Nosotros desenvolveremos un plan trazado en la soledad, en la lucha apostólica, en el estudio; y ese plan nos exige que en nuestras páginas seamos precisos. ¿No falta a España la voluntad? Pues ejercitaremos el periodismo de la voluntad, mostrando a nuestro país sus vicios como en los cartones de la facultad de Medicina se exhiben las enfermedades de la piel. ¿No tiene España enfermedad de la médula? Pues iluminaremos las vértebras de su espina dorsal con el reflector y mostraremos con qué pasiones las descargas eléctricas de la vida se precipitan y confunden. Algo o mucho unilateral, esta labor nuestra, al principio, no tardará en extender su radio de acción. Los toros: el flamenquismo; el amor a los animales; el cultivo de la especie; problemas de la ignorancia; la dictadura del maestro de escuela; la política del pan; la paz a costa de todo, hasta del mismo honor; la universidad; la cultura física; la virilidad, sin majeza ni porquerías de escenario o lupanar; el helenismo; las bibliotecas; el santo amor a la patria; el cultivo intensivo del suelo; la educación progresiva del campesino; la disminución de los tributos, hasta llegar al impuesto único, según las teorías de Henri George: el culto a la verdad; la supremacía del espíritu científico; un indomable afán de instaurarlo todo en el bien...Y para lograrle, como procedimientos, la energía sin eufemismos. (*Escritos antitaurinos* 21-22)

In this narrative, Noel brings to light the issues that he intends to address in his regeneration agenda. In addition, he promises to solicit not only the support of the local press but also that of Europe and America. He also names the “*Sociedad Protectora de Animales y Plantas de París*”

as an ally in his *antitaurismo* struggle. He states: “Buscaremos para nuestras campañas la protección extranjera, llevándola hasta el último extremo en caso preciso; y afirmamos solemnemente que, a medida que los permita nuestra Caja, importaremos obras y hombres que nos eduquen y no manejen” (*Escritos antitaurinos* 23).

He continues by claiming that the ruling government is inept and that its people are slaves to the vices that undermine the culture of society. The campaign will be taken up immediately and Noel promises that this periodical, *El flamenco*, will be guided by the highest standards and be the voice of a *grandioso ideal* in service of the country (*Escritos antitaurinos* 23).

The issues that Noel addresses in his platform are very much similar to those that characterized the regenerationist campaigns of Joaquín Costa, Ricardo Macías Picavea and Lucas Mallada. These included expansion of the educational system, reform of the government, economic overhaul, cultivating greater respect for Spanish cultural traditions, extensive europeanization of the country, fostering a greater awareness of the need for scientific study, cultivation of the land, and most importantly, the eradication of both *taurismo* and *flamenquismo*. In identifying these as elements of his regenerationist policy, Noel very much aligns himself with ideology of these other regenerationists as well as with their efforts to rekindle the country’s spirit and resolve to reclaim its former glory.

As mentioned previously, Ricardo Macías Picavea called for *un Hombre con H grande* as part of his plan for the regeneration of Spain, (*El problema nacional* 176). He furthermore stated that, “Sin él, en cambio... , ¡toda obra resultará incierta y precaria!”(178). Noel, in his narrative, *Pan y toros* alludes to this same person as well. He begins the section of the book by admitting that he is greatly saddened by the Spanish people because he realizes that what lies within them

is far greater than the vices that may retain. He proclaims, “Hasta en sus vicios más encanallados y universales, cuando ese pueblo parece enterrarse él mismo bajo su propia grosería y descomposición, entonces veis brillar algo que os llama atención, un rasgo único, un diseño de temperamento como ningún pueblo de la tierra lo tiene” (*Pan y toros* 28). Noel explains how he dreams of a Spain that has built itself around the exceptional characteristics of its people and he expresses great compassion for its shortfalls, “... la compasión y la congoja dominan al observador!” (*Pan y toros* 29). It is at this point in the narrative where Noel calls for *un Hombre con H grande* in similar style as did Ricardo Macías Picavea. Noel states that the country is in need of a government leader who is able to unite the people in many different ways so that they are one in their efforts and willingness to move the country forward. He expresses the following wish:

Un hombre de Estado genialísimo habría de examinar minuciosamente provincia por provincia nuestra raza; y así como se han unificado religiosa, política y hasta etnológicamente las naciones, así ese hombre de Estado unificaría el carácter ibérico en una sola voluntad y en un solo esfuerzo. (*Pan y toros* 29)

This *hombre de Estado* that Noel calls for appears similar to the *Hombre con H grande* that Macías Picavea summoned in order to lead the country and unite the people. The country must once again find its character in searching from within or otherwise face imminent ruin. He calls for a Spain that is rejuvenated by its young citizens who have studied the positive qualities of its people and utilize them in an effort to bring about change. He states:

Si hacemos una España hermosa, perfecta en lo posible, rica sobria, una Suiza, unos Estados confederados sin otras pretensiones que el suelo y sus riquezas, ¿no os parece que hemos contribuido al perfeccionamiento de la Humanidad más que

negándonos como raza para ser humanos? ...Pero esa raza hoy es un falansterio. Sepultada por siglos de carácter en abismos. Parece que nadie quiere acordarse de ello o los que se acuerdan se engañan con el espejismo y se creen en posesión de esos tesoros y nos dicen que en realidad no somos tan desgraciados. Lo somos por partida doble. Por serlo y porque pudéramos dejar de serlo.

Esa posibilidad es la que entristece y la que dificulta una profunda labor de regeneración...Necesitamos que España se vea, se observe a sí misma hasta con crueldad para que pueda definirse como nación y como carácter. Luego la labor de llevarla a la felicidad es un hermoso trabajo manual. (*Pan y toros* 31-32).

Noel concludes the selection by encouraging the people of his country to nurture *las flores del temperamento* because, as he claimed in the beginning of the narrative, it is this temperament that distinguishes the Spanish people from others.

Noel has called for *un Hombre con H grande* of Macías Picavea; moreover, in the same book, *Pan y toros* he also speaks about Joaquín Costa's *cirujano de hierro* who Costa felt was so desperately needed by the country in order to progress from its present state of decline. What is interesting to note is that according to the narrative, Eugenio Noel dreamt that Costa was calling upon him to assume this role and be the *cirujano de hierro* for whom he was calling. He begins by recounting to the reader how in his dream, he saw himself seated under a tree where Costa enjoyed resting in Graus, the city where Costa was born. Costa suddenly arose from a tomb and spoke the following words to Noel:

“Necesitamos un cirujano de hierro. Vete por toda España gritando esas palabras, únicamente esas palabras. Si te oyen le pedirán. Si no te oyen les escupes. Yo tenía la médula mala. Este cuerpo mío no podía vestirse de torero. Tú, en

cambio, puedes ponerte el traje de luces, hablar con él, mover las caderas y escupir por el colmillo. Es preciso hablar a España en flamenco [...]” (*Pan y toros* 225)

Costa disappears and in his place Noel sees a frog, “La piedra de la tumba se oscureció bajo una capa de musgo y vi en él un hermoso sapo ...” (*Pan y toros* 225) who also began speaking to him. The frog delivers the same message to Noel ordering him to find Costa’s *cirujano de hierro* as he was commanded to do by Costa and he began reading to Noel Costa’s plan for the regeneration of Spain. The frog continues his discussion with the writer expressing his strong opinions about the merits of finding this person and ultimately believes that one will come forward. As Noel’s dream continues, he [Noel] crushes the frog with the heel of his boot and then begins to hear voices once again. The frog has been transformed into a beautiful spirit. According to Noel’s description, “No era más bello el Merlin soñado por Doré para los cuentos de Tennyson” (*Pan y toros* 227). The spirit asks him to fulfill Costa’s final wish. Noel explains to the spirit that he is speaking as if Costa’s body was lying there, whereupon the spirit acknowledges its presence.

In the episode that Noel is describing, he makes it appear that Costa was similar to a Christ figure that rose from the dead and ordered that his work be carried out. In the description that follows, Noel depicts a man much like Jesus Christ who in reality is Costa. He states:

-Ese hombre-murmuró la aparición-que habitó entre vosotros, porque en algunos siglos el Verbo se hace carne, que murió por vosotros después de haberos amado hasta el fin, ese hombre dejó dicho que buscarais un cirujano de hierro. ¿Lo habéis buscado? (*Pan y toros* 228)

Noel promises to search for Costa's “... *cirujano de hierro* ...” and states that his companions will search for him in Europe and return with “... *un arsenal de cirugía en vez del cirujano*” (*Pan y toros* 228). The spirit asks Noel about himself and the latter declares that he will look for this person in his heart. The spirit finally responds once more with the order, “-Haz lo que te mandó” (*Pan y toros* 229). Once again Noel relates Costa to a divine entity and turns his command into something of a higher religious calling:

Cuando a los hombres se les olvidan los testamentos o mandatos de los muertos, éstos, por divina permisión, se aparecen a los más humildes. Recuerda que fue a una ignorada virgencita y no a un barbudo general a quien Dios encomendó el salvar Francia de las garras de los ingleses. Haz lo que se te ha mandado; busca al cirujano de hierro que ha de salvar la España. (*Pan y toros* 229)

Costa then inquires what would happen if he were unable to find this person to which the spirit responds that either this person be found or “... el Destino os envíe uno de esos carniceros de hierro que han asolado vuestra nación como nación y como estirpe” (*Pan y toros* 229). Noel is left pondering his dilemma and asks himself which of the two alternatives he should choose.

From this narrative, it appears to the reader that Noel himself hears this calling and takes on the role of Costa's *cirujano de hierro*. The identification with him is so strong that he presents himself as having witnessed a divine apparition very similar to those that have been experienced by saints or mystics of the Catholic religion. He writes of the entire experience as if it is now has become his mission to act as the person who will save the country and thus continue his campaign based on his “divine” orders from Costa.

In a discussion of this same topic, Herrero explains Noel's identification of Costa's *cirujano de hierro* simply to be a townspeople who has empowered himself/herself with the

spirit and virtue of El Cid and Don Quijote. He selects the tavern owner Moyano from Noel's narrative "Puente de Vallecas, 1898" to explain this concept, for, according to Herrero, "En Noel el hombre capaz se presentaba a través de la parodia de Moyano, el tabernero. Con la vista siempre puesta en los vicios del pueblo, Noel no hacía sino trasladar a Moyano el arrojo que, como hombre 'oficial', le faltaba al cacique" (21). Herrero claims that Noel wanted to hold Moyano up as his model of the *cirujano de hierro*, someone who was removed from government politics and represented the social base " ... para, allí, escenificar lo que para el hombre español preocupado por sí mismo era ese hombre rector: ... El genio español que Noel describía en estos textos era el que estaba arraigado en el subconsciente de la raza" (21). Citizens like Moyano appeared as strong candidates for this formidable position because they were able to overcome the enemy with the heroic spirit that Noel viewed as a national virtue and part of their heritage. Whether this *cirujano de hierro* was a person like Moyano or Noel himself, it was important for the country that he/she be found in order to begin the work of regeneration. Noel writes: "¡Los cirujanos de hierro!...España se ha creído que esos hombres cuando aparecen son tan débiles que fracasan ante la burla o el escarnio. Ignora la desgraciada España que se la ama tanto más cuando más se convence la inteligencia de que tal país está imbécil de remate" (*Escenas y andanzas* 21).

Costa's call for a *cirujano de hierro* was necessary also to fight the *caciquismo* political structure, which pervaded the country. His *anti-caciquismo* stance was central to the reform platform that he established. As Herrero points out, "El tema del caciquismo fue estudiado a fondo por Costa en *Oligarquía y caciquismo*" (17). With regard to his own position on the issue, Noel writes:

Las manifestaciones o exteriorizaciones del caciquismo han ahogado el estudio de su necesidad. Los pueblos que abundan en esta clase de reptiles es que los necesitan. La Nación que no tiene méritos suficientes para gobernarse a sí misma, carece de energía para limar las gorras de los monstruos, y, toda temblorosa, murmura sin rebelarse. Todo cacique en su juventud es un señorito chulo. El pueblo lo provee de todo porque se lo exigen, y porque si no se lo exigieran lo haría de buen grado. Necesita un amo. Cuando dice un pueblo que no necesita amos, idea revoluciones admirables. Cuando, sin atreverse a estos remedios heroicos murmura, ese pueblo merece lo que tiene, y si no lo tuviera sería más desgraciado. (*Señoritos chulos* 40)

Although the two men share similar negative feelings about the presence of these government agents among the people, Noel's treatment of the subject is not as straightforward as that of Costa who sought to have *caciquismo* dissolved through action by the Spanish Parliament. As indicated by Herrero, Noel accomplishes his attack of *caciquismo* through his allegorical references to casinos whose putrid internal organization characterizes the structural decadence of the country. The people, who make up the casino's environment, including the character that represents the *cacique*, epitomize the elements in Spanish society that are contributing to its downfall. Noel expresses no sympathy for the casino or for the people who inhabit it. Herrero states the following with regard to Noel's treatment of *caciquismo*:

En Eugenio Noel dicha problemática, que corrompía las instituciones españolas, se trasladó a sus crónicas sobre la vida en los casinos. Estos centros se convertían, a través de anécdotas e historias de sus protagonistas, en alegorías que expresaban la decadencia estructural de todo el país. Noel utilizó paródicamente

los modelos de varios personajes convertidos en t pico de la Espa a oficial de la  poca (17).

In “El peque o mundo de un casino”, which appears in *Espa a nervio a nervio*, Noel places the reader squarely in the midst of a casino that could be any casino in the country. The games of chance that are being played there metaphorically represent the games of chance that are being played with the country and its people by Spain’s highest authorities (Herrero 18). Noel explains, “Como la pol tica espa ola es un asco y los Gobiernos se suceden con tanta frecuencia, el juego oscila a cada cambio o crisis, y el edificio se alza lentamente por causa de la pol tica” (*Espa a nervio* 144). The building that Noel refers to is a new casino that is intended to be built, or metaphorically speaking, a representation of a new political and social order. He states that an “artist” (*cirujano de hierro* or *Hombre con H?*) is needed to come forward to re-decorate the old casino, which has been allowed to deteriorate (like the country). If this “artist” does not appear, the only one(s) to suffer will be the artist (or the Spanish citizens) for it is very unimportant to the casino whether it is redecorated. In actuality, Noel is metaphorically suggesting that despite any attempts to change the existing political structure of the country, the old order will remain indifferent to any requests for change. He writes:

En las metopas, entrepa os, plafones y dem s sitios donde nada hay pintado espera el casino que alg n d a “pase” un artista y se preste a decorarlos a precio de...trashumante. Y si no “pasa” ese artista, peor para el artista: al casino le es igual est n o no est n decorados los salones. (*Espa a nervio* 144)

Noel describes the atmosphere of the old casino in extremely disparaging terms, “ Qu  peque o mundo de esc ndalo y de vicio!” (*Espa a nervio* 148) and the details that he provides with

regard to the people who frequent the place clearly identify them as members of society that are contributing to its decay. He describes some of them in the following manner:

Mirones parasitarios acercan sillas a las esquinas libres de las mesas; haraganes curiosos se plantan en pie detrás de ellos, y nuevos paseantes aburridos cercan los grupos, formando reuniones adorables. Son los más ricos de la ciudad, acaudalados comerciantes o banqueros opulentos, funcionarios públicos o labradores con muchos pares de mulas. (*España nervio* 145-146)

Noel also mentions the librarian of the casino who seldom appears to do his job, the civil servant who becomes corrupted at the casino, the military person who surrenders his honor there, and the endless procession of daily visitors “... de harapos desechos por la vida” (*España nervio* 149). Noel continues with his description of the frequenters of the casino, “El desfile incesante de los miserables o de los ingeniosos, la circulación por el casino de tanta gente gastada, rota y audaz, daba al casino una vida horrenda, un prestigio extraño, que encuadraba de notable modo en el ambiente suyo” (*España nervio* 149-150). The author does not hold back any criticism in his assessment of the casino’s decadence and misery, which is very similar to how he views the country now. He disturbingly observes, “Las regiones se desangran en sus casinos” (*España nervio* 148). The president of the casino, who metaphorically represents the *cacique*, is caricaturized as being “Gordo, vulgar, feo e indispensable” (*España nervio* 149). He serves no function other than to have recommended that a piece of clothing covered with buttons be worn in the casino. He was not desirous of any other responsibilities and was unanimously elected to the position. Noel creates this scathing profile of him for the reader:

Este señor era el casinario perfecto. Gordo, vulgar, feo e indispensable. Ningún cargo quería, y los aceptaba siempre todos, con tal que fueran presidencias. Éstas

llovían sobre él; nadie se hubiera permitido nombrar presidente de algo a otro que no fuera al famoso señor. No servía para maldita la cosa; lo sabían todos, lo sabía él mismo, y todos le buscaban y él aceptaba siempre. La única idea particular, la que le había, salido de dentro, fue la vestimenta del botones del casino, y, ¡por Arlequín!, que fue una idea de una vez. (*España nervio* 149)

For Noel, the *cacique* only serves to reinforce the negative character traits of a society that was in steep decline. Although not as straightforward as Costa is in his direct attacks against this political entity, Noel, nevertheless, was committed to Costa's vision. Just like *el león de Graus* (as Costa was fondly called), he saw the negative impact that was being exerted on the people and country by the *caciques*. According to Herrero, "Noel, en definitiva, solo veía al cacique como un elemento que aglutinaba en sus manos la capacidad de alimentar los instintos más atávicos en los ciudadanos" (19). Noel clearly rebukes their presence in the political structure of the country and places them into the same category as the despised *flamenquismo* and *taurismo* that were the central issues of his regenerationist platform.

Herrero discusses an interesting interpretation of the *cacique* in terms of his function in Spanish society. He states that the everyday Spanish citizen was very distanced from the politics of the county and not very much interested in economic or political issues as long as their celebrations, festivities and "... materia de ocio ..." (19) were maintained. He writes, "El hombre común no pensaba en mejoras económicas, culturales o sociales a gran escala. Tan solo tenía puestos los ojos en sus fiestas" (20). He theorizes that preserving these pastimes was their only reason for clinging to the *cacique* and engaging in any sort of dialogue with Spain's political system. The *cacique* served as the liaison between the common people and the

governmental hierarchy and therefore became necessary in order to preserve these events. He writes:

Las figuras del poder eran, en estos asuntos, vitales, ya que en ellas se delegaba la potestad de mantener las diversiones. Y como jamás se negaron a darle su “opio” al pueblo, que de cualquier cosa podía carecer, pero no de esta, dichos representantes fueron considerados por muchos estamentos como una figura necesaria y aún beneficiosa para la sociedad española. (18-19)

In describing Noel’s position on the subject, Herrero claims that Noel “... desde su lucha contra el flamenquismo o los toros rechazó rotundamente esa figura paternalista que alimentaba los tópicos insanos de la raza” (19). He categorically rejects the *cacique*; however, Herrero also claims that in his vision, “No aludía Noel tanto a las relaciones políticas verdaderas, ancladas en la alegoría del poder que eran los casinos, sino a la confusión de las disposiciones municipales en materia de ocio con una superestructura nacional donde el dirigente se veía como figura salvadora” (19). He portrayed these despised figures as being critical not so much to politics but more importantly to the local decision-making process, which impacted the maintenance or cessation of the national pastime. Unfortunately, the latter was a very important issue to the average Spanish citizen.

As part of his criticism of *caciquismo* and the governmental structure, Noel takes on the tangential issue of *señoritismo*, which according to him nurtures *caciquismo*. As stated previously, Noel affirms that *señoritismo* provides an environment that cultivates the formation of future *caciques*. He wrote, “Todo cacique en su juventud es un señorito chulo” (*Señorito chulo* 40). According to the writer, the señorito chulo exists because his town wants him to exist. “Necesita un amo” (*Señoritos chulos* 40), therefore, in the mind of the *señorito chulo*, this

sentiment justifies his presence. In this capacity, he sees himself as extending a service to the town and in return, demands that the people provide him with all that he expects. Noel continues, “El señorito chulo fundamenta su razón de ser en esta necesidad. Es listo como los zorros; sabe que le persiguen los pensadores y justifica su existencia de un modo notable” (*Señoritos chulos* 40). In his narrative *Señoritos chulos*, Noel presents a critical overview of the institution of *señoritisimo*. He begins with this profile of the *señorito chulo*:

Ahora bien, él, por sí mismo, es producto de una inmensa degeneración. Usa ilimitadamente de un poder monstruoso, y nada grande toca en su corazón. No tiene fe y finge comprensión; no estudia y simula; la falta de músculo la cubre con sobra de traje. Usa de los recursos de la civilización, gastándolos sin producir, y de las ideas de los demás, que añade a las rentas de su hacienda. En el cortijo que arrendó a un campesino se le ocurre dormir con la mujer del pobre hombre y no prorrogarle plazos o arreglar los edificios o bonificar el contrato. En el teatro está pensando en la actriz más que en la obra. Le come la lujuria, que es la técnica de los perezosos, y la comadrería, constantemente ejercitada, le da cierto aire de dicharachero y parlanchín, que él impone como elegancia, saber vivir y don de gentes. Su orgullo repugna. Todo en él es ficticio, y, no obstante, la realidad colabora con él para engañar a quien él quiere. Esto le da esos aplomo que tanto admira a los escudriñadores de la verdad nacional. (*Señoritos chulos* 41-42)

Noel then presents the character *Bibi*, “... el señorito más chulo de la provincia ...” (*Señoritos chulos* 48) who is about to join his companions at a local *riñadero* to watch the cockfights.

