

THE SPANISH "GENERATION OF 1898": I. THE HISTORY OF A CONCEPT

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THE term "Generation of 1898", together with its variant forms "1898 Generation" and "98 Generation", is possibly the most debated label in Spanish literature. In the first part of this study I shall indicate the main lines of debate: in the second part I shall propose a redefinition of the term.¹

I start with the pre-history of the term and, initially, of the movement itself *qua* movement: "No hay corrientes vivas internas en nuestra vida intelectual y moral; esto es un pantano de agua estancada, no corriente de manantial [...]. Bajo una atmósfera soporífera se extiende un páramo espiritual de una aridez que espanta. No hay frescura ni espontaneidad, no hay juventud. He aquí la palabra terrible: no hay juventud. Habrá jóvenes, pero juventud falta" (1895; MU i. 860). In the following year Unamuno returned to the attack: "Por ahí fuera, allende el Pirineo, se agitan los jóvenes de mil modos", but not in Spain where the young are immersed in a crystallized, authoritarian society: "Cosa triste esa juventud respetuosa aduladora de los hombres viejos y de las fórmulas viejas del mundo viejo todo". "¡Pobre juventud intelectual española!", he commented, "necesita ser metarritmizada" (1896; i. 985-91). "Aquí la juventud no parece joven, porque no espera en nada; vive en la esclavitud del pasado, no en la libertad del porvenir" (1897; iii. 683). In 1896 Martínez Ruiz had expressed a

¹ Where possible, references in this article are to the following editions: Miguel de Unamuno, *Obras completas* (9 vols., Escelicer, Madrid, 1966-71); Angel Ganivet, *Obras completas* (3rd ed., 2 vols., Aguilar, Madrid, 1961-2); Pío Baroja, *Obras completas* (8 vols., Biblioteca Nueva, Madrid, 1946-51); Azorín [José Martínez Ruiz], *Obras completas* (9 vols. [1st ed. for vols. v and ix; 2nd ed. for the rest], Aguilar, Madrid, 1954-63); Ramiro de Maeztu, *Obras* (Editora Nacional and Rialp, Madrid, 1957-).

similarly condemnatory view of his generation¹ and was echoed two years later by Maeztu in his article "Gente de letras".²

This outcry was itself a symptom of the nascent change. In January 1898 Unamuno noted signs of an awakening and observed with satisfaction a "desintegración de antiguas categorías", "tendencias nuevas o renovadas", "concepciones sin tradición alguna" such as are introduced by the arts and sciences (iii. 1287-9). Towards the end of 1898 or the beginning of 1899 Maeztu reinforced the point, both with specific reference to Unamuno³ and in a defence of the youth of his day against José Nakers's accusation of ineffectiveness.⁴ Under the joint influence of facts and foreign thinkers, he claimed, young Spanish intellectuals revealed "síntomas de una renovación tan honda, cuando menos, como la realizada en los periodos históricos de mayor ebullición política" (ii. 224). By 1900, it seems, the new generation's self-affirmation had resulted in a break with their elders: "Están los *intelectuales* españoles irremisiblemente separados en dos ramas: *modernistas*, que significa tanto como espíritus expansivos abiertos a todas las corrientes científicas y artísticas, y otros varones que yo llamo *anticuados*, por no denominar con adjetivo más fuerte y gráfico".⁵ Four years later the future Azorín pressed the point: "viejos y jóvenes", he declared, "son habitantes de distintos planetas".⁶

What are the basic characteristics of the new generation in the eyes of contemporary commentators? Two are generally

¹ "La juventud española es frívola, superficial; no toma en serio el arte, ni el derecho, ni las grandes cuestiones de la vida" (i. 228). As exceptions, not completely exempt from criticism, he noted Fray Candil, Francisco A. de Icaza, Rafael Altamira, Luis Bonafoux and Luis Ruiz Contreras.

² February-April 1898; ii. 35-38. In the dating of Maeztu's early articles I follow Dionisio Gamallo Fierros, "Hacia un Maeztu total", in *Cuadernos Hispanoamericanos*, 33-34, Sept.-Oct. 1952.

³ "En cabezas como la de Unamuno caben los embriones de un centenar de literaturas y filosofías nuevas" (ii. 219).

⁴ ii. 223-38.

