

CONFLICTS AND CONCILIATIONS

The Evolution

of Galdós's

Fortunata y Jacinta

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Preface

Benito Pérez Galdós has taken a long time to attain the eminence he deserves. Even in Spain his work has been accompanied by a certain reserve and has been subject to distortion. This neglect is the result of various factors, among them the variety and extent of his production, spread out over historical chronicles, the thesis novel, contemporary social fiction, spiritualized narratives, dialogue novels, and plays. As a consequence of the diversity of his writing, the detailed appreciation of the very peak of his achievement—the twenty-odd contemporary novels of the period 1881–97—may have been to some extent diminished. At all events, in recent years academic interest in his novels, both in Spain and elsewhere, has increased substantially. In the English-speaking world his reputation now stands very high among specialized scholars, who indeed have contributed immeasurably to the understanding of his work; outstanding among them have been a large number of female critics, attentive to Galdós's evident concern for the situation of women in society. Galdós has yet to make decisive inroads in the nonspecialized literary consciousness, but the situation is improving, with the increasing availability of good translations and easily accessible studies. Prominent among the first is the translation of the novel that is the subject of this book: *Fortunata and Jacinta*, by Agnes Moncy Gullón (Georgia UP, 1986). Other notable translations of the most relevant novels are the complete Torquemada series by Frances M. López Morillas (Columbia UP, 1986), *Torquemada in the Fire* by Nicholas Round (Glasgow, 1985), *Our Friend Manso* by Robert Russell (Columbia UP, 1987), *Ángel Guerra* by Karen Austen (Mellen, 1990), *Nazarín* by Jo Labanyi (The World's Classics, Oxford, 1993), and *That Bringas Woman* by Catherine Jagoe (Dent, 1996). Among critical works, we now have available the excellent compilation *Galdós*, in the Modern Literatures in Perspective series (Longman, 1993), also by Jo Labanyi, and Harriet Turner's fine appreciative study *Galdós: Fortunata y Jacinta*, in Landmarks of World Literature (Cambridge UP, 1992), both aimed, in part at least, at a highly educated but nonspecialist audience.

This study has a different objective. It sets itself the ambitious task of tracing in detail the evolution of the many strands which go to make up a long and complex novel, lending to its inner structure the attention which no one would begrudge a work of such eminence in other literatures. Nevertheless, no attempt is made to embark on the mammoth task of giving a complete description of the manuscript in all of its many facets. The study takes full account, for the first time, of all the various stages of composition revealed by the manuscript and printer's galleys. The tentative drafts of the novel are not, however, treated in isolation, but as part of the process of reaching out toward the coherent definitive text. This text, in turn, is subjected

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to a detailed critical examination and assessment, within the context of its time and circumstance.

The gestation period of the book has accordingly been long. For a while I assuaged my desire to write extensively on the novel by composing a Critical Guide of some 100 pages in 1977, but this by no means satisfied my urge to attempt to do critical justice to the novel on a much more ambitious scale. The opportunity finally came when a much-appreciated Senior Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Humanities in 1992 set me free for one semester from other responsibilities. This period enabled me to make a good start on the new project, which takes an entirely different form from the 1977 book. It has occupied the bulk of my critical attention for the last three years.

Debts to many colleagues and friends on both sides of the Atlantic with whom I have discussed Galdós over the years are too numerous to mention individually. I owe special thanks, however, to Harriet Turner and, like all scholars concerned with *Fortunata y Jacinta*, to Pedro Ortiz Armengol, whose unrivaled knowledge of the Madrid of the second half of the nineteenth century has elucidated many of the puzzles encountered in the novel. Successive editors of *Anales Galdosianos*—Rodolfo Cardona, John Kronik, Peter Bly—have, both in their own scholarship and in the discriminating studies they have published (especially those by the increasing number of younger scholars, most of them women), added enormously to our understanding of the author. Various generations of graduate students at Brown University have enthusiastically contributed ideas and intuitions about Galdós's novels.

The maps in chapter 3 are reproduced from my *Pérez Galdós: "Fortunata y Jacinta,"* Critical Guides to Spanish Texts 21 (London: Grant, Tamesis, 1977), with the kind permission of the publishers.

Some of the contents in this book have appeared in the form of articles or published papers, but these have all passed through a process of recycling which has left them all but unrecognizable. In a few cases my thanks are due to the editors of the relevant publications for granting permission to utilize in some measure previously published material:

"Dos paseos de Fortunata por Madrid y su integración dentro de la estructura de la novela," *Hispania* 70 (1987): 740–45 (part of chapter 7).

"Feijoo: Policeman, Inventor, Egotist, Failure?" *Anales Galdosianos* 22 (1987): 71–87 (parts of chapters 3 and 7).

"El papel de Segismundo Ballester en *Fortunata y Jacinta*," *La Torre* ns 5 (1988): 103–11 (part of chapter 7).

“The Making of a Minor Character: Galdós’s Plácido Estupiñá,” *Symposium* 46 (1992): 147–57. Reprinted with permission of the Helen Dwight Reid Educational Foundation. Published by Heldref Publications, 1319 18th St. N. W., Washington, DC 20036-1802. Copyright 1992 (part of chapter 1).

“Notes on the Narrator in *Fortunata y Jacinta*,” *A Sesquicentennial Tribute to Galdós 1843–1993*, ed. Linda M. Willem (Newark, DE: Juan de la Cuesta, 1993): 88–104 (part of chapter 2).

I am grateful to the Houghton Library, Harvard University, for providing facilities for consulting the manuscript of the novel personally and in photocopy. The manuscript (MS SPAN 93) is quoted by the kind permission of the Library.

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