*Bibi*'s family background establishes its connection to the government. His father, a *cacique* as

well as a lawyer, is in charge of a regional political party and is the proprietor of some *latifundios*, “...amén de administrador ponente” (*Señoritos chulos* 47-48). Noel’s depiction of *Bibi* is revealed to the reader through his description of the cockfights and in the two animals, Lagartijo and Frascuelo, who are about to engage in battle. Noel’s description of the cocks as “Los dos feísimos animales ...” (*Señoritos chulos* 51), metaphorically represents *Bibi*; and his account of the fight explains the manner in which he operates as the señorito chulo, “... no existía sino en su gallo ...” (*Señoritos chulos* 48). The injuries that are inflicted and the blood that is drawn from the aggressive animals mimic similar activity completed by *Bibi* as an agent of the government. Noel gives the following account:

Avanzaron el uno hacia el otro con serenidad pasmosa, de frente, soeces y descarados, enhiestos los picos, ciegos los ojos de furor. Se toparon y, a compás, clavaron los picos el uno en la cresta del otro con un ensañamiento bárbaro. Retroceden un poco y vuelven a la carga sin esquivar el peligro, sin hurtar parte alguna de su cuerpo. No se defienden: atacan los dos. No se preocupan del dolor ni de la sangre propios: buscan herir, tenaces y horribles en su constancia. Su espíritu sanguinario les hace incansables, invulnerables a toda fatiga. ¿De dónde sacarán esos dos monstruos minúsculos tanta energía, ese concepto de defensa que a ratos parece inspirado por un profundo juicio y hasta conocimiento de su anatomía? (*Señoritos chulos* 49-50)

In this depiction of the two animals and their match, Noel establishes a comparison to *Bibi* and the similar manner in which he exerts his influence over the people in the province. There is little concern for anyone in his constituency and the most important goal is “to draw blood” from them in one way or another. Even though he has lost an eye, the cock on which *Bibi* placed his bet

ends up being the victorious one. The following passage, which eventually progresses to the scene where *Lagartijo* strikes his final blow to *Frascuero*, characterizes the behavior of both the animal and *el señorito Bibi*:

Dolor no siente. Estos bicharracos son tan excepcionalmente brutos, que no revelan dolor. Su insensibilidad es un encanto y recuerda la de los acericos y los grotescos, en cuya barriga hincamos los palillos de la dentadura. Se clavan el pico y los espolones cien veces en el mismo sitio y no se quejan ni expresan otra cosa que rabia. Sus heridas les exacerban; el luchar, como a los caballeros andantes, es su descanso. Se duermen matando; despiertan, destrozándose. Sus movimientos, nada concertados a ojos de profano, son, a juicio de los inteligentes en estas porquerías, geniales resoluciones dignas de un Clausewitz. (*Señoritos chulos* 52)

Bibi's reaction to the event is to smile, collect his winnings, and return to the town boasting about his animal that won the match. However, Noel has *Bibi* returning to the casino, which as mentioned previously, is representative of the corrupt governmental structure. Where else would the *señorito* go other than to a place where he could be amongst equals or near-equals in order to engage in mundane conversations that contribute nothing to the welfare of the people or the country? Noel describes Bibi's response to the victory in the following manner:

Bibi sonrío. Recoge sus duros victoriosos y se va. Su alma, saturada de valor, vuelve a la ciudad rumiando las hazañas de su gallo, en cuyo cuerpo metió su espíritu. Ahora, al Casino de señores, a hablar de gallos, de perros, de mujeres, de caballos y de toreros. Si queda tiempo, de un cambio probable de Gobierno.

En el umbral siente que le llaman. (*Señoritos chulos* 54)

As part of his narrative attack, Noel distinguishes between the *señoritismo* of Andalucía and Madrid and unflatteringly compares the two. The former, he says, exists out of necessity, “Existe porque es necesario y lo crea todo un ambiente” (*Señoritos chulos* 38), whereas the latter he says, is a creation of the bureaucrats of the capital city, “El burocratismo mercenario de Madrid ha originado un gusano excepcionalmente curioso: el señorito madrileño, zaino, zurdo, patizambo, cuco, tonto, y lo que es peor, pobre” (*Señoritos chulos* 38). The *señorito* of Madrid envisions for himself a future as a government worker who Noel claims will stop at nothing to destroy the country’s Constitution in order to attain this position, “Sabe que lleva dentro un futuro diputado cunero, un Gobernador o un Ministro, y que para que él sea todo eso se hará trizas la Constitución” (38). He cares little about working and unfortunately has no idea about how to spend time. He typically has attended university but became completely bored by the experience and was barely able to pass the exams. Continuing in his description, Noel states:

Aplicadle esos calificativos en su sentido moral, ya tendréis la pintura de ese tipo bizco, rufián y endiosado, feto y poderoso, que no hace cosa alguna, viste bien, tiene aire de apache y es un mico...Y como sabe todo eso es un canalla bobo de traza de pingüino, que se levanta tarde, llega siempre tarde, se acuesta tarde y no sabe cómo pasar el tiempo. Su birrete de abogado está sobre un talonario del Banco, y al lado de su vacín de noche la carta de la querida, que le pide cinco duros para acabar el mes. Fue a la Universidad y se aburrió. Se examinó, y como no sabía una palabra, salió por la tangente y recordó al Catedrático los chistes con que éste había sazonado sus lecciones; si no era suficiente, deslizaba en las manos del profesor una carta-orden. El señorito madrileño tiene ocurrencias, su filosofía, un manual de educación, la carta de un jesuita en el bolsillo y una ficha

del juego. Sabe que en la puerta de Lhardy se ven lindas muchachas, barraganas apetitosas en la calle de la Visitación, menores de edad en la calle de Echegaray, pensionistas en la calle del Arenal y propietarias en la chocolatería de doña Mariquita. Sabe que los Ministros reciben a todas horas, que se puede cobrar la nómina sin ir a la oficina, que nuestra aristocracia, terrible en la etiqueta, es de manga ancha en la intimidad, y como sabe todo eso, todo se lo permite. En el teatro es el amo. Como es dueño del abono, reina en los bastidores. Las obras se ponen después de pasar por su censura, y es tan modesto que las remite, antes de juzgarlas, al confesor de la familia. Se ha de representar en escena un adulterio con verismo extraordinario, porque esto nada tiene de excepcional; pero la Moral exige no abordar problemas que puedan hacer un gran bien. El divorcio es nefando; ahora bien, si os acostáis con la mujer de vuestro prójimo, allá ella y su marido. Como se aburre, se divierte, y es tan romo de inventiva que goza como las mujerzuelas, criticando. (*Señoritos chulos* 38-39)

Manuel Orozco very interestingly sees the roots of Noel's distaste for the *señoritos* as stemming from his father's experience as a barber who had to shave the faces of many of these types in order to make a living. He writes, "Su antiseñoritismo se le escapaba en sus desplantes, porque tenía muy hondas raíces en su resentimiento, porque eran muchas las barbas rasuradas por su progenitor y le faltó dulzura en su corazón" (Orozco 10). Obviously, Noel holds little respect for the *señoritos* who inhabit these government positions since so much of what they do is meaningless as far as having any beneficial impact upon the population. Prado adds that in addition to their meandering existence, these men will potentially end up being representatives of the government, which becomes an even more disturbing reality. She states:

Lo que se nos da en esta caricatura es un ser totalmente desvitalizado y absurdo, un pelele sin contacto con ninguna realidad respetable, y que emplea los recursos picarescos del gitano en su arte de torear las situaciones serias y esquivar las responsabilidades, sustrayéndose a las pruebas de capacidad. Y, sin embargo, este personaje grotesco e inconsistente es representativo de la España oficial, cuyos altos cargos (diputado, gobernador, ministro) asume ...” (*La literatura* 171)

That the leaders of the country come from the ranks of those who demonstrate little if any concern for remedying the issues that were wearing away at the country was a significant preoccupation of Noel. The author continues his discussion of the topic with his profile of the *señorito* from Andalucía who isn't much different from his *madrileño* counterpart:

Es a las puertas del Casino de Señores donde el señorito chulo campa por sus respetos. Su trono es una mecedora, el automóvil lo espera cerca, allí sus órdenes son ciegamente seguidas por parásitos que viven de ellos. Un telegrama suyo a los amigos de los amigos de su padre es impuesto al Ministro y sacrificado el Gobernador si pone reparos. Quien le molesta es trasladado, quien le discute o se atreve a criticarle se queda sin clientes o sin pan, y tiene que irse a otra parte con sus bártulos. Hunde periódicos o compra periodistas trashumantes, de esos que ofrecen sus servicios al que los necesita, y funda hojas que, inspiradas por sus conveniencias, desprestigian al periodista responsable, y “aquí no ha pasado nada”. Comercia con gitanos, hampones, chalanes, contratistas y mujeres.

(*Señoritos chulos* 74)

Noel goes on to comment on how the Andalusian *señorito chulo* abandons the people he allegedly represents by recklessly controlling the water system. He claims, “Se apodera de las

aguas y comercia con ellas escandalosamente, aunque lea que el tifus es endémico en Andalucía por causa de esas aguas. Su landordismo asesina los campos y su usura las ciudades” (*Señoritos chulos* 74-75). The *chulos* clearly hold the people and the cities hostage with their corrupt practices and inept management of national and local resources. Noel relentlessly attacks them and all that they represent in terms of their being a part of a political system that cares little for the population that it is appointed to serve. He states: “Su inmoralidad les arrastra a toda clase de injusticias, y parecen no oír la famosa voz de la conciencia. Sin escrúpulos, con esa acometividad andaluza del “primer pronto”, verifican actos odiosos, sin sanción penal, que eluden siempre, sin remordimientos, que visten de lentejuelas, bañan de vino y cubren de burlas” (*Señoritos chulos* 75).

In his descriptions of the *señorito madrileño* and *andaluz*, Prado states that Noel takes a scientific approach to analyzing both types. This method would be appropriate to Noel’s style as a regenerationist thinker since, as stated previously in the current research, adopting the methods of science was typical of the members of the movement. She states:

Para ello traza características generales, ambiente, razón de ser, etc., empleando un procedimiento científico, como si estudiara una especie biológica: anota sistemáticamente sus costumbres, sus diversiones favoritas (riña de gallos), sus aventuras amorosas, su moral o falta de ella, sus héroes. (*La literatura* 169)

Thus, because of this approach, Noel establishes a more detailed profile of the person, who having been nurtured in the parental atmosphere of *señoritismo*, eventually rises to become the local *cacique* that erodes Spanish society even more. Providing “data” that is gathered as a result of a scientifically designed process adds greater credibility to the information that is being reported.

With regard to the *señoritos* of Andalucía, Orozco sees Noel as being repulsed by this particular group as well as by other men of questionable backgrounds who originated from this region. The author's experiences in this area of the country with all of the types that he criticized in his narratives e.g. *señoritos*, *chulos*, *caciques*, *ricachones*, *casineros*, caused him great displeasure because of their seemingly indifference to the messages which he delivered at a conference. He states:

Sobre todo, Andalucía le puso a prueba. El ricachón y el cacique, el señorito, el hombre grave y profundo de la otra Andalucía que ignoró, no supo contrapesarlos y colmó la medida de su comprensión y disimulo. En el fondo, su antiespaña pesaba demasiado, y el andalucismo le irrita porque está hecho de una cierta indolencia y un estoicismo supremo. En Granada, Eugenio Noel tiene que sacudir el polvo de sus borceguíes y casi huyendo, coge el vagón de tercera. No resiste el desdén ni la ironía de la gente de los casinos entre patanes y estoicos. Viene en realidad a por esos veinticinco duros de su conferencia y se encuentra una ciudad indolente que no se inquieta por la tauromanía del vate, ni por su conferencia elogio de los iberos. (10)

Noel takes on Spanish society once again only this time in Castile in what several literary critics familiar with his work have called his greatest achievement, *Las siete Cucas*. This book, Noel's only long novel, was published in 1927 and was selected by Joaquín De Entrambasaguas to be included in his collection of works entitled *Las mejores novelas contemporáneas* Tomo VII (1925-1929). In his preface to the 1992 edition of *Las siete Cucas*, José Esteban writes: "Por ello, en su conjunto, *Las siete Cucas*, hay que decirlo, es todo un monumento, toda una compleja creación, todo un resistente y arduo engranaje novelesco de gran categoría literaria y una de las

novelas más apasionantes, más ricas, más ejemplares en el sentido cervantino de la palabra de la narrativa española de este siglo” (*Las siete* 45).

The story takes place in a village in the province of Salamanca. Six sisters and their mother, Saturnina, are the seven *cucas*. The six sisters worked as servants for important families in the town; however, during their employment, they have had to endure personal mistreatment at the hands of their male household members.

Pocos años atrás, bien pocos, estas reales hembras – cuya descripción irá todo lo pronto posible en detalle, como las partidas de una factura-, mozas sanas, coloradotas y robustas, altas como su padre Librado, de alias el Cuco, servían de criadas en las más ricas haciendas del pueblo, a las familias de más recancanillas, lilailas y entredijes. (*Las siete* 99)

Noel identifies each daughter and the family by whom they are employed amongst which are señoritos or representatives of the *señoritismo* which Noel has sharply criticized. He writes:

Raro era el día que no le iba al Cuco alguna de sus hijas con la sanfrancia o pelotera del cuento de apetitos contra su honestidad y recato, chillonas las mejillas de resentimiento y vergüenza de la poca que con su honra gastaban los cabildantes del señorío. Ellas se defendían a mordiscos los atracones de los burros; pero, perdidos los aciales aquellos ricachos pollinescos, no cejaban en su brega lardera y era casi seguro que la faena o fregado carnal terminaría a favor de estos hidalgos de pega y cogulla terruñera, descantillados ya los muy zamarros.

(*Las siete* 99-100)

In order to protect his daughters’ honor and free them from their humiliating situations, Librado, *El Cuco*, commits a robbery and homicide of Sra. Benita, the lady for whom he worked because

according to Noel, “ ... fuera ese el único camino, para sacar a sus seis hijas de la esclavitud de la deshonra” (102). When the crime is discovered, he is turned in to the authorities by his wife Saturnina and subsequently hung “ ... en buena ley de cuño [*ome que faga omecillo por ende muera...*]” (102). All seven cucas are expelled from the town and ultimately shunned by its inhabitants. The seven women decide to take revenge and open a brothel, which all the men of the town begin to frequent thus enraging wives and girlfriends. In the end, the cucas are vindicated by the Bishop, Archpriest, and mayor; the youngest of the sisters, Crescencia is wed to a doctor; and the family reconciles with the village. Noel sensitively writes, “Olvidaron las Cucas su venganza y el pueblo sintió la caricia de aquellas hermosonas en el delicioso aspecto de mujeres solariegas” (*Las siete* 312).

The themes that Noel included in his other narratives, namely, the denunciation of Spanish society, the presence of figures in that society that contribute to its decay, and the need to bring about change are all present in *Las siete Cucas* as well. For example, he takes issue with the town’s false justice for not returning to Saturnina her house and writes, “La Justicia no le había devuelto a la madre Saturnina la casa propia ....” (*Las siete* 113). He also expresses anger at the expulsion of the six sisters who have tried to live honorably by defending themselves against the “ ... ricos rijosos, reveseros y aburridos” (*Las siete* 102). He explains:

A la calle se fueron; vírgenes, honradas, pero a la calle. Ni su hermosura ni su virginidad valían ya un comino. Nadie se acordaba de la valentía nobilísima con que defendieran su honor y engrandecieran, con esas repetidas proezas caseras de cachete y tente tieso, el honor de todas la mujeres del *ejío*. Sólo se sabía o quería saber en el pueblo que aquella madre con sus siete hijas eran cosa aparte, sombras vivas indeseables.

Se las desconoció. Se huyó de ellas. El pan que revendía la Saturna le fue negado en los hornos y nadie, absolutamente nadie, le hubiera recibido de sus manos. En el Mercado les birlaban la compra del día. Cuando entraban en una tienda se salían los clientes y el dueño vociferaba latigazos de cólera. Buscaron trabajo; nadie se atrevió a concedérselo. Eran las del ahorcado. Se enfurecieron y se rieron todos de sus desesperos. Hasta el encanto de sus hechizos las fue inútil y las lágrimas, castigando los ojazos de la raza charra pura, no conmovieron ni a sus propios parientes. (*Las siete* 103)

Not only does he criticize the justice that the town administers to the women, but he also questions the motives that lie behind the actions of these people. For Noel, *el pueblo* is a major accomplice in this episode and he views their intentions as being self-serving rather than a call for justice. Their desire to expel the family of *el ahorcado* from their town is based upon their own need to hide their personal indiscretions and misdeeds as well as their jealousy for the virtuous behavior of the seven *cucas* whose honesty is above reproach. In reality, their own trustworthiness and sincerity should be questioned. Noel writes:

En el fondo del cotarro no era todo el pleito sino envidia a su honradez sin mancha, a su incorrompible conducta, a su misma belleza, a esto sobre todo. Y ahí las herían. ¿Qué les interesaba, en resumen, del crimen de su padre? Lo que ellas querían castigar en las Cucas no era la deshonra de un pueblo por un gesto de crueldad. Eso ya no importa a nadie; es una molestia que, además, dura poco porque son pocos los pueblos que se pueden echar en cara exclusividades criminosas. Se trataba de aprovechar la ocasión y zafarse de testigos de sus

livianidades y tararas y librarse de competidoras probables, amén de más íntimos soslayos y expliques. (*Las siete* 136)

Another important “character” in *Las siete Cucas* is the region of Castile. Prado notes, “... se advierte cómo una de las ideas directrices en su ideología, reflejada en sus procedimientos de composición literaria, es la de enfocar a la multitud como una totalidad, convirtiéndola en verdadero protagonista de la acción” (*La literatura* 248). As he does in many of his works and as a representative writer of *casticismo*, Noel connects the people of the narrative to their background as Castilians with a noble past. He insures that the sensual elements (sights, sounds, taste, smells) of the region as well as character traits that he feels define the Castilian people both of the past and present are included in his accounts. As part of his criticism of the failing society, he recalls the proud heritage of their ancestors in hopes of regenerating that same spirit to stimulate change. In *Las siete Cucas*, Noel places the past and the present back to back, and observes the following:

En cada labriego castellano, en cada una de aquellas casas, que se remiendan como las culera o perneras de las calzas y que hasta por los colores parecen sayas o randas o refajos, no duerme el alma de un santo, sino del Santoral entero, el Cielo en masa, que no es otra cosa que los Santos de Dios, según Sermón de San Agustín, el segundo, sobre el Salmo 107. Tierra de caballeros, de cantos y de sanots... y a machamartillo y encapotados y en gris; todo muy metido en sí, como Ávila dentro de sus murallas.

Estos caballeros de canto y santos de canto no comían de las uvas del ahorcado, ni se acordaban ya para nada de aquella Orden de Caballería de la Banda que instituyeran los castellanos de Burgos. En tal Orden se profesaba servir y guardar

pleitesía a las señoras mujeres, ni menos, pero sí más que el espejo de todo eso, el *Amadís*, de Montalvo.

Mujeres y hombres de Castilla deben haber cambiado mucho y helado en tesos y gredos sus pensamientos y máximas morales. El escarmiento, el castigo o el cansancio, quién sabe. El caso es que se han hecho cazurros, arracimados, fríos y ásperos como el clima, tiesos y zanjados en roca viva. Dicen que se temple el acero sumergiéndole en agua fría; yo no lo creo, pero en baños semejantes el alma se carboniza y así me parece a mí ya el espíritu castellano: carbón, juego a condición de quemarse y consumirse, pero, en el tano, carbón. La ironía y la guasa que tan gran servicio de salinización prestó a la raza, al precipitarse en la descomposición rápida de muchas cosas, les ha dejado en el corazón y el rostro-y del rostro, en la boca- gestos de experiencia burlona, de compresión excesiva y desencanto humorístico. Estos campesinos tienen la boca grande y, aparte el que la tengan así por no comer poco-su sobriedad es otro mito-, la verdadera razón consiste en que se ríen de soslayo, desviando su risa a la diestra y siniestra de sus comisuras ... (*Las siete* 186-187)

In these passages, Noel links the present with the past in hopes of bringing about a change in behavior that will reclaim the quality of life that previously existed in the province. He sees the current society unraveling and fast losing sight of its proud heritage that is so essential to improving their present day circumstances. The administrations of justice, the morality of the people, and their collective spirit have been adversely impacted by the loss of this perspective. Noel once again calls for action, “Es preciso existir a *toda costa* ... Vivir, para el alma ibérica, no es dejarse arrastrar; ha sido siempre y, curisísimo caso, todo lo contrario. No merece en

nuestra tierra la vida quien se deja manejar por los acontecimientos. Las hondísimas raíces de nuestra novela picaresca se nutren en las más jugosas sustancias” (*Las siete* 152).

An interesting theme that emerges from *Las siete Cucas* is Noel’s advocacy for the women in his novel. He addresses this issue very forthrightly and expresses great conviction for their innocence and right to be treated with proper justice. He admonishes the people for the cruelty and inhumanity that they have demonstrated towards the *cucas*. Entrambasaguas writes:

Por el *Argumento de toda la obra*, que sigue *La Celestina*, se descubre no sólo el perfecto desarrollo argumental del tema, sino también su fin moral censurando la crueldad de las gentes- el ambiente limitado y por ello más exacerbable y radical de un pueblo-y su falta absoluta de caridad con las desgraciadas protagonistas, inocentes de la catástrofe que se les vino encima y que rechazaron por su espíritu religioso y moral principalmente. (664-665).

In his writing, Noel expresses great respect for Saturnina. He states: “Aquella fémica tenía en las arterias sangre de doña María de Monroy ... ” (102). “ ... Esa mujer tan callada, tan laboriosa, de tan profundo sentido devoto...” (308). He also admires her daughters and cites their strength of character and resolute will. He expresses the following:

Las Cucas no rodaron de falta en falta como las mujeres que se pierden en las ciudades; cayeron de emoción en emoción y ¡por su voluntad! Y no una a una, sino ¡todas a una!...Nada de tentaciones de droguería espiritual o de perfumería anímica; perversiones platerescas o por...plata; caídas urbanas de esas en las que un autor hace, porque le da la gana y no por otra cosa, salvo la propia experiencia que de ello tiene, maravillas de prestidigitación mental con objeto de demostrar de quién o quiénes es la culpa, que casi siempre es del autor mismo, pues, si no le

conviniera que la infeliz se perdiese, no la perdería y el conflicto se daba por  
quito.

Pero frente a nuestra pluma tenemos mujeres de carne y hueso y no hijitas de Emma Bovary o Margarita Gauthier o Mila de Codra. Criaturas femeninas hasta dejarlo de sobra, mujeres de realidad y no de las que se pueden denominar hijas de solo hombre, o sea las nacidas de varón y pluma, que vienen a ser o a servir de argumentos para demostrar cuál es el gusto de fantaseador, cuando no pruebas de esta o aquella filosofía de moda, o necesidad de tanda, o ensueño de ribera a lo Salomé, la mismísima Magda, una *Ben Platada*, educada por Platón *en catalán*, o sea griega “a la catalana”, una Amy Dorrit o cualquiera de las lamentables *Izés* de nuestros días de inyecciones, proyecciones, inflaciones estupefacientes y cacoquimias. (*Las siete* 148)

Noel presents the women in a manner that is always respectful of them and their circumstances, and through the character of the Archpriest don Juan Higuea, he articulates his unwavering support for their actions against the townspeople in establishing the *mancebía*. He writes, “¡Las Cucas, oh estercolario sacris, las Cucas!...Nunca han nacido de madre mujeres que tengan en lo que están haciendo más razón que esas siete hembras” (97). He understands that they are the innocent victims of a situation that many conflicting elements have created, and along with their mother Saturnina, are suffering unjustly at the hands of the duplicitous men and women of the town. The bishop, upon hearing the case of the *cucas*, decided that he could not deny them access to the church. He explains his decision, “Habían ido a Palacio, en Salamanca, y le expusieron su caso...No se les podía negar la entrada en la iglesia de ninguna manera” (*Las siete* 307). Furthermore, in preparing for a local religious procession in the town, the bishop, despite

the protests of the other village women, informs all of the residents that the *cucas* are to march in procession alongside everyone else, “Resultado. Que las Cucas salieron en la procesión. Que el señor Obispo la presidió, y que pocas veces tuvo tanto splendor” (*Las siete* 311) and furthermore, the figure of the Cristo Pobre, whom the procession is honoring, is to pass in front of their house. He orders “Que pasó el Cristo Pobre delante de la casa de las uvas [las cucas] y que, en ese instante, a la Saturna se le cayó al suelo una lágrima como uno de esos goterones de tormenta que se aplastan sobre el suelo después del primer trueno” (*Las siete* 311). Upon hearing this decision, the *cucas* fall to their knees and are blessed by the bishop. Noel tenderly writes, “Arrodilladas las siete mujeres delante del obispo éste las bendijo y aunque un poco de prisa, bendición era y de las que dejan ronchas y recuerdos” (*Las siete* 312).