⁵ Camilo Bargiela, *Luciérnagas* (*Cuentos y sensaciones*), (Madrid, 1900), pp. i-xxv ("Modernistas y anticuados"). Bargiela's distinction is basically, but not exclusively, chronological. Among the older *modernistas* one notices Costa, Bonafoux and Rueda, but none of the established figures of Restoration literature.

⁶ "Somos iconoclastas", in *Alma Española*, 10 January 1904.

agreed upon : first, that it is a generation of protest against the social, moral and intellectual state of Spain, and secondly, that it is a generation that seizes eagerly on influences from abroad. The two are perhaps complementary and can appropriately be seen in the light of a further characteristic that embraces both and is arguably more basic than either : the generation's idealism or utopianism. “ ¡ Utopías ! ¡ Utopías ! ”, wrote Unamuno in 1898, “ Es lo que más falta nos hace, utopías y utopistas. Las utopías son la sal de la vida del espíritu [. . .]. Por ver en usted, amigo Ganivet, un utopista, le creo uno de esos hombres verdaderamente nuevos que tanta falta nos están haciendo en España ” (iii. 647). “ Valle-Inclán era de los *nuestros* ”, declared Antonio Palomero, also in 1898, identifying “ los *nuestros* ” with “ los modernistas ”, “ unos pobres chicos enamorados del ideal ”.¹ The young generation, claimed Maeztu in the following year, may appear to be lacking in ideals ; in fact, “ su ideal es el inmanente, el verdadero, el intangible, el que perdura tras las revoluciones y las guerras : de la vida misma ” (ii. 226). Two years later Baroja expressed his own view :

Hay entre nosotros, en la generación actual que empieza a vivir literariamente, una gran aspiración hacia el infinito, un ansia indeterminada a la idealidad. Desde este punto de vista, los escritores jóvenes de ahora, conocidos y desconocidos, son superiores en su mayoría a los de hace treinta o cuarenta años, no por ser más artistas ni más exquisitos, sino porque su alma está más abierta a las ideas ambientes (Prologue to Martínez Ruiz's *La fuerza del amor*, in Azorín, i. 737).

Azorín made a similar point in a retrospective survey published in 1910 : there had been a change, he believed, in the political and aesthetic notions of those young men who, around 1896, arrived in Madrid with literary ambitions, “ pero por encima de todas estas diferencias queda siempre, sobresale y perdura respecto de aquella generación, como su rasgo distintivo, el desinterés, la idealidad, la ambición y la lucha por algo que no es lo material y bajo, por algo elevado, por algo que en arte o en política representa pura objetividad, deseo de cambio, de mejoría, de perfeccionamiento, de altruismo ” (ix. 1138).

Up to this point, 1910, the term most commonly applied to

¹ Antonio Palomero, *Trabajos forzados* (Madrid, 1898), pp. 54-55.

the new literary generation was Modernism.¹ Unamuno, Azorín, Baroja and Maeztu, however, all appear either to avoid the term or, interpreting it more narrowly than Bargiela, to identify it with a *decadentismo* or *esteticismo* alien to their own concerns.² In 1912 Azorín proposed a new term: "la generación de 1898".³ In doing so, he changed the emphasis of his earlier interpretation as though to adapt the concept to the proposed name. Hitherto he had referred to his generation's "inquietud y ambición ideal" "ante los grandes problemas de la vida y de la estética, ante la realidad española, ante el paisaje, ante nuestra tradición artística, ante todo lo que debe preocupar a un artista joven" (1910; ix. 1139), but to the best of my knowledge he had made no reference to the special, generational significance of Spain's Disaster year. In 1912, however, he saw the link as clear:

La generación de 1898 se ha iniciado en la vida intelectual teniendo ante su vista un espectáculo tremendo: el del Desastre. El Desastre significaba la quiebra ruidosa, clamorosa, de multitud de ideas y sentimientos hasta aquel momento válidos, prestigiosos. Desde 1898 para acá ya la crítica política y social se va sistematizando; se robustece una convicción capital, esencial: la de que es preciso un cambio radicalísimo en la vida española.

¹ Cf. "¿Has visto la indigna cruzada que los modernistas han hecho contra el pobre Echegaray para amargarle la satisfacción del premio Nóbel? El 'pequeño filósofo' y Unamuno son los que principalmente han promovido esta algarada" (1905; Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo, cit. Manuel García Blanco, in MU viii. 23-24).