Another strong female character in the novel that supports the cause of the *cucas* is Martina la Cheira, whom Noel very humorously describes in the following manner:

Martina entraba en las casas de la población como entra el médico o el ropavejero o la unción. Corría joyas; prestaba dinero; destripaba barrigas, almas y sucesos; proporcionaba, en fin, todo eso que no se cree necesario hasta que se necesita y que juzgan al margen de la vida quienes tienen poco margen en la suya; comadrona sin título, prestamista sin tarifa, curandera sin permiso, celestina sin malicia, urdenredos sin cartilla... (*Las siete* 120).

The sacristan Coquís, petitions Martina la Cheira to provide shelter for the *cucas* as a favor to him. The author writes, “Por el pronto era el único hombre que las dirigía la palabra y al que debían el no pequeño favor de que Martina la Cheira, mujer con la que entablaremos relaciones lo deseemos o no, la permitiera cobijarse bajo techado. En un chamizo o tabuco, pero refugio al fin, anejo a la espléndida casona de la complicada ciudadana” (*Las siete* 112).

Up until now, the *cucas* had been refused refuge in the town. “No las querían en ninguna parte” (*Las siete* 112) until this woman, acting very nobly, accepted them into her house.

Martina befriends the *cucas* and supports them in their struggle to uphold their honor. She is an astute woman who is able to perceive the right moment to intervene on behalf of the *cucas*. Noel observes, “Debido a esta sabiduría infusa que a Martina le venía de las profundidades de la subconsciencia, tan en moda hoy para explicarlo todo, se encontraron las Cucas con una amiga cariñosa y franca cuando más la necesitaban y cuando menos podían imaginarse necesitarla, ni hallarla si la buscaban” (*Las siete* 119).

Noel presents Martina la Cheira as a woman of action and not just of words. He consistently holds her up as an exemplar of this character trait. Through her intervention with the authorities, she somehow manages to broker the return of the *cucas*'s house to them. Noel offers this account of the episode:

No se atrevió la Saturna a dejar a su hermosa borrica y llevarse el carro a Salamanca. Martina vio el cielo abierto y como no era tonta se entró por él sin esperar a *Pedro*.

Desde el día en que Saturna y sus hijas renunciaron tácitamente a marcharse, no vaciló en considerarlas como cosa suya y extremó su ayuda y su audacia, mostrándose de pronto como aquel basilisco era en sí; mala fuerza, pero una fuerza. (*Las siete* 151)

Martina has obviously impressed Noel in her determination to act due to the inner resolve that she possesses. She has decided to do whatever is necessary, regardless of the cost. This determination to act is precisely what Noel perceived as lacking in the generation of writers who preceded him. The members of the generation of '98 eloquently articulated an ideology about the

reasons for the decline of Spanish society and the nation after *el desastre*, but failed to follow through with the next step, which was to act to regenerate the collective and individual spirit of the people in order to regain *el alma de la raza*. Martina la Cheira acted to regain the *cucas*'s house and performed what Noel terms, one of the “... milagros de la voluntad y su origen indudablemente pasional ...” (*Las siete* 151).

Como por ensalmo les fue devuelta la casa de la poza que las autoridades retenían. No quiso decir, ni por ahora nos conviene decirlo a nosotros, de qué medios se valió para arrancar a los enemigos de las Cucas esta prenda, pero el día que lo consiguió tiró las llaves sobre el regazo de la Saturna y zarandeándola con gesto protector y cierto agrillo de reconvención por su debilidad de carácter-agrillo que está muy en el riñón racial y que ya Séneca popularizó, siglos hace, contra los que no aciertan a superar las adversidades por perras que sean-exclamó:  
-Ahí está eso y...¡a vivir!... (151)

With these two words, ¡a vivir!, Noel provides the public with an example of how one can overcome adversities despite the apparent cost. “Ahí está eso y...a vivir... ¡Cuántas cosas quería decir esa frasecita de la Martina! Nada de amilanarse. Es preciso existir *a toda costa*” (152). This mandate is precisely what Noel wants to issue to the people of Spain in terms of accepting their own responsibility to regenerate the country just as Martina successfully regenerated the spirit of the *cucas*. Noel writes that the return of their house which Martina arranged “... les devolvió la energía de quedarse que, desde el primer momento, velado o no por los martirios sociales, era su verdadera decisión” (153). The decision of Saturnina and her daughters to act in a strong resolute manner serves as an example to the citizens of the town of

the need to act on their own behalf and begin the process of regenerating their society and “vivir...a toda costa”.

In his continued support of women, Noel emphasizes the importance of the family unit to Spanish society and clearly places the female head of the household at its center. In doing so, he elevates her position to almost that of the savior of Spanish society. Noel stresses how *el ama* or mother of the house is the real force behind the family unit despite the traditionally held concept of male domination, which Noel criticizes as being useless. It's as if Noel envisions women coming to the rescue of a society that men have badly injured. Noel sums up this situation in the following manner:

Si el nudo de arranque del tejido social es la familia, estos pueblos se han quedado en familias y nudos. Tal vez por ello son tan duros de pelar...de desatar.

Su medula esencialmente religiosa; su cohesión consanguínea; su sentido del linaje y su culto al *padre*, que entraña fe ciega en los antepasados, mientras en la realidad quien trabaja es el ama, la madre-léase sierva patriarcal y querida, ya lo creo, como querían a sus siervas los patriarcas y las quieren hoy los jeques-; el predominio absoluto del varón, acumulación de prerrogativas y energías que la mujer misma se encarga de idealizar con la palabra *macho*. Todo ello habla al alma atenta a estas palpitaciones *inútiles*, de vidas pastoriles y errantes, de mohedinos, trashumantes y sarios, ¿fuimos otra cosa nunca?, con jefes soberbios y crueles espejismos de alma y de desierto, increíblemente bellos, idea de una vida transitoria y avaricia, sordidez, tesoro siempre consigo, escondido dentro de uno mismo o lo más cerca de la mano posible...como los rebaños... (239)

The esteem expressed by Noel for the women of the novel can easily be understood. The author held a similar respect for his mother Nicasia to whom he dedicated his book *Escenas y andanzas de la campaña antiflamenca*, and for his wife Amada as well. His appreciation for the role women play in society and their ability to act based on their will to do so make them change agents who have the capability to regenerate the collective spirit of the people starting with the family. In fact, Elizabeth Munson makes an interesting observation with regard to the regenerationist figures and feminism. She states: “Regeneracionistas tales como Joaquín Costa ... se ocuparon de demostrar que, al contrario, nada podía ser más español que el feminismo. Estas personas, cada cual a su manera, intentaron regenerar España al regenerar la femineidad española. Lo lograron al recobrar un pasado que subrayaba el papel adelantado que habían desempeñado las mujeres a lo largo de la historia española” (43). It is most probable that Eugenio Noel, being a faithful disciple of Costa, was of the same mindset in relying upon women to help accomplish the task of regenerating the Spanish nation.

As presented above, Noel manages to integrate many topics related to the regeneration of the Spanish nation into his multiple texts. One that is repeated in several contexts and always remained a major focus of his campaign was the need for the country to become more europeanized. As he expressed in *República y flamenquismo*, “Los que abren las cárceles al civismo y a la honradez; los que tachan de rojo, y a veces de sangre, las ideas e ideales amados por Europa ...” (78). One of the contexts, which Noel used to communicate this need for the Spanish people to be more like the rest of the European continent, was music. He demonstrates a great appreciation for this artistic area and impresses the reader with his knowledge and understanding of its many idiosyncratic elements. Noel identifies composers, artists, and symphonic, operatic and ballet compositions with the accuracy of someone who has seriously

immersed himself into the area and has acquired a significant understanding of it. He also philosophizes about the subject of music and its important contributions to the cultural life of the people. He states: “La música es la piedra de toque de las almas, y cuando éstas se conmueven de ese modo es que poseen un fondo de sublime belleza” (*El allegretto* 26). It is important to note that several of his literary narratives utilize this topic to promote his agenda for change.

Noel was a great admirer of Beethoven. In fact, given his penchant for histrionics, he was even known to dress up like him. He also never passed up the opportunity to include information related to the German composer into his texts. He asserts, “Su genio [Beethoven’s] abarcó el pasado y el porvenir. Su música es la epopeya de los sentimientos humanos, que gustó y analizó uno por uno, sin que olvidase el matiz más insignificante” (*El allegretto* 13-14). According to Noel, his narrative, “El ‘allegretto’ de la sinfonía VII” which recalls Tolstoy’s *Sonata a Kreutzer*, is a “... homenaje vivo al más grande de los escritores del siglo pasado [Tolstoy] y al músico más excelso que conocieron y verán los tiempos [Beethoven]” (*El allegretto* 11). His short novel is based on the musical theme of the allegretto of Beethoven’s Seventh Symphony, and in the first chapter, he speaks about his encounter with a young man with whom he begins a discussion about the merits of Spanish literary figures. Both agree that the writers are fine executors of style; however, Noel believes that what they lack is creative genius. The young man concurs with Noel’s assessment. They then engage in a conversation in which Noel and the young man speak about the Spanish people’s lack of creativity and inability to express themselves in works that reflect deep emotion. The conversation ends up being a serious critique on Spanish artistic endeavors vs. those of other European countries with the latter appearing much superior to their Spanish counterparts in the area. The dialogue between the two men

reveals Noel's great disappointment in the present state of the artistic contributions of Spain to the rest of the world:

-¿Qué juicio-le pregunté-habéis formado de nuestros literatos?

-Les creo-respondió-influidos por todas las literaturas del mundo, de las que no aciertan a copiar sino las bellezas del estilo.

-Nuestro temperamento de raza-le dije yo-es propicio al estilismo. Es cierto que somos grandes obreros; pero nos falta genio creador.

-Eso es lo que quería decir. Describimos, pero no expresamos. Hay algo en los abismos étnicos de esa gran raza nuestra que nos lleva al hermetismo en todo; a procurar que no se descubra nuestra alma, porque juzgamos signo de inferioridad al ser examinados; y a no analizar el espíritu de los demás, que consideramos infranqueable con el criterio del Código sobre las casas de los ciudadanos.

-Sin duda, esa es la causa de nuestra falta absoluta de obras maestras del espíritu.

-Sólo hay sinceridad en la labor, no en la esencia. A ello se debe nuestra inferioridad, respecto de los extranjeros en los asuntos.

-Tenéis razón. Procedemos por síntesis, y sólo analizamos el detalle a condición de ser pintoresco.

-¿Quién, aquí en nuestra España, se atreve a sumergirse en los océanos de las almas?...No sería leído. Los extranjeros dan realidad, cuerpo y forma a las ideas más abstractas. Nosotros sentimos fatiga y desilusión ante los temas de espíritu puro.

-Es una lástima que todo ello sea verdad.

-No hay sino examinar un libro nuestro; la descripción es el todo. Nuestra música no es íntima, no es arte interior, el *Die Kunsts der Sinnerlichkeit* de los alemanes. Nuestra pintura es pincelada. Nuestro amor, fantasioso. En nuestro teatro, las delicias del discreto matan toda otra eclosión espiritual. (*Allegretto* 11-12)

According to this passage, the lack of spiritualness in the works of Spanish musicians is greatly disturbing to Noel. The fear of being judged inadequate and unable to meet the criteria expected of master works has stifled the creative flow of genius among the members of the Spanish artist population. This inability of the Spanish citizen to express their inner self is apparent in other art forms as well. These include literature, drama, and visual art. The young man with whom Noel is having this discussion turns out to be a musician who finds himself stalled in his own musical composition work because he believes that he cannot compete with the honesty that Beethoven demonstrated in his music. In commenting on Beethoven's music, Noel writes:

-¡Esos *Cuartetos*...esos *Cuartetos*!-murmuraba el joven.

-En ellos pensaba. ¿Qué os gusta de ellos más?

-Su firmeza de corazón. Esa valentía le ha dado la técnica más asombrosa que puede concebirse; sencillez y claridad, eso es todo; cuando esos motivos claros y sencillos se combinan, mezclan, arrullan o armonizan, la sencillez y la claridad son verdaderamente deslumbradoras. Todo el secreto de su arte consiste en no sacrificar la verdad nunca. Es sincero y llega a la audacia en su sinceridad.

(*Allegretto* 17)

In this description of the German composer's creative ability, Noel presents a model of composition that could easily replace the *fatiga y desilusión* that he observes in his compatriots.

Noel informs the young man that since he is so committed to the spirit of Beethoven, then perhaps he would be able to revoke his decision not to compose music anymore if he found a form of love that inspired a composition. The young man challenges Noel to find *un amor-guía* and Noel suggests *el allegretto de la Sinfonía VII*. He asks him, “¿Estáis seguro que el *allegretto de la Sinfonía VII* no habla de amor?” (*El allegretto* 18). According to Noel, the young man looks at him “... como quien siente descubierto, cuando menos lo espera, un sentimiento que a nadie se ha contado” (*El allegretto* 18) and asks him why he couldn’t have offered him other examples of the *amor-guía* of Beethoven like movements from some of his sonatas, “Mirad si me habíais podido recordar tiempos de las Sonatas, sus obras más íntimas ... No; ha tenido que ser el *allegretto de la VII*” (*El allegretto* 18). The episode ends with the young man about to tell Noel a story from his past, which appears related to his decision not to engage in musical composition any more. What Noel has accomplished in this initial chapter besides introducing the reader to the theme and hero of the story is also to underscore the need for more deep artistic expression and creative genius among the Spanish population. He also begins to make a spiritual and artistic connection between music and love, which is at the center of the story. He asks the young man, “Os reís del amor como tema de arte?” (*El allegretto* 17).

As mentioned previously, Noel’s preferred method for representing the decaying governmental structure is to use metaphorically the organization of the casino. This imagery once again becomes an important focus in the second chapter of *El allegretto de la Sinfonía VII*. The author introduces this segment of the narrative with the young man beginning to tell his story. The latter recounts to the reader a visit that he made to his elderly parents and his chance encounter with *un matrimonio extraño*. In his depiction of the husband, Noel explains the man’s fondness for the casino and ascribes to him all of the character traits that he associates with those

who frequent these profligate centers. True to his literary style, he begins to create a caricature of this figure. He writes: “Él era un boticario muy amigo de estar en el Casino haciendo la estúpida vida que sabéis se lleva en estos pantanos pueblerinos ... ” (*El allegretto* 19).

Immediately, Noel establishes a level of criticism that is subsequently directed at this man as representative of that segment of society that is in large part responsible for its decay. He explains, “Era alto, rubio, casi rojo, con la barba en punta, magro y feo. En sus ojuelos azules, ‘como el Danubio, de Strauss’, según decía él mismo, temblaban las pupilas del diablo de la lujuria. No recuerdo de él más” (*El Allegretto* 19). Noel, via the voice of the young musician, continues to describe the man’s house in similar terms that he used to describe the casino. He states: “Mi primera e inolvidable impresión, en aquella casa para mí tan fatal, fue el olor que subía por la escalera, un olor de droguería, de botica descuidada, de potingues y píldoras, de enjuagues y antiespasmódicas” (*El allegretto* 20). The two men engage in conversation, the musician observes his paintings, which do not impress him and asserts that he is “Tan mal pintor como literato ... ” (*El allegretto* 20). They exchange ideas about their preferences in composers and the young man informs him that he favors Beethoven over Wagner who happens to be the favorite composer of the man. The man’s wife, “... una real hembra, que no salía de casa ni a la iglesia, por lo que en el polbacho la llamaban la ‘atrasá’ ” (*El allegretto* 19), enters the room and joins in the discussion about the composers. She expresses to the young musician her pleasure with Beethoven’s Seventh Symphony, “¡Qué hermosa es la VII!” and of course, he informs her that the German genius is his favorite as well. He is clearly taken with the woman and she begins playing a section of the renowned Sinfonía VII. Because the music has moved her so deeply, she abruptly ends her performance. From her reaction, she appears as connected to the work as is the musician. She states: “Vivo envenenada por la música ... ” (*El allegretto* 25).

The three continue their discussion and the young man grows increasingly irritated by her husband's behavior. He complains, "Cuando hablaba el marido de aquella señora, sentía yo ganas de ordenarle callar" (*El allegretto* 25) and the chapter ends with the characters philosophizing about the virtues of music and the young man reflecting upon his and the woman's mutual connection to the allegretto de la Sinfonía VII and his own attraction to her. He writes, "Callamos, ella y yo sentimos en el alma el motivo dulcísimo del *allegretto*. Gota a gota caían en nuestro corazón las lágrimas ardientes" (*El allegretto* 26).

The next two chapters of the book link the *allegretto de la Sinfonía VII* to the theme of love as the reader becomes increasingly more acquainted with the young man's infatuation with the piano player who was introduced in the second chapter. He grows more and more enamored of her and asks her to play the allegretto movement of the symphony on the piano. The third chapter ends with the young man discussing his unspoken love for her as well as how her specific interpretation of this music does indeed communicate love. He writes, "Aquella mujer habló así en el piano ... Les veía yo dialogar sobre las teclas, y su vida espantosa exaltaba mi amor" (*El allegretto* 36). The musician had questioned her about her happiness in being married to this man, "...Decís que sois feliz, que vuestros hijos y vuestro marido materializan vuestro ideal de dicha. -Completamente.-Y decís también que ese hombre con solo interrogaros desvanece vuestra felicidad y os la muestra más lejos.-Sí, sí...más lejos" (*El allegretto* 31). At a later point, he comes to realize that the woman's husband truly loves her and he therefore becomes more tolerant of his behavior "Su risa franca acabó de alejar de mi alma todo odio ... Su beso era legítimo" (*El allegretto* 32). Nevertheless, he continues his silent adoration of her as both of them kiss the statue of Beethoven, which she has on display nearby.

In the final chapter of the book, the young man continues to discuss his love for this woman but keeps his relationship with her at the spiritual level and does not advance it to the physical. They have the following verbal exchange:

-Sí; os amo, os amo, y no pido que me correspondáis; pido que me dejéis que os ame yo ...

-Os repito, amigo mío, que no escucharé nada mientras habléis en ese tono. Soy una mujer casada y no debo oíros. (*El allegretto* 40)

At this moment, her husband walks in as “El repugnante olor a botica nos anunció al marido” (*El allegretto* 40). He is accompanied by two men who, according to the young man, are just as repugnant as he is, “... un joven barbudo y presuntuoso que tocaba el violín ...” (*El allegretto* 40) and “... un médico morfinómano que cuando oía música llevaba el compás con la cabeza y las puntas de las botas” (*El allegretto* 40). The young man grows suspicious of the doctor’s intentions since the latter makes daily visits to see her and demands that she play the piano for him. He ponders, “Era curioso aquel hombre ... Y oía horas y horas sin cansarse, embelesado, criticando sagaz, mordacísimo a veces, siempre caustico y acertado” (*El allegretto* 41). He regrets her lost opportunities to express her passion through music as well as her unfortunate sentence, which is to live as a prisoner of the house. He forlornly states: “Su divina cara era como su inspiración; se consumían en la domesticidad, en el ensueño, en la vida interior, rota durante el día por ramalazos siempre iguales de atenciones caseras ... era, sencillamente, un alma a la que fueron revelados los misterios de la melodía” (*El allegretto* 41). Her husband and the doctor make a joke about not letting her escape from her house or sepulcher to which the young man silently responds, “Bien seguro estaba aquel chivo humano de que no escaparía su mujer. Conocía mejor que nadie la pasividad del alma que tronchara al florecer, y cultivaba esa

indiferencia con su carácter positivo y jovial. No oponiéndose a cosa alguna, dejando hacer, conseguía ser dueño absoluto de aquel espíritu incomparable. Al menos me lo figuraba yo así” (*El allegretto* 43). The doctor suggests that if the woman had lived in the capital city, she would have had a very different life. The woman reveals that she has dreamt about glories and triumphs and denies that her husband and children have prevented her from experiencing this. She exclaims, “-No; mi marido no sería nunca un obstáculo. Ni mis hijos” (*El allegretto* 45). She is unable to articulate her reasons for not pursuing these dreams “ ... pero hay aquí en el corazón algo que me detiene, que me impide marchar adelante” (*El allegretto* 45). The woman admits to an unknown fear, “Temo. Y no sé lo que temo” (*El allegretto* 45). The chapter ends with the woman once again playing the allegretto movement and both she and the young man reflecting upon their relationship that has been sealed in their souls. He writes the following description of the scene:

Entonces, sin que ninguno de nosotros se lo mandara, tocó [la mujer] en el piano *el allegretto de la VII Sinfonía*. Lo que las palabras no pudieron decir era ahora claro y diáfano.

Oí en mi espíritu:

-¿Comprendes ahora por qué no puedo amarte?

Ella oyó:

-¿Comprendes ahora por qué te amo?

Y en esa indecisión de aquellas notas, semejantes a lágrimas de sangre ardiente, las almas nuestras encontraban la imposibilidad de amarse y la necesidad de atraerse la una a la otra hasta la fusión de las dos. Decían aquellas frases que no importa el adulterio real cuando las almas lo han cometido en espíritu y deseo;

que es suficiente para adorarse en la realidad vencerla con la angustia de saber que ella mataría el verdadero amor si se le confiara.

Y así fue cómo ella determinó no vencer y yo me di por vencido. (*El allegretto* 45)

The reader now understands with greater clarity why the young man initially responded with such tentativeness to Noel's suggestion to him that *El allegretto de la Sinfonía VII* act as an *amor-guía*. The connection between art and love that is at the heart of the story is also established and more clearly understood.

As seen earlier in the narrative, Noel uses this musical theme in order to demonstrate the continued need for nurturing creative expression, which he feels, will allow his compatriots to stand alongside their European neighbors as equals to them in this area. In addition, Spanish citizens must feel connected to one another spiritually as well as geographically. Different elements of society must work in harmony in order to be able to move the country and people forward. Society and government must both continuously examine themselves so that social, economic, cultural, and spiritual growth can occur. Questionable figures such as *el marido boticario*, *el joven barbudo y presuntuoso* and *el médico morfinómano* should not be allowed to paralyze the lives of other citizens and deleteriously affect their potential contributions to the cultural life of the nation. They are the elements of society that must be kept in check.

In speaking about Beethoven as a composer, Noel notes the following:

Su firmeza de corazón. Esa valentía le ha dado la técnica más asombrosa que puede concebirse; sencillez y claridad, eso es todo; cuando esos motivos claros y sencillos se combinan, mezclan, arrullan o armonizan, la sencillez y la claridad

son verdaderamente deslumbradoras. Todo el secreto de su arte consiste en no sacrificar la verdad nunca. Es sincero y llega a la audacia en su sinceridad.

(*El allegretto* 17)

This formula of Beethoven could easily serve as a blueprint for orchestrating the regeneration of the country and this particular selection with music as its centerpiece provides Noel with yet another venue with which to articulate a plan for regeneration. In *El Allegretto de la Sinfonía VII*, the author expresses the need for Spain to encourage the development of her cultural resources alongside that of other neighboring countries. The ability to nurture creative genius among the population must become a priority. Noel states in *República y flamenquismo*:

Nada más inmundo que nuestro flamenquismo. Fermento de la descomposición de un pueblo, quiere ocultar la realidad con vanidades monstruosas y mentir una vida varonil con alardes de macho. Hay en Europa sensualidad refinada, voluptuosidad, vicio, pasiones extrañas, gustos extraviados; pero tienen un hermoso atavío: les ha engendrado o la plétora de bienestar o libros admirables o una vida interior rara. El flamenquismo no sabe prepararse sus placeres: los improvisa, siempre a costa de alguna renuncia. Admira a los extranjeros ese deseo frenético de divertirse que notan en nuestra Patria. ¡Pero qué diversiones!...La plaza de toros, la ‘juerga’, algo de pirotecnia, una misa cantado. Sobre todo y ante todo, los toros. (9)

One of Noel’s goals, as well as that of other regenerationists, was to europeanize Spain and remove the perceived stigma of *flamenquismo* from its culture. Noel felt very strongly that the regeneration of the country could occur by way of *la cultura*. As the “... apasionado defensor de la posibilidad de regenerar a España a través de la cultura ...” (Linares 22), he managed to

engender a greater awareness of the importance of the arts as a major component of his campaign. Music was an area in which this could be addressed and paying the highest compliment to musicians everywhere, he states emphatically, -“¡Estaría buena la Humanidad si la gobernarán los músicos!” (*El allegretto* 26). Giving more attention to the music of German composers such as Beethoven and Wagner, who are both mentioned extensively in his narratives, was a remedy, which Spaniards could apply in order to expand their own musical canon and help reclaim their ability to express their own spirituality and deep attachment to cultural touchstones of civilization. As mentioned previously in this research, Noel was so deeply committed to the work of his favorite composer that, according to Gómez de la Serna, he went so far as to make himself appear like him. He informs the reader that “Noel se afeitaba la cabeza para tener una frente como la de Beethoven, y, en efecto, lo conseguía ... ” (309).

In another selection where the music theme predominates, Noel once again writes about a young woman who demonstrates a great passion for operatic singing but lacks the needed talent to succeed. In *Musicalia: Bella voz*, the writer introduces the reader to a young lady, who according to those who surround her, possesses an exceptional talent for singing, an assessment with which Noel does not concur and openly admits, “Sonreímos, porque acabamos de oírla, y francamente, no comprendemos tanta admiración” (*España nervio* 123). He further states: “Su misión es casi divina. Consiste en que no huya de los escenarios el *bel canto*; todo, todo lo sacrificará a esa empresa” (*España nervio* 125) and describes how this young artist is very much tied to the standard *bel canto* repertory of opera while eschewing the more modern works of such composers as Richard Strauss. The author observes, “¡Oh, cuán mimosa y adorable verdaderamente está al criticar el modernismo musical, ella, tan joven y, sin embargo, tan lejana de nuestro tiempo!” (*España nervio* 125). Noel admits that one unfortunately must resort to

telling lies in critiquing this young girl's singing ability by expressing to her how talented she is rather than speaking the truth, "Y como es de rigor, caemos en todos los lugares comunes imaginables. La buena sociedad..., las buenas maneras..., en fin, que la educación nos ordena mentir sin límites" (*España nervio* 124). What Noel is actually criticizing is the false adulation which society has extended to this singer of questionable talent. Society has deemed her worthy of a first prize when in reality nothing more than family background has allowed her access to cultural opportunities. He exclaims, "... qué cara tan divina tenía esa criatura cuando...no cantaba!" (*España nervio* 124). The fact that she has a family whose position in society enables them to sponsor a formidable musical education for her, regardless of her talent, points to a flaw in the standard and process of creating a cultural life for the nation. Noel states:

¡Qué vasto y hermoso repertorio!...¡Con él se puede recorrer el mundo de punta a punta!...Ese es precisamente su plan, es decir, el plan de papá y de mamá y de la mamá de mamá, que ha sido la que ha dirigido los trabajos íntimos. ¿Alguna antigua celebridad de la escena, tal vez? ¡Oh, no; una simple enamorada del *bel canto*! A ella le debe el refinamiento artístico, la inmejorable escuela que hemos disfrutado. Gracias a la mamá de mamá, será ella una Norma ideal, una admirable Semíramis, Desdémona, Lucrecia, Margarita, Leonora, Raquel, Alicia... Sí, sí; antiguo, todo antiguo; lo moderno, ¡qué horror!, eso tiene que pasar pronto. (*España nervio* 124)

Noel continues his narrative by appearing to acknowledge the singer's superior ability in the area of vocal performance when in reality he is quite disdainful of it. Because of her reluctance to take on any other roles other than those of the *bel canto* repertoire, something which he finds unsettling, he considers this averseness to be a flaw in her musicianship. He

enumerates what he believes to be outstanding features of Strauss's opera *Salome*, which is a more contemporary work than those of the *bel canto* repertoire, and then proceeds to criticize the work negatively based on the same elements, which in reality he finds very fascinating.

“Salomé.. ¡qué odiosas son obras como ésa, aunque a nosotros nos parezcan cosas del otro mundo!” (*España nervio* 125). He continues, “Nosotros protestamos; todos los hombres que rodean a la gentil soprano protestamos indignados de Salomé, de Strauss y de todo lo que sea alejarse del cisne de Roncale (*España nervio* 125). This false censorship, which he expresses in front of the young singer, in reality, is meant to convey the disingenuousness of his remarks. On the one hand, Noel is pleased that the young woman has the ability to influence in a positive manner the perception of Spanish contributions by other European cultures. On the other hand, he is disappointed because these contributions have not yet embraced modern musical elements such as the operas of Richard Strauss that demonstrate even greater progress in the area of the arts. He writes:

Su misión es casi divina. Consiste en que no huya de los escenarios el *bel canto*; todo, todo lo sacrificará a esa empresa. Mentimos millares de veces felicitándola y animándola con frases ardorosas. ¡Es tan bella esa cara, es tan generoso ese escote!... Bastante nos importa en aquel momento toda la música que haya venido después de Verdi. La esperan y nos esperan días de gloria, porque ella no será tan avara del triunfo que no nos deje a los españoles un rinconcito de su corazón. Cuando cante en Munich, o en Viena, o en Stuttgart, o en Baden, o en París, o en Nueva York, dirá que es española; y allá, en esos inmensos teatros donde el arte es un culto y un rito, ella cantará como un ángel el *Trovador* o *Rigoletto*, la *Gioconda*, la *Forza del destino*, *Linda de Chamounix*, esas *Variaciones* de Proch

y esa *Vilanelle* de Dell'Acqua que antes produjeran furor en el selecto auditorio, para que vean por esos sitios que progresamos y que valemos tanto como ellos.

(*España nervio* 125-126)

Noel then indicates that the young soprano must give a local benefit concert since this is what is expected of her as a member of *la alta sociedad*. He goes on to enumerate the selections, which she will offer which are arias from the standard repertory and include none that are works by more modern composers.

At this point in the narrative, Noel reveals that this young singer, a first prizewinner in competition, has a fear of singing in major opera houses. While she enjoys performing operatic selections such as the *Ave Maria* from Verdi's *Otello* in church, she is afraid to sing in the large theaters of the world for fear of being criticized. She has studied books about the anatomy of the ear and mouth “... como si para cantar bien fuera preciso conocer por qué es así la fosa navicular, o por qué es del otro modo la membrana del tímpano, o qué demonios es eso de filetes sensitivos de la lengua” (*España nervio* 126). According to Noel, what is needed to sing well is “... una mamá como la que ella ha tenido y llama, sobre todo llama viva en el corazón” (*España nervio* 126). Noel admits that she does indeed have this flame or passion within her, but she also has this fear of possibly failing at the task. He explains:

Ella tiene esa llama, pero también tiene miedo, una paura horrible.

¿Acertamos a qué tiene miedo? Pues... al paraíso del Real. Es una cosa tonta.

Tiene miedo desde un día... ¡cosa más tonta!..., en que, estando todo en silencio, uno del paraíso gritó con voz estentórea a uno que tenía el sombrero puesto:

‘¡Qué se quite el cráneo!...’. Además, a una Aida amiga suya, porque no la salió

bien una fermata, la gritaron que se pelara los zorros de la cabeza. La verdad es que allí arriba son terribles. (*España nervio* 126)

What Noel has accomplished in this selection is to demonstrate by way of his several misleading statements of approbation of the young singer's operatic abilities, the need for artistic integrity in the life of the nation. True artistic talent, if it is to endure, cannot be acquired via superficial means such as one's place in society, one's looks, or feeling entitled to it. A special talent such as musical prodigiousness must be a part of the person so that it can be cultivated through pedagogy, expanded through modern repertory, and be connected to the artist. Talent cannot be forced or endowed. Even though the young woman in the story had a certain level of potential as an artist, she was paralyzed in her development. She was unable to perform in theatres of the world for fear of being criticized and possibly found out as not having sufficient talent with which to meet the expectations that had been set for her. Noel calls upon Spanish society to examine itself and plan for the expansion of a cultural life that extends beyond that of the bullring. In addition, there need to be serious attempts made by the public to become more modern and embrace contemporary repertory works so that the country remains in step with the rest of the world in continuing to progress as a creative people. Noel appreciates the presence of a cultural life as part of the soul of the nation but it must be genuine and worthy of being called art.

A remaining short selection, which focuses upon music is *Musicalia: El piano de la señorita*. This story tells of a talented pianist, Aurora Augusta, whose father Noel describes as “... un pundonoroso y bizarro ciudadano ...” and whose mother, according to Noel “... se quedó sorda y un poco estropeada de la cabeza” (*España nervio* 141). Despite this family background, Aurora has received fine musical instruction that has made her successful in mastering the

necessary techniques required for outstanding piano performance. Noel praises her ability, “Y no podeís imaginaros a qué maravillas de mecanismo llegó Aurora Augusta” (*España nervio* 142). As in the previous selection, *Musicalia: Bella voz*, Noel uses the musical theme here to present the reader with an episode of the artist as a conflicting figure of society. On the one hand, the young pianist Aurora demonstrates qualities that should be cultivated in the aesthetic life of the nation. Passion for music, the development of talent, and the incorporation of modern pedagogy in musical education are praiseworthy components in the development of a cultural heritage. He observes, “Augusta ha sido un prodigio de buen gusto, y maestros y profesores de esos que llevan la instrucción a domicilio convirtieron su alma en una joya inapreciable, en un fruto sazonado de la moderna pedagogía” (*España nervio* 141). There is little doubt that the benefits of a formidable musical background can stand in great contrast to the questionable merits of a cultural life based on *flamenguismo* and *taurismo*. On the other hand, there is also a sense of artistic pretentiousness in the young pianist’s demeanor as the author describes among other things, her extreme attachment to the musical instrument. In addition, Noel notes her precise arrangement of the busts of Beethoven, Wagner, and Handel along with the careful placement of a dozen pictures of Puccini, Bach and other composers on top of a Manila shawl “... que formaba pliegues y caídas simétricos ...” that covers the piano (*España nervio* 143). He states:

Todos los días ella, ella misma, Aurora Augusta, limpiaba con sus propias manos todo esto. Bien sabían los criados que nadie, a no ser la señorita, podía colocar sus manos en el querido mueble. Era su orgullo que nadie sino ella se acercara al piano adorado. Cinco años antes de nacer ella, y tenía ya veintiséis, había su madre comprado el divino cómplice de tanta pasión. Y nadie, excepto Aurora Augusta, tocó en él jamás. Ni el afinador. (*España nervio* 143)

A balance is lacking between Aurora's musical aspirations and personal life as she rejects any other love than that which she has for her piano. “-Bah-decía- ¿no tienen mis amiguitas un gato o un perro al que dedican todo su afecto? Pues yo he colocado mi amor en el piano” (*España nervio* 143). In addition to Aurora being a model of musical prodigiousness, Noel presents her as an example of someone whose seemingly superficial passion for art acts as a substitute for establishing genuine relationships with music and people. As Noel explains, “Su confidente, su amigo, su vida, era el piano” (142). Prado finds that Aurora Augusta serves as a grotesque caricature who demonstrates artistic pretensions. She states: “Apenas hace falta llamar la atención sobre la cursilería que en este caso reviste el carácter de pretensiones artísticas, del cuadro presentado con su amontonamiento de objetos heterogéneos: un verdadero cuadro de época, exagerado hasta la caricatura más grotesca” (*La literatura* 207). Prado sees in Aurora an example of Noel's use of *la técnica de naturaleza muerta* which serves to highlight the deterioration, emptiness and vanities of that time period and reveals “... las lacras sociales españolas ...” (*La literatura* 206). However, despite the conflicting portrayal presented in this particular episode and in the two others previously discussed, Noel's accounts that have music as a *modus operandi* for change, still offer the Spanish community a potential life-changing force - one that is embedded in a proud national past and reflects the highest of human emotions and creative expression. He shows great respect for music and in each of the selections, *El allegretto de la sinfonía VII*, *Musicalia: Bella voz* and *Musicalia: El piano de la señorita*, Noel demonstrates how an artist can be frozen in their artistry if they are misguided or unsupported in these creative endeavors. The young man and woman in *El “Allegretto” de la Sinfonía VII*, the operatic singer in *Musicalia: Bella voz* and Aurora Augusta in *Musicalia: El piano de la señorita* all offer examples of characters suffering from some form of artistic paralysis due to societal

forces, which have negatively impacted their creative development. They are part of a call for the country to assess itself and provide remedies that will allow the artist to flourish in an environment that nurtures genuine talent. However, despite the critical rhetoric that is aimed at exposing *las lacras sociales españolas* in each of these selections, it is still evident that Noel considers music to play an important role in empowering a people to move forward in a plan for regeneration of their homeland. As stated previously, according to Noel, “La música es la piedra de toque de las almas ...” (*El allegretto* 26).

In an essay, which is tangential to the ones cited above with a musical theme, Noel uses the metaphor of dance to demonstrate once again the country’s cultural poverty. In “Las danzas de Napierkowska”, Noel criticizes gypsy dances along with advising the reader of the hostile effects of *flamenquismo* on the Spanish culture. He states:

Al pueblo del garrotín y de la tripita no le gustan mucho las danzas nobles. Uno de los males del flamenquismo ha sido empeorar los bailes. No poseemos idea alguna de voluptuosidad, de refinamiento, de gracia sutil .... En nuestra absurda tecnología flamenca un bailarín es cierto sujeto que se mueve mucho, y una danzarina cierta tía que se las trae. Traérselas es taconear, relinchar, agitarse frenética y convulsivamente, y cogiéndose la barriga con la palma de la mano derecha, zarandear las caderas en molinetes asquerosos. (*Escenas* 120-121)

In contrast to these distasteful gypsy dances, Noel offers an account of the performance of French dancer, Stacia Napierkowska and describes the response of the people to this performance. He cynically states that in order to appreciate her genius, an audience that has attained a certain level of culture and who appreciate her exceptional gracefulness must be present. Unfortunately, the audience that attended the same performance of the dancer as Noel,

did not satisfy these criteria. He classifies her as a prodigy and equates her with other accomplished artists. He states: “Admira ver un alma que nos trae sin palabras, plásticamente, al escenario de un teatro moderno danzas bellísimas que creíanse muertas” (*Escenas* 123) and proceeds to enumerate all of her attributes with regard to the manner in which she is able to execute her steps. He enthusiastically describes her movements:

Su cuerpo adopta las posturas, los rasgos, las proporciones que estudió en los Museos, y los anima con su espíritu cálido e intuitivo, brincando por la escena, moviéndose siempre bella, ligera, sugestiva y sugeridora ... No toca el suelo; se desprende de él inmediatamente que lo toca. Camina sobre la punta de los pies desnudos, y cuando alza las piernas se mueve blandamente en inverosímiles giros, y avanza y torna y retrocede, prendiéndose a su danza, a su pasión, enamorados (*Escenas* 123).

Noel ends the selection by informing the reader that the Spanish people have much to learn from la Napierkowska because of the fact that they themselves haven't progressed in any areas of performance, not even in the art of dance. The author delivers these words in a condescending tone of voice with hopes of raising the consciousness of the people for a need to act in a way that will move the country forward. He spares no insulting words that could serve to awaken the Spanish population to their cultural ignorance and invokes the metaphor of dance to demonstrate how even in this art form, the people of his country are sorely lacking in taste and knowledge. He is very critical and saddened by their overall willingness to maintain the status quo and reluctance to advance culturally. He states:

Y nosotros mucho que aprender de ella. Porque somos el pueblo que no progresa en nada, ni aun en las danzas; el pueblo del magreo, parcho, jaripeo, arrimen,

empujen y tripoteo; el pueblo que arroja insultos y bolas de papel a Tórtola Valencia, y el que ve indiferente y aburrido a la Napierkowska. Y sin embargo, estas mujeres son mensajeras de gracia, llenas de ella, prodigios de belleza y emisarias de una civilización cercana a la cúspide de sus grandezas. (*Escenas* 124)

This entire selection is one more invective by Noel against the Spanish people in an effort to instigate action that will motivate them to improve the economic, social, and cultural fabric of the country. He intends his words to be “a wake-up call” to the citizens of Spain to unite and regenerate the country.

Much of the Noelian ideology that has been outlined in the present research has been derived from the narrative genre and reflects the ideas of a mature man of letters who thinks, writes, and speaks from the perspective of one who has been impacted by many different life experiences. Maria Cruz García de Enterría completed an investigation in which she discusses the thoughts and ideas of “... un hombre veraz y vital ...” (154), a 20 year old Eugenio Muñoz Díaz before he changed his name to Eugenio Noel. She states that “Es un muchacho de 20 años, cuya personalidad no hecha todavía se trasluce, incluso, en la misma escritura utilizada” (154-155). Cruz García de Enterría writes about a different genre used by Noel to communicate his ideology. Her father, Eduardo García, who was a friend of Noel, exchanged these letters with him between 1906 and 1907. She describes them as “Cartas escritas a sus veinte años a un amigo (mi padre) un poco más joven; espontáneas y frescas (al menos éstas que conservamos y aquí reproducimos), y sin escritas en fechas concretas y sitios concretos que quedan así recogidos sin las imprecisiones que la memoria, años más tarde, iba a introducir en el *Diario*” (154). One notable quality of these letters is that they provide the reader with access to Noel’s

thoughts in the darkest days of his bohemian life-style. She states: “Porque en ‘lo más negro de su bohemia’, según dirá él mismo, es cuando están escritas estas cartas” (155). The researcher classifies Noel as an intellectual who adopted this bohemian life-style in response to the contemporary reality that surrounded him. She explains, “Su intento de transformar, curar, regenerar (palabra clave todavía en la juventud de Noel) le lleva a tomar una actitud vital que era, en el fondo, algo más que una perduración de rasgos románticos o decadentistas” (156). What García de Enterría perceives in Noel’s letters is the same spirit that would inspire him later on in his life to bring about political and social change in the country. The early 20<sup>th</sup> century events that occurred in Spain during Noel’s bohemian youth planted the seeds of his regeneration campaign that were to flourish as he matured. She states: “Y de ahí, el pretender situarlo en esa corriente intelectual, por tanto, bohemia-de comienzos del siglo XX que intentaba fluir, política o socialmente, en la búsqueda eficaz de una solución para los problemas de la patria. Lo veremos ya muy claro en alguna de las cartas que siguen, a pesar de la inmadurez y lo indeciso, todavía, de sus planteamientos vitales y profesionales” (156). Obviously, Noel was greatly affected early on in his life by conditions in society that disturbed him and addressed these issues at the beginning of his writing career. García de Enterría includes these letters in her article and also offers the reader an example of Noel’s poetry. In fact, according to one of the letters that Noel wrote to Eduardo García, Noel states that he planned to put together a volume of work entitled *Decálogo* that was to include 10 books of poetry. He wrote, “Bástete saber que pienso (es un hecho feliz, Eduardo) dar a la prensa, editado por Fhé [sic]<sup>5</sup> un libro de Poesías cuyo índice que te mando te podrá dar una idea de su importancia” (165). Unfortunately, the book never became a published reality. In fact, Pedro Caba writes that Noel “Concebía gran número de argumentos

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<sup>5</sup> Cruz García de Enterría states that the editor’s name is Fernando Fé and not Fhé.

o de proyectos de obras políticas, sociales o científicas, que nunca llevaba a cumplimiento. Todo lo intentaba: un hambre inmensa de escribir, de elaborar libros, de construir teorías, le hacia entregarse viciosamente a un continuo hilar de pensamientos” (96). To this statement, García de Enterría adds, “Aquí tendríamos que añadir: y de obras poéticas. Novelas, ensayos, artículos, etc., sí conocemos de Noel, y publicados, mientras que poemas, hasta ahora, no han aparecido impresos” (165).<sup>6</sup>

The theme upon which Noel bases his poem *La Canción del mendigo*, which the researcher supposes to have been written in 1906, is poverty. He describes the plight of a blind beggar who is looking only for sustenance for his wife and children. The beggar stands by the temple seeking assistance but is not able to procure any offerings.