² Not completely alien, however. Though he found the term "modernismo" to be extremely vague and seemed to associate it primarily with "decadentismos gongoristas o conceptistas", Unamuno nevertheless applauded the "fermentación", "acción" and "movimiento" of the new literature, claiming it to be akin, "en otro orden de cosas", to the "deshacimiento de viejas instituciones económicas" (1898; iii. 1288-9, 1296).

³ "Generaciones de escritores" (ix. 1140-3). The article has been strangely overlooked in favour of Azorín's 1913 articles. It does, however, offer an interesting transition to the author's 1913 standpoint, as well as being—apparently—the first occasion on which the term "generación de 1898" was used. For the earlier use of the terms "generación nacida intelectualmente a raíz del desastre" (by Gabriel Maura) and "generación del desastre" (by Andrés González Blanco)—both in 1908—see Guillermo Díaz-Plaja, *Modernismo frente a noventa y ocho* (Madrid, 1951), pp. 92-93. In an article by Azorín published in 1910 there is an OC misreading of "la generación de 1896"—the name that Azorín then gave to his generation—as "la generación de 1898" (ix. 1139). For the original, see ABC, 19 May 1910.

But, continues Azorín, one must not think that the new social criticism, represented most notably by Joaquín Costa, is a sudden, spontaneous manifestation. There is a long tradition of Spanish critical intellectualism and Almirall (in 1886) and Gener (in 1897) offer notable examples. “ No ha hecho Costa sino sintetizar—maravillosamente, excusado es decirlo—la corriente de crítica social y política iniciada en el siglo XVII ” :

Nació a la vida intelectual la generación de 1898 teniendo ante su vista el espectáculo del Desastre. Comprendió toda la inanidad de la vieja palabrería, palabrería en la literatura, en el periodismo, en la oratoria. Vio que era preciso observar la realidad, seguir el movimiento filosófico y científico extranjero, conocer la propia historia y el propio arte. De aquella generación arranca un más exacto y minucioso realismo en la novela ; aquellos escritores han sentido el paisaje, como antes escasamente se había sentido. Acusados de extranjeristas, ellos han sido los que han envuelto la vieja habla castellana y han intentado remozarla con su mismo centenario espíritu ; ellos han desempolvado los primitivos poetas, como Berceo, Juan Ruiz, Santillana ; ellos han iniciado el gusto por las viejas ciudades, por todo lo castizamente castellano ; si al *Greco* se le ha estudiado cumplidamente, esos escritores fueron quienes primero le loaron y ensalzaron. En resolución y sintetizando, se puede afirmar que el espíritu de esa generación ha sido análogo al de la generación romántica de 1830 : un espíritu de independencia, de rebeldía, aliado a un hondo sentido por el paisaje, la literatura y el arte castellanos.

The spirit of 1898 is a spirit of renovation and independence, “ un espíritu iconoclasta y creador al mismo tiempo ”.

Azorín's four articles of 1913 are well known and can be passed over more briefly.¹ The contrast between *viejos* and *jóvenes*, already muted in 1912, is muted still further. The 1898 Generation, Azorín claims, protested not against *los viejos* but against *lo viejo*, against “ todo el denso e irrompible ambiente ”, and the older generation showed the way : Echegaray with his passion, Campoamor with his corrosive sentimentality, Galdós with his realistic vision. In social criticism Sellés, Almirall and Gener, with their “ literatura regeneradora anterior al desastre ”, go as far as Costa, Macías Picavea, Maura, Sánchez de Toca, Silvela, Azcárate and Damián Isern after 1898. The implication would appear to be that these latter are the men of the 1898 Generation. But this is not Azorín's view. In his final essay he shifts his ground and emphasizes that the 1898 Generation

¹ “ La generación de 1898 ” (1913 ; ii. 900-18).

marks a renaissance, " la fecundación del pensamiento nacional por el pensamiento extranjero ". " Hombres de la generación de 1898 ", he declares, " son Valle-Inclán, Unamuno, Benavente, Baroja, Bueno, Maeztu, Rubén Darío ".