¡Piadosas señoras,  
 Dad vos el ejemplo...;  
 Llevo tantas horas  
 En vano en la puerta sentado del Templo!  
 ¡No seais extraños  
 A la cruel desgracia de mi atroz ceguera...!  
 Hace ya cinco años  
 Que pedí limosna por la vez primera!  
 Por la Virgen Madre...  
 ¡mirad mis pequeños; mirad a su padre!  
 Caridad, piadosas. (159)

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<sup>6</sup> In his edition to Noel’s long novel, *Las siete Cucas*, José Esteban includes a bibliography of Noel’s works which contain works he identifies as being written by Noel but that he believes remain unpublished (49).

Even though the theme expressed in the above poem was a common one for authors of the period, it still provides the reader with an insight as to what Noel's passions were at that time in his life and how he continued to incorporate it into his personal journey to regenerate the country. Addressing the plight of the disenfranchised members of society was as much a part of his youthful ideals as they were of his later ideology. In another letter that is dated (with reasonable assurance) September 1906, Noel discusses the trips that he called *estos andurriales donostiarras* that he was in the process of making across the country. He identifies these excursions as products of *un plan vastísimo de Guerra juvenil*. García de Enterría interprets these early journeys as his "... ansia juvenil y desinteresada de regenerar a su patria por medio de un trabajo literario e intelectual válido" (163) rather than as a desire to extirpate *flamenquismo* and *taurismo* from the national landscape which became part of his motivation later on. Very interestingly, he speaks about a meeting he has with Unamuno and his brother who both predict *un porvenir glorioso* for Noel. He describes Unamuno as "... un carácter ligero, contradictorio, poco seguro" (163). In an important footnote, García de Enterría comments on Noel's relationship with Unamuno, and interprets it to be a validation of Noel's self-declared separation from the members of the generation of '98 and his affiliation with another group. She states:

La opinión de Noel sobre don Miguel de Unamuno es dura y, tal vez, una prueba más-como toda esta carta-de su interior y radical diferencia y separación de los hombres del 98. Noel, parece claro, se considera ya de otra generación y, por tanto, ha de romper con la anterior y pensar de otra manera. Rebeldía juvenil explicable, como lo fue la de la misma juventud del 98 con respecto a la generación que la precedió. (163)

Unamuno informs Noel of his [Unamuno's] failed conference in the teatro de la Zarzuela which García de Enterría explains in her footnote. She cites the passage in Noel's *Diario íntimo* in which he speaks about this conference and Unamuno's inability to speak the truth to the people because of the presence of the military there (163). She quotes Noel's account in his book:

Asisto por entonces al rotundo fracaso de ese gran viejo que se llama Unamuno. Se han agrupado en torno de él los escritores del 98, y le eligen para que concrete el programa a seguir. Todos concurren al teatro de la Zarzuela, donde esa noche no cabe un alma más. Se espera que de allí salga la resurrección de España. Unamuno debe decir cruentas verdades. Pero entre el pueblo que asiste a la conferencia hay muchos militares que van a tomar ostensiblemente nota de todo lo que el recio escritor deba decir. Y Unamuno se calla... Desde este instante fracasa como apóstol y hombre de acción. España necesita al conductor de masas. Ni lo es él, ni lo son los otros. Son hombres sin proyecciones.

Sólo hay uno que pueda hacerlo. Joaquín Costa ... (*Diario íntimo* 1: 141).

Distressed by Unamuno's failure to communicate to the assembly, Noel advises Eduardo to prepare himself for some important changes with the following statement to him, "Hazme caso, estudia: se prepara algo muy nuevo y muy fuerte. Hoy por hoy no hay nadie en España cuya alma sea digna de ser eje; es preciso formar una telaraña vastísima" (164). Here we once again hear a fiery youthful voice calling for action as Noel promises to dedicate all of his efforts and those of his peers to a plan for change in Spain. The reader senses in this letter the same Noelian resolve that appears in his other narratives and accounts of his numerous conferences across the country. Noel writes the following in his letter:

Unamuno me ha dicho: Vislumbro en Ud. un joven nuevo que me aturde; yo le he contestado. Soy nadie, pero mi orientación es certera y mi ánimo resuelto. He creído encontrar la clave en [sic] un problema y a él dedicaré mi esfuerzo primordial y el de muchos jóvenes; es preciso que una enorme multitud de inteligencias frescas arrojen sobre España aguas de mar, regeneradoras, agrias, amargas... ." (164)

The zealous spirit of the Noel who eventually took up the cause against *flamenquismo* and *taurismo* is seen here in its early stages as he launches his crusade to regenerate the country. In fact, García de Enterría hypothesizes that perhaps it is here where Noel first expressed his desire to go beyond his writing and conferencing and rally the people to a cause by forming an organization known as the Order of Lay Preachers. This group would unite everyone in any organization into one entity and use the power and strength of its numbers to achieve an articulated goal. Noel mentions this entity in his *Diario íntimo* as well as in his beginning to his book *Escenas y andanzas de la campaña antiflamenca*. He writes, "Uno de mis ensueños sería formar la Orden de Predicadores laicos, y vais a saber-si os gustan las cosas serias-en qué razón fundamento esa ilusión mía" (*Escenas* vii). Noel likens this group to a religious organization and believes the secret to their success is their fanaticism, which he sees lacking in the lay people. He laments, "... ved y medita que ese fanatismo trocado en laico nos hace falta" (*Escenas* vii). Noel proposes that in converting this religious fanaticism into a lay fanaticism, "... adquiriremos necesariamente las virtudes de aquél, a saber: la visión intensa del objeto y nada más que del objeto, un irresistible movimiento hacia el fin, convergencia en el fin de todos los propósitos, voluntad y deseos" (*Escenas* viii). Noel sees in this organization the grouping of all

competing entities, regardless of their reason for existing, united in the spirit of reform where reform is the only goal of those in the organization. He concludes:

Si algo aleja las almas en España de la actividad, es el pesimismo de ver cómo los espíritus jóvenes se adecuan al medio ambiente al fracasar en sus primeros arrebatos. Así es que el día feliz en que vieran surgir una institución laica encaminada a la regeneración intelectual y moral de España, tendrían por lo menos que dejar su cómodo pesimismo y decir: Veremos, en vez de decir como hoy a todo esfuerzo levantado y noble: Eso que pretendéis es imposible; sois solo. Pensadlo bien, y si lo entendéis, comentadlo. (*Escenas ix-x*)

Unfortunately, this organization never emerged, for in his *Diario íntimo*, Noel states: “El 26 [de septiembre] sin dinero, trabajo y sufro. Recibo cartas alentadoras, pues ha gustado mucho mi idea de una Orden de Predicadores laicos. Sigo recibiendo más cartas en este sentido, y rabio, pues no tengo medios materiales para ponerme a la obra. Bosquejo las reglas de la Orden” (2: 95). This was probably Noel’s closest attempt to moving his campaign forward to another level. Whereas other regenerationists like Costa, Mallada, and Macías Picavea were politically active in their regeneration campaigns, Noel confined himself primarily to writing and conferencing in trying to gain support for his platform. Prado suggests a similarity between Noel’s Order of Lay Preachers and the *Institución Libre de Enseñanza* of Giner de los Ríos. It was perhaps his goal to offer a spiritual reform movement in his time, which was as powerful and influential as the *Institución Libre de Enseñanza*, was in its time; however, it would only be in this respect that they were similar given the fact that their goals were very different (*La literatura* 152).

In summarizing this section of the present research, it finds that Noel greatly aligned himself to the regenerationist movement as evidenced by select works that this investigation has studied. Even though his stance against *flamenquismo* and *taurismo* was central to his platform, he successfully managed to integrate other themes of the regenerationists into his rhetorical campaign as well. In particular, he aligned himself with the philosophy of Costa and struggled to revive the spirit of the *león de Graus* in the daily lives of his fellow Spanish citizens. Europeanization, cultural enrichment, progressive education, anti-caciquismo, and a modern approach to reviving the economic, social, and political system based on upholding Spanish traditions were themes that he integrated into his literature and articulated in his conferences.

## Chapter IV

### A Literary Style Analysis of the Works of Eugenio Noel

This chapter will examine the literary style of Eugenio Noel and the manner in which it influenced his regenerationist ideology. Noel's style will subsequently be compared to that of other regenerationists who were engaged in a similar campaign to move the country forward. Themes, lexical choices, and modes of presentation that Noel selected for his narratives and conferencing campaign will be discussed and placed side by side with similar activities of other major regenerationist figures, namely, Joaquín Costa, Ricardo Macías Picavea, and Lucas Mallada.

As stated previously, one of the principal venues, which Noel utilized to stimulate regeneration of the country, was literature. Through his abundant production of essays and narratives, Noel brought to the public awareness not only the need for change in the country but also the remedies that he felt would promote the progress that was so necessary to modernizing its citizens and the infrastructure. Manuel Martínez Arnaldos very appropriately concludes, "Es como si quisiera salvar a España con su literatura oral y escrita" (14). Sánchez Reboredo theorizes that Noel hoped to accomplish with words, the goal of his campaign, which was to regenerate the country, without addressing the more pressing social and political issues of the day. He states: "Eugenio Noel, al igual que los autores del 98, tenía la esperanza de que con la palabra escrita se pueda llegar a una rápida reforma de las costumbres, sin atacar a la vez otras cuestiones sociales y políticas más profundas. Pensaba que la cultura, al difundirse como en una especie de apostolado ... lograría el cambio de la sociedad" ( 162). Noel is well known for his combative attacks against *flamenquismo* and *taurismo* in his oral and written presentations;

however, this was not his exclusive style or method of delivery. As Ángeles Prado reminds the reader:

Si la obra en prosa de Eugenio Noel consistiera tan sólo en sus escritos vehementes y combativos, de curioso fondo ideológico, su figura estafalaria despertaría en nosotros un interés y una curiosidad de tipo histórico, es verdad; pero no reclamaría tan poderosamente nuestra atención. En efecto, nos hallamos en presencia de un verdadero artista y creador literario, artista desigual, es cierto, pero capaz cuando acierta de alcanzar una expresión de valiosa calidad estética.

(*La literatura* 181)

Prado places Noel's writings within the Unamunian framework of *casticismo* "... de descubrir la realidad del pueblo español ... " (*La literatura* 182) and finds that the author's works somewhat represent a dichotomy of forms. His literature would include descriptive articles (*cuadros o apuntes*) subsequently compiled into books, his stories, and his single extensive novel, *Las siete Cucas*. All of this output represents the author's attempts at creating a regeneration platform with a more literary orientation that became one of his primary modes of communication. As Prado states:

El que se encare con la extensa labor literaria de Noel dispuesto a caracterizarla, se sentirá desconcertado, primero por la índole fragmentaria de sus escritos, y segundo, por las formas anómalas que emplea. No obstante, sería posible y plausible, creemos, considerar su prosa sobre el casticismo como un solo cuerpo, con dos caras. El anverso lo constituyen sus artículos descriptivos, que preferimos llamar cuadros o apuntes, reunidos en libros tales como *Las capeas*, *España, nervio a nervio*, *Nervios de la raza*, *Aguafuertes ibéricas*, *Raza y alma*,

así como sus cuentos coleccionados en *Novelas escogidas* y la extensa novela titulada *Las siete cucas*. En todas estas obras es patente la elaboración literaria.

(*La literatura* 181-182)

Prado identifies the other face of Noel's works as being represented by his "... artículos y ensayos de propaganda combativos y fustigadores, donde impera un tono retórico y moralizador según se nos muestran en los volúmenes titulados *República y flamenquismo*, *Escenas y andanzas de la campaña anti-flamenca*, *Piel de España* .... (*La literatura* 182).

However, according to the researcher, Noel might have included both descriptive and propagandist narratives in a same book because of the fact that each of these two forms served his intentions at the time of writing in order to fulfill his author's purpose:

Esto no se debe meramente a razones circunstanciales de orden editorial o a precipitación y descuido por parte del autor, sino a que en concepto de éste las diferentes clases de escritos respondían sustancialmente al mismo propósito, y así no será de extrañar que también en el fondo de lo que hemos denominado sus cuadros literarios y de sus novelas, lata siempre un juicio moral y una intención crítica, aun cuando no explícitamente expuesta. (*La literatura* 182)

Rosario Cambria very succinctly highlights some of the major stylistic choices of Noel in his analysis of his works. Cambria primarily studied the *taurismo* theme in twentieth century Spanish essays and as part of his investigation, included a review of Noel's work since *taurismo* was a major focus of his literary production. He describes Noel's narrative style as being uneven in quality because his bohemian personality wielded such an influence over it. He also notes Noel's tendency to utilize a prose style that appeared baroque, exaggerated, and recalled the literature of a previous age. Although Noel was able to capture accurately in his writing the

essence of the Spanish population and the world in which they lived, his lexical style could be boisterous and accusatory with very few self-imposed limits placed upon his passionate cries of protest. Cambria explains:

Casi se podría decir que su obra total tiene un solo tema central, presentado con machacona insistencia en todas sus posibles variaciones: el antiflamenquismo y su hermano gemelo el antitaurismo. Su estilo literario concuerda con su personalidad exterior: enfático, vehemente, exagerado; una prosa recargada y barroca unas veces, otras veces llana y casi poética; es jactancioso y exclamatorio (a lo Unamuno), muchas veces chocarrero y vulgar, como los mismos flamencos que quería combatir. Su prosa, como él mismo, es a menudo pintoresca y de gran fuerza expresiva; de vez en cuando encontramos una descripción de lo horripilante o lo sórdido que puede rivalizar los poderes descriptivos de un Quevedo, por ejemplo. En total, un estilo y una producción literaria muy personal y de muy desigual calidad artística, pero que revela una gran capacidad observadora y un íntimo convivir con los tipos, el lenguaje y el mundo particular de la gente del pueblo. (183)

While *flamenquismo* and *taurismo* were evidently the central foci of Noel's campaign, it must be remembered that these two themes were in reality serving the promotion of a greater theme, which was the total regeneration of the country. Cambria, himself, states: "Nuestro autor, en efecto, se propone nada más (pero tampoco nada menos) que la empresa gigantesca de la regeneración completa de la patria" (189).

As mentioned previously, even though Noel interjects his *antitaurismo* and *antiflamenquismo* position into many of his narratives, there remain works that identify

additional issues than those already mentioned. Noel himself states that in the conferences which he organized, he would speak about other topics as well as his most famous two. For example, although containing concepts that allude to *antitaurismo* and *antiflamenquismo*, the narratives in *El Allegretto de la Sinfonía VII* are not overpowered by them. More importantly, the stories were intended to convey Noel's desire to europeanize the country more and demonstrate the power of music and the power of culture to promote the freedom of self-expression that is so important to regenerating the spirit of the people and country. Additional examples of Noel's work, which address other themes related to his regenerationist platform, are the narratives that describe the casinos in the regions. Although these texts contain elements that recall his *antitaurismo* and *antiflamenquismo* sentiments, the more vital message contained in them is to warn the citizens of the deteriorating conditions of the governmental organization and the need to address its restructure. Noel's attacks on *flamenquismo* and *taurismo* provided him with two themes to which the Spanish citizens could easily relate and therefore help him gather support for promoting his overall goal of regenerating the country.

According to Prado, each of these two major themes of his campaign, acted as *leitmotifs* that permeated much of his work; however, as pointed out earlier, they were not his exclusive ones. As she explains, "No hemos de olvidar que muchas de sus conferencias versaban sobre temas de cultura, pues no todas estaban dedicadas a la lucha flamenquista" (*La literatura* 151). Noel himself corroborates this statement in *República y flamenquismo*, "A nosotros lo que nos importa es la revolución intelectual, la pureza de las costumbres, la salud, la sanidad del corazón, la austeridad, las grandes virtudes republicanas, el civismo, la gimnasia, los baños, el porvenir, Europa" (28). These were the greater themes that Noel spoke to in his texts. He placed them alongside *flamenquismo* and *taurismo* and subsequently contextualized them in a modern

society. Not only did Noel “literaturizó” (Herrero 16) his position on *flamenquismo* and *taurismo*, the two greatest evils that he wished to see eradicated, but he also tried to “literature-ize” other themes as well that he wanted to promote in his campaign for the regeneration of his homeland.

As part of his decision to adopt a literary approach to communicate his message to the public<sup>7</sup>, Noel very often made sure to include his personal observations based on scientific reporting as part of his presentation. In Prado’s words, Noel was more concerned “... de aportar datos precisos y ‘científicos’ para una psicología de la raza” (*La literatura* 182). Regenerationists often used this approach to make their work appear more informed, valid, and objective. This stylistic decision is very much similar to the approach taken by Joaquín Costa whereby he examined the problems of Spain and subsequently prescribed remedies for them. As stated earlier in this study, Costa often included specific data related to the topic he was addressing in order to validate his position and statements. In current terminology, Costa’s research would probably be considered “data driven.” For example, in speaking about the national lottery, Noel offers a presentation that includes figures and explanations that could very much impress the casual reader of that time who was not very familiar with this particular activity. He writes:

Al Estado español no le importa desmoralizar ni empobrecer-mintiéndoles una riqueza espontánea-a sus súbditos y les mete en el bombo de la lotería su idea de ambición, la da vueltas y la arroja entre las masas como los degenerados emperadores romanos tiraban el pan y los garbanzos tostados durante las fiestas de los circos. Todos los años juegan 1.747.000 jugadores. ¿Cuántos pierden?...1.657.561. Ganan, pues, 89.439. Sacad el tanto por ciento: 5,15.

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<sup>7</sup> Prado states that Noel wasn’t concerned in creating literature, and in fact, insisted in “... la ‘antiliteratura’ de sus escritos ...” (*La literatura*, 182).

¿Cuánto ha distribuido el Estado de los cientos veintiséis millones ciento veinte mil pesetas que pidió para hacer con ellas dentro de un bombo un burdo juego de manos o algo peor? Según datos oficiales: 87.261.472. Le quedan en consecuencia, es decir, se quedan con 38.858.528 pesetas limpias. Esto no es robar; pero es audaz e inmoral y una operación de usura con todas las ventajas.

El que anualmente buscara 126.120.000 pesetas y por el inmenso trabajo de dar vueltas a un bombo se quedara, después de repartir un 5,11, con cerca de treinta y nueve millones ¿cómo le calificaríais?

¿No ha calculado un economista que si esos jugadores, que tanto daño hacen a la patria buscándose un bien desproporcionado e inmoral, impusieran una peseta mensual, al cabo de dieciocho años tendrían desembolsadas nada menos que 2.364.750.000 pesetas; capital de 5.755.000.000 y ganancia de 3.390.250.000?...¿Es que no se pierden en caso contrario en el juego de la lotería 728.597.400 pesetas?

Si quedara en España un poco de vergüenza colectiva, de espíritu de raza, confesaríamos que esos datos son muy tristes y muy denigrantes. Es más: es el ácido corrosivo de la estirpe. El grito tan conocido en nuestras ciudades: “¿Quién quiere un décimo?”, ese reclamo es la condenación de un Estado por inmoral. Las naciones que de este modo se dejan engañar y no vacilan en dar al Estado cantidades monstruosas para que éste con lo que roba a unos pague a los otros, esos países han caído verticalmente en el descrédito más repulsivo. (*Castillos* 270-271)

What Noel has accomplished in these passages is to substantiate his objections to the Spanish lottery system by providing multiple statistics, and subsequently drawing what appear to be valid conclusions based upon his analysis. By including this quantitative information in his presentation, he strengthens his own arguments, which in turn become more convincing to the public. Ultimately, they place him in a better position to persuade the people to support his opinions, and like other regenerationists gather approval for his agenda for change.

In addition to including data in his narratives, Noel would also cite well-known people of his day who shared his same *antiflamenquismo* and *antitaurismo* sentiments. Their inclusion served as additional support from respected members of society for his own position on regenerating the country. For example, in the essay “Los nervios de los flamencos”, he includes comments by Ortega y Gasset and Unamuno in which they both criticize the presence of *flamenquismo* in the Spanish culture (*República* 21). Even if these writers did not openly offer full support for his campaign, but wrote in the spirit of regenerating the country, Noel was more apt to include them in his narratives. As Prado states: “Es tanto más evidente el deseo de Noel de utilizar para sus fines los grandes nombres de esos escritores cuanto que algunos de los textos reproducidos por él, si bien están en la línea de la regeneración nacional, distan mucho de apoyar la validez de sus campañas” (*La literatura* 105).

Another important observation of Noel’s style that Javier Barreiro addresses in his research is that the author bases much of his literary production, especially his narratives, upon his travels throughout Spain and the Americas. Barreiro states: “En la magna obra de Eugenio Noel (Madrid, 1885-Barcelona, 1936) abundan los libros construidos en torno a las incansables andanzas del autor por tierras de España” (53). He also indicates that with the exception of *Los compradores de pieles (De Puerto Montt a Punta Arenas)*, a work which appeared in a volume

compiled posthumously by José García Mercadal and entitled *América bajo la lupa*, Noel's *libros viajeros* are not structured in the manner of the typical *libro de viaje*. Rather, they contain a series of articles with descriptions of the author's observations and analyses of Spain based on his extensive travels throughout the country and the Americas. Barreiro describes them in the following manner:

Sin embargo, salvo el citado libro que relata en clave casi policiaca un viaje por las costas chilenas cercanas a la Antártida [*Los compradores de pieles (De Puerto Montt a Punta Arenas)*], las obras de Noel no tienen la estructura itinerante típica de los libros de viajes sino que se construyen en torno a una serie de artículos que son visiones directas y análisis nada superficiales de esa España ibera, racial, brutal y genuina, *leit-motiv* constante del escritor. (53)

Some examples of Noel's *libros viajeros*, similar in characteristics, which Barreiro identifies include *España nervio a nervio* (1924), *Escenas y andanzas de la campaña antiflamenca* (1913), *Nervios de la raza* (1915), *Las capeas* (1915), *Aguafuertes ibéricas* (1926) and *Raza y alma* (1926). An additional collection of articles that had not yet appeared in a book is entitled *España, fibra a fibra* and was compiled by Noel's editor, José García Mercadal in 1960. The articles which appear in this volume also reflect the characteristics of the typical *libro viajero* of Noel and are similar to the volumes already mentioned.

As stated earlier in this investigation, Noel's stylistic choice of the *libro viajero* allowed him to create narratives based on his travels. These, in turn, not only afforded him the opportunity to observe first-hand the serious situations that needed to be addressed in the different regions of Spain, but they also allowed him to form a body of thought and communicate his ideas about the changes he felt were necessary in order to regenerate the country. The people

with whom he dialogued were some of those most affected by the country's inability to revive and transform itself into a more dynamic entity, and therefore, could provide important insights into forming the questions and applying the remedies. Barreiro explains:

A través de las páginas de su *Diario íntimo* es posible reconstruir los numerosísimos itinerarios viajeros de Eugenio Noel...Por él sabemos que Andalucía fue uno de sus destinos más frecuentes, casi siempre en busca del dinero que le deparaban sus conferencias. Allí mismo nos dice que en noviembre de 1921 había impartido quinientas cincuenta y dos, y, a finales de 1924, eran ya setecientos seis. Pero también motivaba sus viajes esa persecución de la esencia de lo ibérico, que constituyó su obsesión y razón de vida, y alcanzar la oportunidad de inmiscuirse en la raíz de lo popular, con una capacidad de enlazar con lo auténtico y primitivo que no se di en ningún otro escritor de su tiempo.