We have touched on areas of much subsequent debate. Does the generation we are considering mark a sufficient break with the previous generation and do its members reveal sufficient common characteristics to justify the use of a special generational term? If a generational term is justified, which is more appropriate, Modernism or 1898 Generation, since both have been used in a similarly inclusive generational sense? Or perhaps some form of distinction is appropriate. Benavente and Altamira, both seen by Bargiela as *modernistas*, are surely very different from one another. So are Unamuno and Darío, who are both seen by Azorín as members of the 1898 Generation. According to Bargiela, the *modernistas* were expansive regenerating spirits open to all scientific and artistic currents. But might not some have been attracted more by scientific currents and others more by artistic currents? According to Azorín in 1904, young Spanish writers were divided into two main groups: on the one hand, the champions of art for art; on the other hand, the defenders of art for usefulness.¹ Perhaps we may expect a corresponding division of preferences in the foreign reading that we are assured characterized them all. And what importance should be given to Azorín's shift of position in 1912 and his new insistence on continuity and the impact of the Disaster? In his 1913 articles he distinguishes between two aspects of a work of art: on the one hand, its aesthetic value; on the other hand, its social influence, which he associates with its ideological import. Thus, in emphasizing the role of Echegaray, Campoamor, Galdós and others as forerunners of his generation, he makes it clear that he is not concerned with their literary merits.² His

¹ " Arte y utilidad ", in *Alma Española*, 3 January 1904.

² This is hardly surprising, of course, in view of his earlier insistence on his own generation's " idealidad " and " esfuerzos de renovación estética " (1910; ix. 1136-40) and on the previous generation's spiritual poverty (" una generación de pobres de espíritu . . . dramaturgos, novelistas, poetas . . . ", in *Alma Española*, 10 January 1904). Echegaray, for example, he had described as " un artista plebeyo, adulador de las muchedumbres " (loc. cit.; see also, in 1895, i. 186-8)

aim is simply to show that there is no ideological break between their generation and his own. In his fourth article, where he emphasizes more literary criteria, he suggests no bond with the previous generation. Here, it seems, his 1904 view still applies : “ viejos y jóvenes son habitantes de distintos planetas ”. But the distinction between literary and ideological criteria will not satisfy everyone. Azorín steers a manifestly difficult course between his acknowledgement of the impact of the previous generation’s “ gran corriente ideológica ” and its “ modalidad emotiva, sentimental ” (Echegaray, Campoamor, Galdós) and his emphasis on his own generation’s “ fecundación del pensamiento nacional por el pensamiento extranjero ” and its consequent “ renovación de las letras ”. The difficulties can perhaps most nearly be resolved by emphasizing a negative-positive contrast :¹ in their critical attitude to the Spanish social and political scene young writers continued the work of preceding generations, especially that of their immediate elders ; as champions of an intellectual and artistic renaissance—that is, in their more positive aspects—their only links were with foreign thought and literature. But even this does not resolve all the difficulties : in particular, it is difficult to see Echegaray’s “ grito de pasión ” and Galdós’s “ visión de realidad ” as merely negative characteristics. Finally, in the light of Azorín’s own distinction between ideological significance and literary value, is he really justified in naming his generation after the Disaster year, especially since it is precisely in the more *engagés* aspects of the Generation—those potentially most relevant to the Disaster—that he assures us there is a “ perfecta unidad de la crítica, antes y después de 1898 ”? These problems have not always been clearly identified. They have nevertheless underlain all subsequent study of the 1898 Generation. Before indicating the response of scholars to these problems during the last half

and Campoamor was, in Yuste’s words, “ un símbolo perdurable de toda una época de trivialidad, de chabacanería ” (1902 ; i. 847). Even Galdós, it seems, who was generally esteemed by Martínez Ruiz, had prompted “ acrimonias ” that perhaps occasioned the young critic’s fall from favour in *El Mercantil Valenciano* (vi. 126).

¹ Cf. Azorín’s own 1912 duality : “ un espíritu iconoclasta y creador al mismo tiempo ” (ix. 1142).

century I shall survey briefly the views expressed by the most commonly accepted members of the Generation during the period 1913-26.