(56)

As an example of the *libro viajero*, the 1924-work *España nervio a nervio* invites the reader to travel with Noel across the Spanish peninsula to small towns in the region of La Mancha, to Andalucía, Alcalá de Henares, to Benicasim in Castellón, Barco de Ávila in Castilla, and among other places, Murcia, Soria, and Madrid. Noel utilizes these locations as settings where he develops an idea. He may use the geography of the land or his observations of the people of the provinces as his starting point to uncover Spain's past history and heritage or to make a social commentary. He visits casinos, dines with village inhabitants, or observes the natural beauty of the area. Each of these activities held the potential for him to develop an extensive, colorful, and descriptive narrative that would typically convey his ideas and author's purpose.

In addition to providing him with material for his narratives, Noel's excursions also gave him the opportunity to organize conferences where he would openly speak against *flamenquismo* and *taurismo* as well as the negative impact, which he felt the presence of these elements exerted on the Spanish national identity and character. These conferences not only enabled him to host a live forum where he could publicly express his ideas as well as his indignation, but according to Prado, they gradually became a source of income for him. As she explains, "Ese espectáculo comenzó siendo gratuito, pero pronto se dio cuenta Noel que podría convertirlo en un *modus vivendi* y, en efecto, ante la penuria de sus recursos decidió obtenerlos de las entidades donde pronunciaba sus conferencias" (*La literatura* 106-107).

Noel's first conference was given in the city of Bilbao in 1911. He informs the reader that "En diciembre de 1911 comencé la campaña contra el flamenquismo, pronunciando en un salón republicano de Bilbao la primera conferencia" (*Escritos antitaurinos* 25). He also corroborates that his conferences were not restricted to the topics of *flamenquismo* and *taurismo*, but also addressed other issues that he felt were important to the regeneration of the country. He adds that "Por centenares y en todos los Círculos he hablado de arte, de ciencia, de política, de industria, de dinero" (*Escritos antitaurinos* 30). Furthermore, these conferences would be given in such locations as "Los Círculos republicanos, los Centros socialistas, las Casas del Pueblo, los casinos aristocráticos, los circos, los teatros, los Ateneos ..." (*Escritos antitaurinos* 26). By the end of 1924, Noel states that he had given an impressive number of 706 conferences in Spain and America (*Diario íntimo* 2: 375).

However, the author reports that he was often ridiculed as a result of these conferences, "Tratado como un perro..." (*Escritos antitaurinos* 28), even when simply urging the public to respect the cultural elements of their society such as the library, the press, books and studying.

According to Noel, out of these places and activities would come all liberation (*Escritos antitaurinos* 29). The crowd that attended his conferences was very eclectic and included a variety of people at different social levels. Millionaires, outcasts, monarchists, leftists, republicans, clerics as well as flamencos and bullfighting enthusiasts, would all converge together at these gathering in order to hear Noel speak. He acknowledges, “ ... he conseguido que España se fijara en mí ... ” (*Escritos antitaurinos* 30). According to Noel, a typical conference would include a presentation on the current situation of Spain. In addition, he would offer a description of the people at a bullfight and include all of their vulgar language, speak about the bull, the horses, and bullfighters as well as censor any actions that he felt went against the laws of morality and civility. He writes:

¿Y qué les digo? No hago historias de las corridas ni exégesis profundas de su vicio o pasión, no; con sencillez grande les describo, primero, nuestra patria tal como es, recargando la pintura de tintas; porque cuando se halla en los escenarios la idea, necesita una especial escenografía; luego les describo Europa con menos grandeza de la que sería necesario, porque en las comparaciones desmesuradas pierde la consecuencia siempre; después les pinto a ellos en la corrida, antes y al fin, tal como son, con un lenguaje crudo, a veces chabacano, mordaz siempre, lleno de ironía y de imperio, que todos entienden; les hago ver al toro y al caballo, al torero y al espectador en todos los momentos de la lidia, y censuro agriamente lo que se aparta de una ley absoluta de moral y civismo, poniendo en ridículo a esos ídolos que el pueblo cree de oro. (*Escritos antitaurinos* 33)

He writes about how during the conference, he was capable of changing the initial angry facial expressions of the crowd into ones of approval, and as a result, they would end up applauding him:

¡Si vierais aquellas caras!...Cuando se habla a correligionarios o se trata asunto artístico o industrial, veis en los rostros la expectación, el deseo de oír cosas bellas o profundas; pero en mis conferencias antiflamencas, ¡oh, qué caras!...Todos los matices de la burla, todas las sonrisas del equívoco, todas las presunciones de la malicia, todos los sentimientos de la ira contenida a la fuerza, todas las cosas malas que pueden decirse sin hablar a un joven pobre, solo, de largas melenas, que no se dobla a conveniencia alguna, que no respeta convencionalismo alguno cuando del bien o de la verdad se trata. Ahora bien; id cambiando poco a poco esas caras y tornadlas mansas; id paso a paso domeñando aquellos corazones; id lentamente apoderándoos de sus riñones, de sus hígados, de sus gestos, y hacedlo sin piedad, cruelmente, con su propio lenguaje, con todos los tecnicismos del “caló”, la sinvergüencería, las corridas, el vicio y el desenfreno; e id al mismo tiempo sintiendo hasta sangrar lo que decís, venciendo aquella voz que no ha sido cuidada, aquella laringe rebelde, supliendo la falta de oratoria con el encanto de la misma verdad y los panoramas de las realidades que describís. Y arracad aplausos y entretener a miles de almas que ríen sin cesar porque les dais un toreo, un aficionado, una plaza, un pueblo que no habían visto. (*Escritos antitaurinos* 31-32)

Groups that came to disrupt his presentations never succeed in doing so because of the fact that Noel spoke the truth to them. He explains, “ ... y como tengo razón, las ideas se bañan en la

emoción fresca de la verdad y no hay quien se rebele contra tanta sinceridad y entusiasmo” (*Escritos antitaurinos* 33). However, Azorín takes issue with Noel’s own assessment of his conferences. He writes about an incident that occurred during one of his gatherings where the crowd grew quite unruly. In evaluating the situation, he suggests that perhaps Noel might have been too forceful in his presentation of the topic and therefore was not winning over the throng to sympathize with his cause. Azorín observes:

Continuamente se halla Noel en peregrinación por tierras de España; a menudo, en los periódicos encontramos noticias de discursos pronunciados por el conferenciante; alguna vez nos sorprende la nueva de algún incidente ruidoso provocado por las prédicas de Noel. Nos hacen suponer estos incidentes, siempre lamentables, que el propagandista ha estado demasiado agresivo en sus palabras; no podemos creer que, de exponer sus ideas correctamente, y con todo el ardimiento que se quiera, pudiera haber quien atajase violentamente sus lícitas propagandas. (1109)

Prado interestingly hypothesizes that Noel, in all likelihood, infused much of the same caricature style and grotesqueness that were part of his literary flair into his conference presentations as well. She describes how he probably won over the audience through his histrionics and theatricality that left the people believing him to be more a farcical actor than the hero or martyr for his country that he tried to portray. The researcher explains:

Resulta claro que apela a los recursos de la caricatura y de lo grotesco para chocar a la imaginación de los oyentes y provocar en ellos la reacción que desea. En su momento hemos de ver que esos mismos recursos aparecen con el valor de rasgos de estilo en su obra literaria. Lo que en este punto nos interesa destacar es que sus

conferencias, más que tales, eran representaciones histriónicas que probablemente dejarían la impresión de un farsante con más frecuencia que la del mártir y héroe que él se figura. Sin duda su móvil era serio y digno, pero la manera en que promueve su causa de acuerdo con su personal idiosincrasia, tenía que conducir a efectos equívocos. (*La literatura* 108)

The reason why Noel's conferences merit the reader's attention is that together with his narratives, they comprised the major instruments with which he articulated his platform for change. The orator as author eventually recorded these public assemblies in his two-volume *Diario íntimo*. Conferencing was a form of action for Noel and as stated previously, action is what he felt was significantly lacking from the generation of writers before him who spoke about the need to regenerate the country's spirit but did not take the necessary next steps to accomplish this task. Even though Noel wrote memories of the generation of '98 in his *Diario íntimo* from the perspective of his maturity, and Prado is not in total agreement with his assessment, she does feel that Noel's statements do serve to articulate his reaction to them. She states: "Endiosa a Costa, con quien obviamente se identifica, y menosprecia a los demás del grupo, acusándoles de ser 'sentimentales' e 'intelectuales sin dinamismo'. Por contraste, él, que se considera novecentista, será el hombre de acción, el científico desapasionado" (*La literatura* 131).

Conferences brought him to towns and cities all over Spain and the Americas and provided him with the opportunity to meet with the people, observe their everyday interactions, and subsequently comment upon them in his text. It was an invaluable tool and venue for pronouncing his program for reform and displayed the elements of his rhetorical style that he would also employ in his narratives.

As mentioned earlier in this investigation, Noel's histrionics played a significant part in the delivery of his message. In her article, "Eugenio Noel denunciador y exponente de la España Castiza", Prado provides an interesting analysis of the place of histrionics in Noel's personal style as she notes, "... su entusiasmo por el movimiento fascista italiano triunfante en aquellos momentos, la atracción que siente por el gesto enfático, la apariencia carnavalesca y la hueca teatralería. Más interesado en parecer que en ser, decidido a 'figurar' de cualquier manera, siempre lo encontramos dispuesto a asumir papeles" (10). She explains how Noel's need to shock people with his appearance and gestures was typical behavior of those writers of the generation of '98 who preceded him, but all but disappeared in the next generation except in Noel and in a few of the less-important writers. The researcher finds that it is important to distinguish between those artists who adopted this practice because it happened to be in vogue at the time and those who actually felt that dressing and acting in an exaggerated manner expressed their identity. She states that Noel was not under any social pressure to dress according to this standard since his literary peers at that time had not chosen to do so. If he made the decision to dress according to the norms of the members of the generation that preceded him, e.g. Unamuno and Valle-Inclán who expressed their identity with an idiosyncratic appearance, he would have maintained a constant "look" that identified him in the manner in which he wished to be perceived at all times. Instead, Noel's appearance often changed. At various intervals, he could be seen dressed as a romantic writer, an Argentinian gaucho, a bullfighter, or a Mexican charro. Prado relates that "... parecería subrayar el carácter histriónico de su personalidad descubriendo un matiz de secreta inseguridad psíquica" (*Denunciador* 10). By his constant changes in appearance, Prado perceives Noel as not being able to hold on to a secure personal identity that may ultimately reveal a conflict of identity that lay within him. She writes, "Pero Eugenio Noel

cambia de papeles como un actor de teatro capaz de representar personajes diversos con los que en el fondo, quizá no se identifica en serio. Sus cambios de disfraz pueden tener un valor de revelación externa de su interior condición” (*Denunciador* 10). In addition, she interprets his dressing in an exaggerated style as being motivated more by the possibility of garnering greater notoriety with this appearance as opposed to his connection to a cause. In examining Noel’s own accounts of his conferences, the reader is able to detect a strong preoccupation on his part with his audience’s response to his presentations. Because of the fact that despite his extensive readings of literature, Noel hardly mentions the names of any great novelists, poets, historians, philosophers or scientists “... de renombre universal hacia 1915”, Ramón de Garciasol asks the question “¿... era temor a que desvaneciesen su yo elefantiásico” (330). Noel very frequently includes in the accounts of his public appearances, descriptions such as “... he conseguido que España se fijara en mí ...” (*Escritos antitaurinos* 30), “El pueblo oye con entusiasmo y respeto profundos, gritando en masa: ¡Viva Noel!” (*Diario íntimo* 2: 174), “Por las calles, mi nombre en carteles amarillos destaca como un símbolo, y medito ante ellos.” (*Diario íntimo* 1: 372), “El pueblo me sigue, me aclama y me grita” (*Diario íntimo* 1: 298), “Doy mi conferencia en el Círculo Obrero Federal, con el acostumbrado éxito, produciéndose un caso nunca visto en Salamanca, donde la gente me acompaña por las calles, aplaudiendo con sincero entusiasmo” (*Diario íntimo* 1: 305). All of these expressions of approval and acclamation appear very important for Noel to experience. These adulations along with his penchant for histrionics and his love/hate relationship with *flamenquismo* and *taurismo*, raise questions as to the possibility of Noel having an unstated or hidden agenda as part of his overall campaign to eradicate the two latter entities. This need for public approval could very well point to his desire for greater notoriety given that these were all venues where it could be easily obtained.

In an effort to avoid making a *psicoanálisis* 'amaetur' of Noel, Prado believes that an uncertainty of identity permeates his literary work also. She suggests that this outward ambiguity in his persona is a result of an internal character flaw; however, she refuses to label him as a cynic who would use any available means in order to gain an advantage. She contends that "El problema está, creemos, en una radical indeterminación acerca de su propio ser y, por lo tanto, de su auténtica posición en el mundo" (*Denunciador* 10). Prado believes that Noel should be given the benefit of the doubt and that perhaps in the excesses of his dress and mannerisms, he was merely trying to create a live caricature of the person that he was satirizing in the style of Gómez de la Serna. She offers the following defense on behalf of Noel and his affinity towards histrionics:

Esa intención de caricatura vivida parece corroborarla en cierto modo el hecho de que Noel no comprende, por ejemplo, el humor gratuito de su coetáneo Gómez de la Serna, cuyas extravagancias desapruaba: "Por este tiempo-escribe-, Ramón Gómez de la Serna da una conferencia en el Ateneo de Bilbao, donde imita a las gallinas y se come una vela; es un síntoma del ambiente, y por esto lo pongo aquí" (*Diario íntimo* II: 286). Puesto que el disfrazarse de torero constituye una extravagancia por el orden de las que, dentro del espíritu de vanguardia, cultivaba Ramón, esa repulsa de Noel a sus puras eutrapelias sugeriría que él buscaba al hacerlo un efecto chocante con vistas a la derogación del objeto caricaturizado, es decir, el torero. (*Denunciador* 10)

Ultimately, she views the work of Noel as being an important antecedent in understanding the work of the author, Camilo José Cela, and as a major literary manifestation of *casticismo*, a

movement that pervaded much of the national landscape and influenced an important period in Spanish history.

In addition to histrionics and caricature, researchers have also discussed the element of *costumbrismo* that they have determined to be an important stylistic choice of Eugenio Noel. In many of his narratives, Noel speaks about the land, the people, their customs, and the *alma de la raza* that permeates the Spanish culture. For example, Trifón Abad López discusses all of the *costumbrismo* elements related to the senses that are present in Noel's story "Puente de Vallecas". He writes, "El gusto, el olfato y el tacto adquieren un notable protagonismo en este sabroso relato rebotante de humanidad y cargado de humor, que se presenta como un caleidoscopio de la capital tras la crisis del 98" (*Un paseo* 72). In the narrative, Noel cites the smells, sounds, sights, and food of Madrid and its environs at the same time that he criticizes the people for their indifference to the political situation after the disaster of '98. He is also indignant at their preoccupation for the national pastime. In commenting on passages in Noel's story that highlight the *costumbrismo* elements mentioned above, López states:

Este fragmento muestra el paroxismo desbocado de Noel es capaz de transmitir sensaciones por medio del cómputo, es capaz de inducir al lector a respirar el hedor, le permite vislumbrar al gentío sudoroso en pleno mes de julio; la mezcla de tufos que se condensa en el aire en las afueras de la plaza antes del espectáculo, casi obliga al lector a taparse la nariz para descubrir después, sorprendido, que se encuentra delante de un libro que huele como todos los libros.  
(*Un paseo* 76)

Even though Noel desires Spain to become more like the rest of Europe, he continually lauds his country's own heritage and the native people he meets throughout his travels across the

peninsula and the Americas. Despite all of their apparent vices and character flaws, Noel depicts the everyday Spanish citizen with great affection and admiration. The author Julio Cejador y Frauca clearly affirms the presence of *costumbrismo* elements in Noel's work and in his *Historia de la lengua y literatura castellana*, he describes Noel and his writing style in the following manner: "... madrileño, admirable satirizador de las lacras españolas, flamenquismo, toreo, etc., etc.; perspicaz observador, pensador levantado y noble; prosista sincero, brioso, pintoresco, suelto y castizo; pintó vivamente las costumbres, sobre todo de la gente maleante, de arriba y de abajo, y copió del natural el habla de chulos y toreros" (68). However, it should be noted that Noel himself totally rejects the idea of his being considered a *costumbrista*. He writes: "Cae en mis manos, en un libro de literatura española, un trozo de Cejador donde dice que soy "un gran prosista descriptor costumbrista" y varias tonterías como ésa" (*Diario íntimo* 2: 329). However, Miguel Pardeza in his article entitled "Vindicación de Eugenio Noel", finds that the themes that Noel's addresses in his works clearly place him within the tradition of not only what is known as *senequismo literario hispano*<sup>8</sup>, but also within the framework of *los costumbristas españoles* (182). Obviously, Noel viewed himself and his work differently than do his critics. However, the illustrations of the everyday life of the Spanish citizen as well as the recurring theme of *casticismo* are both common threads in such works as *Las capeas*, *Nervios de la raza*, *España, nervio a nervio*, *Raíces de España*, *Piel de España*, *Castillos de España*, *España fibra a fibra*, *Raza de alma* and *Taurobolios y verdades contrastadas*. Each of these literary collections presents examples of Spanish existence that speak to the traditions and soul of the country and people. The land, their customs, their shortcomings, as well as their character strengths and flaws are all exposed in these narratives and are used to develop and articulate Noel's platform for the

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<sup>8</sup> Pardeza gives the following citation: Cfr. Juan Marichal, *Teoría de historia del ensayismo hispánico*: Alianza Editorial, 1984.

regeneration of the country. Prado affirms the following with regard to the *costumbrismo* of Eugenio Noel: “No cabe duda de que gran parte de la obra de Eugenio Noel, por su forma exterior y por sus temas, podría considerarse costumbrista ...” (*La literatura* 184); however, the researcher feels that it is necessary “... establecer el lugar y la orientación de Noel dentro de esa modalidad literaria que se llama el costumbrismo” (*La literatura* 184). Azorín as well finds these costumbrismo elements in the writing of Noel as reasons to admire his work. According to him, Noel’s descriptions of towns, artifacts and people of interest make his writing artistic as well as political. He states: “... hemos de elogiar en el libro de Noel numerosas páginas; (bien que estas páginas a que nos referimos no sean de aquellas que encierran una determinada tendencia política). Pueden servir de ejemplo los capítulos dedicados a la descripción de Triana, o a hacer el retrato de un torero malogrado y pintoresco, o a describir una capea un Medina del Campo” (Azorín 1115-1116). Azorín ultimately finds the writing of Noel to be “... una prosa cálida, pintoresca, un poco redundante, un poco amplificadora” (1111).

In defining the concept of *costumbrismo*, Chang-Rodríguez and Filer state that it represents a “tendencia o género literario que se caracteriza por el retrato e interpretación de las costumbres y tipos del país. La descripción que resulta es conocida como ‘cuadro de costumbres’ si retrata una escena típica, o ‘artículo de costumbres’ si describe con tono humorístico y satírico algún aspecto de la vida” (593). In light of this explanation, Noel’s work reliably meets the criteria established by these two researchers. Within his narratives, Noel presents the reader with many *cuadros de costumbres* where there is little action but much description of everyday Spanish lifestyle. In addition, Noel injects much satire that directly points at the members of Spanish society and the government who have overseen the country’s decline. However, he does not present these *cuadros de costumbres* with the exclusive intent to

paint a picture of Spanish existence as it was, but more importantly to bring about reform and change through their manifestations of reality. Prado states:

Ante todo, debemos precisar la intención crítica y reformadora de Eugenio Noel en sus cuadros descriptivos, intención que lo coloca dentro de la línea establecida por José Clavijo Fajardo y José de Cadalso en el siglo XVIII, y continuada por Larra en el siglo XIX, autores en cuyas descripciones de la realidad española predomina el espíritu irónico y satírico. (*La literatura* 184)

According to Prado, it is within the context of Larra's *costumbrismo* that one must examine the work of Noel " ... en cuyos 'cuadros' de la España castiza late siempre, según advertimos, un juicio moral que hace patente su empeño regenerador" (*La literatura* 185).

Margarita Ucelay Da Cal offers another definition of the *artículo o cuadro de costumbres* in her work entitled *Los españoles pintados por sí mismos (1843-1844)*. She states:

El "artículo de costumbres" visto en su desarrollo, ofrece una personalidad bastante definida. Es siempre una composición breve, en prosa o en verso, y que tiene por finalidad 'la pintura filosófica, festiva o satírica de las costumbres populares', o en un sentido más amplio 'la pintura moral de la sociedad'. Sus temas concretos son la descripción de tipos, costumbres, escenas, incidentes, lugares o instituciones de la vida social contemporánea-la contemporaneidad es una nota imprescindible-; con escasa o ninguna trama argumental. En cuanto a la tendencia de su contenido, presenta un carácter variable: ya es satírico o didáctico, con propósito de reforma de la moral o la sociedad; ya pintoresquista, humorístico, o realista descriptivo, sin preocupación ulterior fuera del puro

entretenimiento. En su fondo y en su forma representa una fusión feliz del ensayo y del cuento. (16-17)

Once again, if the reader analyzes Noel's work consistent with the above criteria established by Ucelay Da Cal, it easily reveals the *costumbrismo* elements that connect it to this genre of literature. An interesting observation that Prado makes in assessing Noel's work is that some of it can be considered stories or *cuentos*. She states: "En efecto, algunos artículos de Noel, por su elaboración, por su apoyatura anecdótica, podrían considerarse cuentos" (*La literatura* 185). According to Ucelay Da Cal and Correa Calderón, whose criteria Prado cites, the fact that Noel's work contains a plot calls into question its *costumbrismo* orientation. Prado's explanation, however, offers clarification of this element in Noel's narratives as well as a resolution to the question of his being an author in the style of the *costumbrista*. She states that any boundaries that may exist between *artículos* and *cuentos* were unimportant to Noel. For him, the lines between these two forms of narratives were able to remain blurred. The author insisted that his only intention in creating his work was to document reality. All of the information which he provided within his texts served only to reveal the psychology of the Spanish people, for as Prado clearly points out, "... pues si insiste una y otra vez en que él solo quiere documentar la realidad, y en que sus estudios son *datos* para una 'psicología de la raza', también es verdad que su visión personal no deja de ser un factor importante en esa estilización" (*La literatura* 186). Thus, it becomes clear that the *costumbrismo* elements that Noel used in his writing were his attempts at representing reality and establishing facts that supported a higher goal, which was to reveal *el alma de la raza*. Pardeza concurs that, "En efecto, en sus pinturas y reportajes costumbristas palpitan rasgos tan manidos como la estadística del reformador, el talmud del rabino, y aún se sospecha que el revólver del revolucionario ..." (182).

Another literary device that Noel commonly used in his narratives was caricature. “Hay que decir ... que la caricatura constituye uno de los puntos fuertes en la obra literaria de Eugenio Noel. Es ahí donde esa obra se levanta hasta alcanzar niveles de alta excelencia estilística” (Prado, *Denunciador* 10). In examining his descriptions of *toreros*, *chulos*, *señoritos*, *flamencos* and *casineros*, the reader can continuously observe the exaggerated portrayals of these people that Noel created for the purposes of satirizing them. For him these characters served as “types” and represented the worst elements present in Spanish society. This was his way of exposing them to the public as well as their corrupt and questionable life-styles.

Noel very frequently borrowed from the world of visual arts and painted caricatures or created costumbrismo-like paintings with words. Prado notes Noel’s proclivity towards utilizing the device of creating visual art forms with words. She states: “... es significativo que para representar a la España flamenca se valga de la caricatura como medio expresivo, mientras que en sus cuadros de la España primitiva tiende al aguafuerte” (*La literatura* 188). She also observes that in an effort to acquire money, Noel thought about creating pieces for the theatre including “... una opereta bufa ...” (191). Just as he did with his histrionics, Noel uses caricature to create drama and often evokes laughter from the reader because of his exaggerated portrayal of the “type”; however, it is precisely this feeling of drama that Noel wished to establish because of the sense of reality that it brings to the reader. Prado notes the element of theater that is present in both Noel’s own appearance and behavior and speaks about the existence of this same quality in his narratives. In fact, there is a passage from his *Diario íntimo* where he talks about creating an actual theater piece. During a stay in Santander and reflecting upon his financial problems, Noel thinks to himself, “Cada vez sentía con mayor fuerza la necesidad de hacer una gran comedia que llevase los problemas de la torería por los escenarios”

(*Diario íntimo* 1: 280). Obviously, incorporating a dramatic flair into his writing was a consideration of Noel and partially realized through the creation of characters that very much appeared to come to life on the written pages of his works. His portraits were so vivid that the reader, while laughing at their exaggerated flaws, could not help but relate to the message that he was intending to transmit which was precisely the goal of the narrative. As explained by Prado,

La caricatura, cuyo equivalente literario es la parodia, provoca una risa pensativa al proporcionarnos una perspectiva alcanzada mediante la exageración de ciertos rasgos característicos que revelan algo profundo, y cuya revelación debe inducir a la reforma. Cuando dichos rasgos se dan, no en el individuo, sino en el tipo, entonces la reforma buscada es de carácter social, o sea, sátira de costumbres. (*La literatura* 190-191)

As an example, in creating his portrait of the *flamenco*, Noel lists all of the negative traits that he has attributed to this figure. He skillfully uses his ability to create caricature to emphasize his pathetic nature and existence. Physical and emotional characteristics as well as intelligence and personal appearance contribute to the overall portrait that Noel seeks to create in order to satirize or demonize the type or position he has selected for his target. In creating his caricature of the *flamenco*, Noel offers the following profile:

Un hombre ‘flamenco’ es un ser humano a quien toda clase de cuestiones le tiene sin cuidado, a excepción de las que puedan afectar a su interesante persona...El flamenco vive en todas las clases sociales; le veis en la taberna, en el club, en la política y en el periodismo. Toca su cabeza con gorrilla o chistera; es conservador o republicano. Tiene un gesto característico, maneras achulapadas, desenfado en sus actos, cobardía en la mirada, soltura de piernas. Camina

erguido, imperativo y satisfecho. En la vieja historia de los ‘Bravos’ tiene ascendientes notables; pero hoy es un tipo imbécil, cuya importancia consiste en que es una plaga dentro de una nación. Gusta de la guitarra canalla, de las canciones andaluzas, de las frases soeces, de los modismos enrevesados. Prefiere llevar navaja a revólver; pero si puede poseerlo le lleva también. Llama a la “dignidad” vergüenza torera”, y al corazón “riñones”...Copia al torero en sus actitudes, en esas actitudes asquerosas que parecen forzadas y no son otra cosa que exteriorización de un orgullo y vanidad infinitos. Su traje irá cortado a imitación del torero, y su cuerpo marchará contoneándose, braceando de ese modo que atrae las miradas de los transeúntes. Tendrá un infame concepto de la mujer y la tratará con toda clase de bajezas, producto de su trato continuo con las prostitutas. El flamenco huirá del trabajo cuanto le sea posible, y crecerá en méritos si sabe buscarse la vida sorteando el Código penal, explotando desgraciadas o viviendo a la sombra de “un diestro”. Además, estos hombres, sin noción alguna del verdadero patriotismo, serán patrioterros, charlatanes, difusos y huecos. En su alma ignorante, sin riqueza sentimental, se darán todas las manifestaciones de la degeneración del espíritu. Para él, el valor será la temeridad; el amor, la facilidad; la grandeza de alma, el orgullo del “yo”. Tales seres, que serían inofensivos, constituyen, por su número, uno de los mayores peligros. (*República* 7-8)

Noel’s description of the *flamenco* is one that has exaggerated his worst qualities; but with this portrayal, he successfully establishes the image that will communicate his strong message of distaste to the reader. All of Noel’s abhorrence for what he feels the *flamenco* represents to the

Spanish nation and culture is relayed through the caricature that he has created. He uses this technique in many of his essays and stories where he paints the image of the character that he is criticizing for the sake of moving forward his own platform of national regeneration. In speaking of Noel's ability to use imagery in order to convey his message, Trifón Abad López states: "Su uso de unas imágenes totalmente visuales y explícitas, junto su amplio conocimiento del refranero y de las sentencias populares, le permite aplicar un humor satírico, inunda al lector hasta embriagarlo de simpatía y lo aborda en un doble perspectiva: divertir y denunciar" (74).

Another characteristic of Noel's style that researchers find to be of significant importance is his use of language, in particular, the vocabulary of his works or as Abad López describes it, "... su exquisito uso del lenguaje (revestido siempre de un ácido e inteligente sentido del humano, ricas referencias a la tradición clásica y una gracia tan afilada que, para muchos críticos roza el esperpento) ... " (72). As Noel himself affirmed, he viewed himself not as a member of the previous group of generationists of '98, but as one belonging to the new group of writers known as *novecentistas*. According to Senabre, membership in this group brought with it the concern for the use of words that Noel clearly demonstrates by his continuous use of archaisms, neologisms, words expressed in dialects and pleonasm, which all came together in inflated expression. In addition, the researcher explains:

Deliberada y voluntariamente, Noel se inscribió en el grupo heredero del 98: el novecentista. Su declaración nos pone en la pista de algo que no puede ser examinado aquí con detenimiento, pero que convendrá precisar.

Novecentista es, en efecto, la preocupación de Noel por la palabra, así como su tendencia al arcaísmo y al neologismo; novecentista la búsqueda de formas

dialectales y el recurso a las citas e imágenes científicas, estimulado, probablemente, por la prosa de Costa, gran mentor del grupo. (323)

There are many examples of Noel's creative use of language throughout his literary production. His narratives are replete with the kinds of expressions that distinguish his writing from that of other authors. "Cuando le vence el mundo, Noel se refugia en su lenguaje; en una irrealidad de tonos significantes propios de la paleta de un Van Gogh" (Arnaldos 19). The lexical elements that are utilized impress the reader because of their ability to create strong mental images that help him to achieve his writer's purpose. For example, in the opening passages of his major literary work and only long novel, *Las siete Cucas*, Noel describes the wine that is omnipresent as part of the setting where the reader is introduced to the characters of the Arcipreste don Juan Higuea and the sacristan, Cóquilis. He describes the scene in the following manner:

Y que el vino es de la mismísima bodega del tío Varetas, un peleón castellano de la Vieja, marrajo de venazón, moriego en el color, poco zurriagado en la corambre, trajinado al descuido del lagar al zapo, del tinajo a las cubas, con posos en la turbia, criazón en la madre de mosquitos y hasta zollipos; pero, aparte quitamotas y mascujadas, gallofeando el dónde de los Bascueños, allá de monte Aranja y, para apañar el bodrio, tan beato y gafo como el pardillo de Noblejas o el clarete valdepeñero. (*Las siete* 67)

Immediately, the language of the paragraph makes an impact upon the reader because of its complexity and creative construction. Many critics have commented upon this stylistic element of Noel with different assessments of it. Ricardo Senabre has completed a close examination of the author's works and finds that Noel as a self-declared *novecentista* was very much concerned

with the creative use of words. That is why the vocabulary in the paragraph cited above from *Las siete Cucas* calls for the close attention of the reader.

This is precisely what we see in Noel's writing, the tendency to use words that date back to earlier literary periods as well as to create new vocabulary from already existing terms. "Un inventario de la lengua de Noel deberá atender a procedimientos de origen muy diverso, frecuentemente mezclados sin discriminación, que dan a la prosa una fisonomía claramente barroca, donde elementos muy heterogéneos se engarzan en series inacabables de pirotécnica literaria" (Senabre 323). In addition, Noel has the tendency to become redundant in his language expression using a large amount of words to create an idea. Many times, he also includes dialectal and popular forms of communication that place the prose or essays into a more regional atmosphere with much local color. The paragraph from *Las siete Cucas* that is cited above is an example of how Noel incorporates these regional elements into his writing. It would not be sufficient for Noel to offer a simpler description of tío Varetas by using fewer and more standard vocabulary words to create his profile. The author chooses instead to embellish the sentence with adjectives and colloquialisms: "... un peón castellano de la Vieja, marrajo de venazón, moriego en el color, poco zurriagado en la corambre, trajinado al descuido del lagar al zapo, del tinajo a las cubas, con posos en la turbia, criazón en la madre de mosquitos y hasta zollipos; pero, aparte quitamotas y mascujadas, gallofeando el dónde de los Bascueños, allá de monte Aranja y, para apañar el bodrio, tan beato y gafo como el pardillo de Noblejas o el clarete valdepeñero" (*Las siete* 67). While colorful in his depiction of the character, Noel's style of writing often appears cumbersome and difficult to understand. In citing a passage written by Noel, Senabre observes "... una suma de procedimientos dispares-arcaísmos, neologismos, formas dialectales y populares, pleonasmos-que convergen hacia un mismo

resultado: la hinchazón expresiva, la *amplificatio* de antigua prosapia. Una estética semejante ofrece al escritor numerosas trampas; la inexactitud y la redundancia, por ejemplo, son escollos difíciles de evitar” (324). The researcher offers the following examples of typical constructions which Noel utilizes in order to create his rich lexicon: 1) placing the verb with a complement, as in *sanalotodos* and *sacamuélas*; 2) forming words by adding suffixes such as *ío*, *ía*, *il*, *esco*, *iego*, and *eo* such as *mujerío*, *gañanía*, *femenil*, *sacristanesco*, *serraniego* and *magreo*, respectively; 3) the use of parasynthesis, in particular, following the formula of *a* + the *noun* + *ado* as in *afidalgado*, *arresolado*, *aguas asurcadas* and *hojas arriñonadas* (325-332). Other prefixes that Noel attaches to nouns include *en* as in *enfaldado* or *zahones enaceitados*. He also connects prefixes to adjectives to create words such as rasgos *achulapados*, *desesperación asordada* or with adjectives as a base to form verbs such as *enmustecer* or *amortecerse* (332). Senabre adds to Noel’s narrative lexicon vocabulary based on local color including variations that refer to the feminine form of words, e.g. *diabla*, *noblas* or *grosura*, popularisms and reflect Noel’s background as a *madrileño*, or expressions that demonstrate the influence of the Andalusian dialect on his vocabulary selection. He also notes his use of archaisms that include words that are no longer in use. The researcher states: “No son infrecuentes las series barrocamente organizadas, con arcaísmos y sentidos traslaticios” (337). Commenting on Noel’s use of archaism, Senabre points out that “La frase es, por tanto, muy simple. Lo que la complica es la extraña obsesión de Noel por enmascararla y darle una fisonomía nueva; la ingenua proclividad, en suma, a recrear arqueológicamente, aún a costa de la propiedad semántica, formas desusadas” (337).

In speaking of Noel's style, Azorín is more critical and finds his prose language to be amplified and redundant in its inclusion of expressions of Emilio Castelar. He states the following:

El estilo de Eugenio Noel es un tanto amplificador; el autor nos dice que él ha leído todos, "absolutamente todos", los libros de Emilio Castelar: algo del énfasis y de la redundancia castelarinas se nota en la prosa de Noel. ¿Por qué no ser más precisos, más concretos? Da la impresión esta prosa de que ha sido escrita febrilmente, al azar de los viajes, sin el reposo necesario para una coordinación reflexiva. Así se ve, por ejemplo, que en las descripciones hay cierta falta de matiz unificador, de transición de un detalle a otro, de un aspecto a otro. (1114)

However, it is with this rich vocabulary and expression that Noel is able to communicate with great conviction and commitment, his body of thought for regenerating the country. Despite any apparent excess use of words or phrases or the misuse of words, Noel is still able to deliver his message to the people as witnessed in their strong response to his controversial personality. He writes, "Doy mi conferencia en el Círculo Obrero Federal, con el acostumbrado éxito, produciéndose un caso nunca visto en Salamanca, donde la gente me acompaña por las calles, aplaudiendo con sincero entusiasmo" (*Diario íntimo* 1: 337). To affirm the people's approval of him, he writes, "Hablo en el Casino de La Amistad, de Peñarroya y en la Casa del Pueblo de Bélmez. El pueblo oye con entusiasmo y respeto profundos, gritando en masa: ¡Viva Noel!" (*Diario íntimo* 2: 174).

The elements in Noel's style that critics claim detract from his work may very well be the features that have strengthened the power of his message. His ability to interact with the people and subsequently record the details of these meetings in narrative form in order to promote his

platform is quite noteworthy. His words are intriguing, abundant, expressive and most of all, very impactful. Miguel Pardeza corroborates Noel's unique ability to personalize his narratives and raise them above the level of political rhetoric to that of literary artist. He states: "Es precisamente esta proclividad avisada y voluntaria a personalizarse en sus escritos, sean éstos de puro corte regeneracionista o escenas de la vida castiza, lo que marca la diferencia, lo que le salva del prosaísmo político y lo reivindica como verdadero artista" (182). Noel writes with passion and with the spirit of a crusader. "El sonido y la letra, espadas brullidas y relucientes de múltiples y encontrados destellos morfofónicos, en manos de un hombre que recorre incansablemente los más recónditos lugares de España y América hasta el temprano y deseado agotamiento mortal" (Martínez Arnaldos 20). These qualities come through in his writing despite the unending inclusion of archaisms, neologisms, colloquialisms, pleonasms and dialectical expressions. Unamuno, in commenting on the work of Noel, observes these same qualities in him as well and likens the passion that the writer displays for his own campaign to the same feeling of passion that Costa had for his work. Unamuno writes, "Sus trabajos todos eran trabajos de batalla. Fue un sentidor, un hombre de pasión arrebatada, un hombre a quien la patria le dolía" (*De esto y de aquello* 254). Unamuno appears profoundly inspired by Noel's demonstration of total commitment towards improving the quality of life of the people of his native country and he expresses his approval as well as his concerns for the future of Noel's mission in the following comments:

Noel piensa proseguir su campaña. En las cartas que me escribe parece un visionario medieval, un profeta. No sé si sucumbirá bajo la nevada. Pero en tanto levanta el ánimo ver a un hombre de pasión, ver a un hombre que convencido de que es un mal grandísimo lo que otros estiman un honesto esparcimiento, se

apresta a combatirlo con toda su alma: reconforta al corazón ver que aún no se ha desvanecido el alma de Don Quijote. Se le dejará solo como en otro campo se le dejó a Costa solo, y seguirá la gente creyendo que se divierte. (*De esto y de aquello* 260)

In his remarks about Noel's use of language, José Esteban very interestingly finds that in addition to his desire to regenerate the country, Noel is also desirous of regenerating the Spanish language. As a result, an artist treats the reader to a lexical feast of words, phrases, and expressions that demonstrate the creative use of oral and written expression. Esteban states: "Y así, en su afán regenerador, Eugenio Noel se sintió también llamado a regenerar el idioma, tan maltratado ..." (35). Noel's desire for Spain's regeneration was not limited in scope to only the spirit and heritage of the people, but also to the language that was so important to the communication of his platform and messages and to the sense of identity of the people.

Noel, as a regenerationist, shares his mission with other figures who aligned himself or herself to the same goal of reigniting the spirit of the Spanish people and nation. In examining some of the paths taken by other regenerationists to articulate their policies, the reader sees a clear distinction in their methods when compared to those of Noel. In his discussion of the author, Manuel Martínez Arnaldos states that he used his words and writings as weapons in order to embrace reconstruction of the Spanish nation. He writes, "Y Noel, tomando como armas predilectas la palabra y la escritura, y por medio de ideales como los de Joaquín Costa, se apresta a una lucha de reconstrucción de la raza desde su propia reconstrucción y el manejo de tales *espejismos*. Es como si quisiera salvar a España con su literatura oral y escrita" (14). This is precisely what Noel tried to accomplish through his conferences and literary voice. He trusted the power of the Spanish language, albeit in a very personalized manner, to communicate his

message of renewal to the Spanish people. For Noel, his regenerationist voice came alive most clearly and powerfully in his rhetoric or the oral and written forms of the language. According to Trapiello, Noel published 30 books between the years 1911-1930, or almost 2 a year, and 65 short novels between 1911-1926 (*Raíces de España* 1: 18).

Other regenerationists seeking to promote their agendas did not necessarily adopt the same methods, as did Noel. Three such figures cited at the beginning of this study were Joaquín Costa, Ricardo Macías Picavea, and Lucas Mallada. A focus of the present study has been Joaquín Costa's influence upon Eugenio Noel. However, in what ways was Noel's approach to promoting the regeneration of Spain different from that of Costa? Costa, like Noel, was a prolific writer; but according to Ramos Oliveira, in addition to his passion for writing, Costa also studied other subject material such as law, history, ethnology, geography, botany, zoology, mechanics, and mathematics. Costa eventually made his way through the political machinery of Spain and in 1896 ran for parliament in an effort to serve as a representative of the Spanish middle class. Despite his loss in the election, he continued to engage in political battle with his rivals in an effort to bring about change including the removal of the oligarchical structure of the government. Costa was much more of a political activist than Eugenio Noel. His method for regenerating the country was through political activism as well as creating a body of written work, which according to A. Ramos Oliveira numbers over 40 volumes (165). Within his writing, Costa addressed such topics of agriculture, politics, education, history, and folklore (Oliveira 165) all in the desire to act on behalf of the Spanish nation and its people. Whereas Noel's voice was heard primarily through his conferences and narratives with *flamenquismo* and *taurismo* as his focal points, Costa's campaign reached farther in terms of the problem issues that he addressed and the course of action that he adopted, i.e. his political activism and writing.

Ricardo Macías Picavea, like Costa was a man of letters who held several university positions and served in the military. He decided upon a military profession “... a fin de promover una reforma administrativa del ejército español, con la intención de transformarlo en un organismo del Estado sometido a la suprema autoridad civil y respetuoso con la voluntad popular” (Hermida de Blas 17). Unfortunately, he became frustrated in his attempts to accomplish this task and eventually renounced military service. He held a series of teaching positions and ultimately received his doctorate in 1876. In 1878, he was transferred to the Latin and Castilian cátedra of the Provincial Institute of Valladolid and co-founded the Academia de Derecho, Filosofía y Letras y Notariado of which he became director. In addition to holding this position, he wrote a textbook entitled *Compendio elemental y razonado de gramática general latina* and the dramatic work *La muerte de Cervantes*. In 1881, he co-founded the periodical *La Libertad*, which became a voice for the Partido Republicano Progresista in the city of Valladolid. Obviously, like Costa, Macías Picavea became involved in politics also. Hermida de Blas explains this involvement with the following information:

El subtítulo de la publicación (Diario democrático de intereses morales) y el contenido de su artículo programático (defensa de la democracia progresista, de civilización moderna y de la república) expresaban de manera contundente y significativa los ideales de sus redactores: en especial, de Picavea, a quien-por ser el ideólogo del partido en Valladolid-es atribuido el mencionado artículo programático.

El periódico se convirtió en tribuna política desde la que los republicanos apoyaban a sus candidatos durante las campañas electorales y a sus diputados y

concejales en el desempeño de sus funciones, además de intentar propagar entre sus lectores los principios republicanos. (19)

After writing a book about public education and reforms in Spain, Macías Picavea entered the realm of education politics. In 1883, a year after completing his book, he was designated representative of the *Claustro del Instituto Provincial* in the commission that was to act as advisor to the minister of public works about teaching reforms that were being designed by his ministry. At the same time, he remained director of *La Libertad* despite the controversies among its proprietors, and assumed a professorship of geography and history at the Instituto Provincial. Like Costa, he was interested in ridding Spain of the corrupt *caciques* so that tax monies could be more evenly distributed to benefit all of the people of the country. “De ahí su decisión de intervenir a partir de entonces más en la política, y de participar en las reuniones que fueron configurando y constituyendo un nuevo movimiento agrarista castellano” (Hermida de Blas 23). In 1891, Macías Picavea ran as a candidate for the office of *concejal del Ayuntamiento de Valladolid*. He was very much concerned with the social and economic crises facing his city and was named president of commission of housing. In this position, he sought to alleviate the problems of the most disenfranchised classes of the population. He used his periodical *La Libertad* to further his political work that included the denunciation of the local *cacique*. Furthermore, as *concejal* in the *Ayuntamiento*, he endeavored to improve the infrastructure of the city as well as the social conditions of its inhabitants. Macías Picavea continued to become involved in the political life of Valladolid in various capacities with much of his work involving its educational system. He continued writing text books as well as novels in which “... lo principal es su análisis de la ‘cuestión social’ y del problema agrario en Castilla, así como su crítica al caciquismo y a la Restauración, su defensa de una ‘revolución agraria’ y del

movimiento agrarista y, por último, su intento de recuperación actualizada de la tradición española colectivista, municipalista, republicana, ‘socialista’ y democrática.” (Hermida de Blas 25). In 1898, Macías Picavea began to write *El problema nacional*, which was to become his most famous work. Despite his increasing bad health, he was hopeful to complete the document so that it could be an influential element at the meeting of the *Liga Nacional de Productores* that was being convened by Joaquín Costa in 1899. “Publicado en 1899, su obra casi póstuma supuso la síntesis del pensamiento regeneracionista picaveano ya maduro. Y como tal síntesis, se puede rastrear la procedencia de mucho de sus párrafos, que en ocasiones son reproducciones literales de otros escritos suyos de principios de la década de los ochenta, o de otros años anteriores al 98” (Hermida de Blas 25-26). Like other regenerationists, Macías Picavea completed his study in scientific form similar to a medical examination. First, the symptoms were noted, followed by a diagnosis of the illness and a prescription for a remedy. All of this was done in hopes of alleviating the ills that were attacking the Spanish nation and people and “... despertar en sus compatriotas el deseo de regenerar España” (Hermida de Blas 26).

The reader can easily see how Macías Picavea’s plan of action for the regeneration of Spain was quite different from that of Noel. In fact, Hermida de Blas states that contrary to Costa, Mallada and others, Macías Picavea wanted to integrate entirely the *cuestión española* into his book, *El problema nacional* by way of the studies that he had undertaken during his entire lifetime (26). He was actively involved in the process of identifying the symptoms, arriving at a diagnosis, and subsequently applying the remedies to the underlying problems of the country. Unlike Noel who never fully realized his goal of forming a potentially influential organization known as *Orden de Predicadores laicos*, Macías Picavea held political office and worked through the government system in order to promote his reform platform. Not only did he

use the influence of his political office but he also used the power of the written word via his newspaper to bring about change. Like Noel, he wrote newspaper articles; however, his newspaper, *La Libertad* also became an arm of his political party. In addition, he was director of the newspaper.

Macías Picavea held a number of teaching positions and wrote extensively about the educational system as well as other social issues that affected the people. His approach to writing these documents was very much different from the more popular style that Noel adopted in writing his narratives that addressed some of the same issues but from a different perspective. Noel walked among the people as one of them in a style to which they could relate. In his narratives and conferences, the essence of Noel's message was reaffirmation of their Spanish heritage and the manner in which they could regain *el alma de la raza*. Even though he attempted to be scientific in his detailed observations of the status quo, Noel remained for the most part a rhetorical and literary voice for change whereas Macías Picavea primarily adopted the methods of science to observe symptoms, make a diagnosis, and apply the required remedies to the problems facing the Spanish nation. In addition, he worked through the political organization of the government to develop programs and make recommendations for reform.

Lucas Mallada, another major figure in the regenerationist movement, began his career as a mining engineer and pursued other interests, which included geography, geology, and paleontology. Francisco J. Flores Arroyuelo provides the following description of him, "Lucas Mallada, ingeniero de Minas, fundador de la paleontología española, viajero incansable de los caminos de España..." (Flores Arroyuelo 9-10). He based his ideas of regenerating the country on his knowledge of the history of Spain, his interactions with the political establishment and on scientific information. In his preface to a publication of Mallada's important work, *Los males de*

*la patria y la futura revolución española*, Flores Arroyuelo states the following with regard to Mallada:

Muchas eran las voces que se habían levantado pidiendo una revisión limpia de la situación española tanto en su división territorial como en su desbarajuste administrativo; unos .... levantaron su voz para imponer orden apoyándose en su conciencia de historiador ... ; otros, como Lucas Mallada, alzaron su voz basándose también en la Historia, en su acercamiento directo al suelo de España, en sus conocimientos de la Administración y del Derecho español, y, además, en una larga serie de razones científicas (9).

Like Noel, Mallada traveled across Spain, but in an attempt to draw up geological maps of the country that ultimately became synthesized into a seven-volume work entitled *Explicación del Mapa Geológico de España*. From this project, he came to know the poverty that existed in the poorer areas of the country and this experience affected him deeply. He continued to write other books based on his geological and paleontological knowledge hoping to instill in the people an appreciation for these areas of study as well as provide a substantive resource for professionals of the area. However, his major work mentioned earlier in the present research was *Los males de la patria y la futura revolución española* published in 1890. This volume represented a compilation of his articles that he had written in 1875 for the newspaper *El Progreso*. In *Los males de la patria y la futura revolución*, Mallada writes critically about the situation facing Spain at the end of the nineteenth century in terms of its decline as a world power. Flores Arroyuelo writes:

Los males de la patria presenta, como nunca se había hecho, un acopio fundamentado de problemas que España tenía y tiene que resolver. Aquí está el

problema de la pobreza de nuestro suelo, de lo que hoy se llama “evasión de cerebros”, de la mujer española, del hombre español, de los ferrocarriles, de la especulación, de la minería, de la Administración Pública, de la Religión Católica Española, de la emigración, de la agricultura...” (10)

In this book, Mallada, similar to Costa, Macías Picavea and Noel, speaks from a scientific perspective. According to Flores Arroyuelo, “... es la obra de un hombre de ciencia, no de un técnico de nuestros días ... Lucas Mallada era un hombre de ciencia en sentido de riqueza espiritual, humanismo y conocimientos de las materias que estudió desde el punto de vista profesional” (9). The topics that he discusses are the poor condition of the soil, defects in the national character, the dire state of agriculture, industry, and commerce in the country, public immorality, and the Spanish political parties. What Mallada seeks to do in his book is to destroy all myths relating to life in the Spanish nation and replace them with a more authentic vision of “things as they really are.”

If the platforms of the regenerationist figures in this study were to intersect at some point, this intersection would include their common vision of a renewed spirit among the Spanish people along with an overall reform in government policies and structure. These common threads run through all of their ideologies and public statements. However, though they may appear united in their determination to re-invigorate the people and the nation, the issues upon which each of them focused and the manner in which they conveyed their message to the people were very different. Noel accomplished this task rhetorically through the written and spoken word. His main venues for stimulating change were narratives and conferences where he virtually attacked some of the same issues that Costa, Macías Picavea and Mallada addressed. However, even though he spoke to these common issues of europeanization,

education, government reform, *caciquismo* and *señoritismo*, the main focus of his regenerationist campaign always remained *flamenquismo* and *taurismo*. In contrast to Noel, the three remaining regenerationist figures of Costa, Macías Picavea and Mallada decidedly worked through the political machinery in addition to producing written narratives and government documents related to the issues that were adversely affecting the people and the nation.

Although more formally scientific in their approach than Noel, just like him, they were men of action who wanted to move the country and the people forward, but through the adoption of more direct methods. However, unlike Noel, they also utilized their political and research activities as well as their written work in order to try to accomplish this. In addition, the major focus of their campaign was not *flamenquismo* or *taurismo* but was related to issues that sought to improve the quality of life through public works projects based largely on agrarian and education reform. They did not adopt the same bohemian life-style or histrionics that Noel displayed which in some cases may have diminished the power of his [Noel's] message.

Although all four men strove to regain *el alma de la raza*, each of them found their own unique style and voice for trying to accomplish this mission. In speaking of *Los males de la patria*, Flores Arroyuelo makes an interesting comment that can be applied to the unfinished work of all four of the regenerationists of this study, including Noel. He observes:

Por último, solo cabe añadir que *Los males de la patria* era la primera parte de una obra que se había de completar con un segundo volumen que iba a tratar de los “remedios de los males de la patria” y que quedó sin escribir. Pero estamos seguros que esta obra, de puro arbitrista, llevaría el mismo sello que aquella de que hablaba Don Quijote al cura y al barbero, cuando le miraban como a un loco

pensando que iba a decir una incoherencia. No sería una solución “impertinente sino pertinente.” (11)

Despite all of the criticism given to Noel’s work, there are many who believe that it has been unjustly overlooked and deserves to be given more attention and appreciation for the fine collection that it is. Noel was enamored of his homeland and chose to serve it in a manner that he felt would lead to positive changes. Even though he may have been unorthodox in his approach and style, his goals were no less noble than those of the figures with whom he aligned himself. Like him, his work was colorful, alive with expression, and exaggerated...but always dedicated to serving Spain.

## Summary

The present study addressed the element of regenerationism in the ideology of Eugenio Noel, Joaquín Costa and other figures of the movement. Even though Noel has very often been seen as heir or epigone of the generation of '98, he himself has rejected this association and declared himself a member of the group of writers known as the *novecentistas*. This investigation outlined the history of Spain during the period when regenerationist thought was once again beginning to take hold again. It examined the ideologies of three prominent figures of the movement, namely, Joaquín Costa, with whom Noel expressed a close philosophical connection, Lucas Mallada and Ricardo Macías Picavea in order to describe the platforms of the regenerationist plan for improving the Spanish nation during the time leading up to and immediately following *el desastre de 98*.

In examining select titles of Noel's works which primarily consisted of his essays, short novels and his only long novel, *Las siete Cucas*, it can be seen that Noel not only focused upon the topics of *flamenquismo* and *taurismo*, but also spoke to the issues that other regenerationists were actively addressing through their political activism and writings as well. These included the europeanization of Spain and economic, political, social, and cultural reform. Noel aligned himself with them on many issues which all of them felt were contributing to the decline of the Spanish people and the loss of the *alma de la raza* which was so important to their heritage.

Even though their methods for achieving these goals were diverse and the content of their messages at times differed, all four men were united in their efforts to move the country and the people forward through a plan of action rather than just through soul-searching rhetoric. That this plan may have been different for each of them does not minimize the common goal they all shared which was to restore the Spanish people and nation to the position of prominence

of which it boasted in the past. Whether the plan included a public works project, educational reforms, government restructuring, increased europeanization of the country or in Noel's case, the eradication of *flamenquismo* and *taurismo*, all were completed in the hope of regenerating and revitalizing the nation and people.

While Eugenio Noel's approach was strongly to attack, criticize, caricaturize and regenerate the language as well as the country, it still managed to speak to the people and convey his message. He was an intellectual figure who attempted to invigorate the nation's future by having the people recall their proud heritage and reclaim it once again. Although bohemian and at times unconventional in his methods and style, he nevertheless worked tirelessly on behalf of the country for which he always expressed his deepest love. It was to the service of his country that he committed himself and his life's work " ... se puso de rodillas ante ella [España]" (Garciasol 335). Although not as politically active as the other figures of the regeneration movement who were mentioned in this study, i.e. Joaquín Costa, Ricardo Macías Picavea and Lucas Mallada, Noel still wrote about it as passionately and tirelessly as they did, primarily via essays, articles and other narratives, so that the voice of reform and renewal of spirit could be heard via his rhetoric.

As expressed earlier, the sincerity of Noel's regenerationist message has been questioned by figures who viewed his histrionics as a possible means of gaining notoriety for himself. In a further discussion of this issue, more recently, the author Manuel Urbano in his book *La hondura de un antiflamenco: Eugenio Noel*, also challenges the strong *antiflamenquismo* stance of the author and genuineness of the message. Urbano who himself has written much about the topic of *flamenquismo*, questions how one who professed to be such an arch regenerationist could have written so much , with "... una honda sabiduría jonda..." (35),

about a subject that he felt was responsible for the country's total decline. Noel wrote about *flamenquismo* with a scientific-like knowledge and at times with great esteem, yet he was greatly repulsed by its on-going presence in Spanish society. Urbano writes, “... no, no existe rencor ni odio en Eugenio Noel, como nos será dado comprobar; hay en él un violento afán regeneracionista y un amor mal disimulado por lo flamenco, que le rebrinca en las palmas de las manos” (10). The researcher sees contradictions in Noel's denunciations vs. his expressions of admiration for this element of Spanish culture (37) that he detested. In response to this apparent conflict, he offers the following theory using the words which Noel himself wrote in his *Diario íntimo* to explain this phenomenon of his amor/odio relationship: “Se destruye con tremenda rabia lo que se adoró con temor” (2: 289). Fear, Urbano theorizes, is at the heart of Noel's rejection of *flamenquismo*. Fear of the outward manifestations of *flamenquismo*, *la España de pandereta*, are what Noel rails against because of its ability to project an inferior image of Spain and the Spanish people to the rest of Europe and the world. As Urbano explains:

A Noel lo que ahora le duele, contra lo que clama es la España de pandereta, contra le [sic] falsa moneda que, al contrario del decir de la copla, tiene holgada aceptación, contra el atraso y la grosería, contra la juega sorda y sórdida, contra los trenos de mancebía. Noel se pronuncia contra la España del cacique y el clientelismo, la que estimaba al pensar como funesta manía, la que, a fin de inhibirse o alienarse, se daba cita en los abrasados tendidos taurinos para presenciar la muerte de unos animales y, en vez de luto, denomínase fiesta nacional. (Urbano 57)

Despite the scientific knowledge of *flamenquismo* with which Noel wrote, Urbano cites several examples of Noel's work that also point to his lack of total understanding of this element of

Spanish folklore. Antonio Machado, through the voice of Juan de Mairena, identifies folklore as “... cultura viva y creadora ...” (Machado 116), “... una realidad dinámica” that is an expression of both the past and present (Carvalho-Neto 29). Seen from this perspective, Noel’s love/hate relationship with the elements of *flamenquismo* can be easily understood. What Noel admires in the folklore or *cultura viva* of *flamenquismo* is the emotion, for example, of the *cante hondo* that engenders a spirituality that has the power to liberate the people from their daily lives of interacting with *caciques*, *señoritos*, and *chulos*. Urbano states: “... para un andaluz, cante hondo y cante del sentimiento de su tierra son sinónimos, que su emoción es su espiritualidad” (41). What Noel relates to in his perceived state of *amor/odio* is the connection that this musical genre makes with the inner soul of the people. He admires its ability to transcend *la España de pandereta* and replace it with the spirituality and sincerity of what Juan de Mairena identifies as *el pueblo* or “...el cada hombre ...” (Carvalho-Neto 42) who “... lleva la Historia dentro de sí” (27). According to Prado, this desire to penetrate the national soul and transform reality is what distinguishes the author from the generation of writers that preceded him. She states:

Con todo el regeneracionismo de los noventayochistas, su contemplación de la España rural tiene una predominante inflexión estética que sólo de un modo mediano refleja la ideología latente, aun en casos como el de Unamuno, cuyo pensamiento impregna cada una de sus páginas. En verdad ellos están interesados en conocer antes que en transformar la realidad. En contraste, Eugenio Noel se dirige hacia esta realidad con el deliberado propósito de prescindir de la literatura. (*La literatura* 236)

Prado speaks about “...la dramaticidad e intenso dinamismo ...” with which Noel tries to depict life in the different towns of Spain in order to uncover “... el carácter de la raza” (*La literatura*

239) and “ ... la realidad del pueblo español ... ” (*La literatura* 182). She also remarks about Noel’s ability to draw benefits from the contrast between the sacred and profane aspects of the people’s lives. She explains, “Conjugando ambos motivos, el escritor capta a la multitud en el ápice de la emoción, donde se muestra al desnudo su alma” (*La literatura* 239). She summarizes by stating that Noel’s desire in his travels was to conceive “ ... una psicología de la raza mediante los métodos de observación objetiva que él considera científicos, tanto como luchar por la eliminación de los vicios que denuncia en ella” (*La literatura* 237-238). For these reasons, Noel renounced the outward manifestations of *flamenquismo* and *taurismo* or “La España de charanga y pandereta, /cerrado y sacristía devota de *Frascuelo* y María,” (Manuel y Antonio Machado, *Obras completas*, “El mañana efímero”, 828) and committed himself to the reclamation of the national soul and character. Noel states: “Creo contribuir al estudio del alma nacional con estos dibujos a la pluma hechos entre los azares sin nombre de una activísima campaña” (*Nervios* 30). Despite his alleged accusation of the insincerity of Noel’s message, Urbano ultimately concludes that the author’s invectives, “ ... más anti-flamenquistas que anti-flamencos ... ”, are merely a smoke-screen that conceal his love or “... cuanto ama; puesto que ellos constituían el móvil de su campaña regeneracionista” (101).

Because of Noel’s tireless efforts to search for the Spanish national soul, a rich body of literature now exists that bears his characteristic elements of *costumbrismo*, caricature, creative language, and above all passion. Even though some critics have questioned the sincerity of his message, there is little disagreement among them in acknowledging that Noel led a formidable crusade to reclaim the *alma de a la raza* of the Spanish people and made this mission his life’s work. Whether through his conferencing or his writing, he sought to address the conditions that would improve the quality of life of the Spanish people and subsequently move the country

forward in a positive trajectory. In both of these venues, Noel, “... un especie de fuerza de la naturaleza, un hombre de gran cultura, un autodidacta ...” (Abellán and Monclús 321), impressed the public with the trademarks of his style that were much like Noel himself, unique and unorthodox. As a result, the author succeeded in creating “... un estilo propio y un mundo muy personal” (Sánchez Reborado 163) and a rich literary corpus that is unlike that of any other body of work in Spanish literature.

In a final testimony to the enduring legacy of Eugenio Noel, the author Eduardo García Rico, in his 1968 review of Noel’s biography, *Diario íntimo*, reassures the reader of the continued presence of Noel’s spirit and mission:

Triste destino el de este rebelde que nunca vio cumplidas sus esperanzas. Uno comprende muy bien, al leer hoy, al cabo de cuarenta años, estos escritos, su tremenda amargura: es la amargura de la impotencia de cuantos aspiran a transformar una realidad irracional injusta, ‘zaragatera y triste’ empobrecida y retrasada. Lo mejor de Eugenio Noel, su fuerza para la crítica, su espíritu profundamente renovador, aún siguen vivos. (13)

## List of Works by Eugenio Noel

## I: Short novels:

1. *Alma de Santa*
2. *El rey se divierte*
3. *El crimen de un partido político*
4. *Don Oliverio XXIV de Bombón*
5. *El cuento de nunca acabar*
6. *La reina no ama al rey*
7. *Los piratas de los barrios bajos o el crimen de la Costanilla de los Desamprados*
8. *El Charrán y Flora la Valdajo*
9. *Vida de un fenómeno*
10. *El As de Oros*
11. *El torero y el rey o el milagro de la Virgen del Pa.omo*
12. *El "allegretto" de la Sinfonía VII*
13. *El billete de la lotería*
14. *Musarañas*
15. *La Melenitas*
16. *Amapola entre espigas*
17. *Los frailes de San Benito tuvieron una vez hambre*
18. *Un espíritu puro que no tiene cuerpo*
19. *La señorita mema*
20. *Artista de circo*
21. *Las tres hijas del maestro*

22. *De cuerno de morueco*
23. *Chamuscón y Tabardillo*
24. *Como la palma de la mano de un viejo*
25. *Rayito de luz*
26. *Dama ibérica*
27. *El picador y su mujercita*
28. *Oros viejos*
29. *Misa de botón quitao*
30. *La novela de un pueblo en capea*
31. *Martín el de la Paula en Alcalá de los Panaderos*
32. *Los compradores de pieles*
33. *El rey se divierte: Includes:*
- El rey se divierte*
  - Alma de santa*
  - El cuento de nunca acabar*
  - El crimen de un partido político*
  - Don Oliverio XXIV de Bombón*
34. *Vidas de santos, diablos, mártires, frailes, clérigos y almas en pena: Includes:*
- La Egipciaca*
  - Entre Dareya y Damasco*
  - Las bodegas del Monasterio de Pujet*
  - Simona de Antioquía*
  - Satanás en Roma durante un Cónclave*
  - Monte Cassino, en San Germano*
  - Sirico Silíceo, virgen y mártir*
  - Hoy se saca Anima*
  - Cómo trasladaron los ángeles la Santa Casa de Loreto*
  - La venerable Madre María Francisca de Champiñón*

35. *La providencia al quite. Vidas pintorescas de fenómenos, toreros enfermos, diestros y siniestros del embrutecimiento nacional: Incluye:*

- Vida de un fenómeno
- El torero y el rey
- El As de Oros

36. *El “allegretto” de la Sinfonía VII: Incluye:*

- El “allegretto” de la Sinfonía VII
- La reina no ama al rey
- La Melenitas
- Amapola entre espigas

37. *Los frailes de San Benito tuvieron una vez hambre: Incluye:*

- Los frailes de San Benito tuvieron una vez hambre
- La Laua de San Sabas en el torrente del Cedrón
- Un espíritu puro que no tiene cuerpo
- El refectorio de la Cartuja de San Gregorio en el siglo XVI
- Una visión de la señorita Jerónima Nadal
- La señorita mema
- Musarañas

38. *El picador Veneno y otras novelas: Incluye:*

- El picador Veneno
- Oros viejos
- Sueño de feria
- Las tres hijas del maestro
- Dama ibérica
- Misa de botón quitao

39. *La novela de un toro: Incluye:*

- La novela de un toro
- Los compradores de pieles
- Martín el de la Paula en Alcalá de Guadaira

40. *Un toro “de cabeza” en Alcorcón: Incluye:*

- Un toro “de cabeza” en Alcorcón
- Cura trágica de un maletilla
- Los caballistas de Arroyo del Puerco
- Capea jocosa en Segurilla

II. Long novel:

41. *Las Siete Cucas (Una Mancebía en Castilla)*

III. Essays and miscellaneous themes:

42. *Notas de un voluntario. Guerra de Melilla, 1909*

43. *Lo que vi en la guerra. Diario de un soldado*

44. *El flamenquismo y las corridas de toros*

45. *República y flamenquismo*

46. *Pan y toros*

47. *Escenas y andanzas de la campaña anti-flamenca*

48. *Las capeas*

49. *Nervios de la raza*

50. *Castillos en España*

51. *Señoritos chulos, fenómenos, gitanos y flamencos*

52. *Semana Santa en Sevilla*

53. *Juicios de valor*

54. *Piel de España*

55. *Cornúpetos y bestiaros*

56. *España nervio a nervio*

57. *Raza y alma*

58. *Aguafuertes ibéricas*

59. *La revolución hispana. Como ha "caído" la República Española en el alma de nuestras colonias americanas*

60. *Taurobolios y verdades contrastadas. Hombre e ideas de América y de España*

61. *España, fibra a fibra*

62.*Diario íntimo*

63.*Escritos antitaurinos*

64.*América bajo la lupa*

This list of titles of Eugenio Noel's works is based on a bibliography prepared by Francisca Escudero Vidal published in 1995 (606-613).

William Lyon also mentions the existence of the rest of *Diario íntimo* as well as some unedited papers of Noel. According to Lyon, these works are in the possession of a possible relative of Eugenio Noel. (*El país* 3)

In his edition of *Las siete Cucas*, José Esteban lists works, which Noels claims to have published, edited or planned to publish (49). Some of these works are included in the *List of Works by Eugenio Noel* above.

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