Maeztu, commenting on Azorín's 1913 articles, maintains : (1) that foreign influence was not a distinguishing characteristic of the men of 1898 ; the previous generation, too, read widely in foreign literature ; (2) that the outcry of the 1898 Generation was largely an outcry of wounded national pride at the abyss that the Disaster revealed between reality and the inherited inflated vision of Spain ; (3) that amidst the resulting awareness of Spain's deficiencies the men of 98, less confident than their predecessors, saw their country not as an affirmation or a negation but as a problem.¹ In another article he supports Américo Castro's view that the men of 1898 were romantics in their lamentation at Spain's misfortunes ; in yet another he objects to views expressed in the Catholic paper *El Debate* : the men of 98, he maintains, did not reject true tradition—the ensnared people, early literature—only the suicidal tradition of the traditionalists.²

Unamuno intervenes in the debate to emphasize the following points : (1) that the outcry of the men of 98 was a protest against the political and moral state of Spain, “ el derrumbe de nuestros ensueños históricos ”, “ el desplome de la leyenda ” (cf. Maeztu's second point) ; (2) that in their general onslaught the men of 98 were seeking to disclaim responsibility for Spain's misfortunes and thereby to preserve their own personality and, ultimately, the hitherto suppressed personality of all Spaniards (“ Aquello fue un movimiento de personalismo—no de fulanismo—frenético ”) ; (3) that the search for personal salvation “ a raíz del desastre colonial ” prompted the quest for a *patria* (“ Pero ¿ hombre y sin patria? Por eso partimos a la conquista de una ”) ; (4) that in that quest there was no unity, no brotherhood, only a common sense of “ falta ”, “ carencia ”, “ orfandad ” (“ Fuimos una pequeña tropa de ermitaños, un escuadrón de solitarios ”).³

¹ “ El alma de 1898 ” ; “ La obra de 1898 ” (1913 ; i. 79-89).

² “ Romanticismo ” (1921 ; i. 90-92) ; “ Los del 98 ” (1923 ; i. 68-70).

³ The first two points are emphasized in “ Nuestra egolatría de los del 98 ” (1916 ; iii. 1173-7) ; the last two in “ La hermandad futura ” (1918 ; viii. 407-9).

Baroja denies the existence of the 98 Generation, or at least the appropriateness of the title. For the men of his generation, he maintains, 1898 had no special significance. He does, however, refer to them, by their approximate birth-date, as the 1870 Generation and makes a number of important observations : (1) that they represent a reaction against Restoration Spain, with its stupidity, its vulgarity, its corruption, its self-worship (*egolatría*) and its neglect of Spanish life, all of which culminated in 1898 ; (2) that their abhorrence of Restoration Spain drove them towards solitude, literature, intellectualism, utopias, individualism ; (3) that they nevertheless sought to know Spain and Europe both in their reading and in their travels, to find “ lo típico y lo característico ” and to rid Spain of social injustice ; (4) that there were various tendencies—Modernism heavy with sentimentality in the majority ; political and sociological interests in others—but that there was no common ideal and each young writer of the time went his own way.¹

Finally, Azorín returns to the debate to emphasize : (1) his generation’s “ grito de rebelión ”, “ aquel ímpetu, aquel ardor, aquel gesto de independencia y fiereza ”, “ el desdén hacia lo caduco ”, “ la indignación hacia lo oficial ” ; (2) the impact of the Institución Libre de Enseñanza, especially in its wakening of the new generation to the love of nature and of things Spanish, and (3) the impact of foreign thought and literature and of Castile’s landscape and old towns.²

In the light of so many authoritative and at times contradictory statements, what is the response of the academic world as we enter the second quarter of the century? Manuals of the time offer a pointer to the prevailing confusion. Aubrey Bell, for example, in 1925, sees the 98 Generation’s relationship to Modernism in three apparently contradictory ways that we can epitomize in the words “ contrastive ”, “ inclusive ” and “ synonymous ”. Thus, at one moment he refers to “ the

¹ “ Nuestra generación ” (1917 ; v. 204) ; “ Divagaciones de autocrítica ” (1915-?-24 ; v. 491-502) ; “ Tres generaciones ” (1926 ; v. 565-84).

² “ Aquella generación ” (1914 ; in Azorín, *La generación del 98*, Madrid, 1961, pp. 28-31, but apparently not in OC) ; “ Don Francisco Giner ” (1917 ; iii. 1243) ; “ La generación de 1898 ” (1926 ; ix. 1143-6).

critical and analytical Generation of 1898 " and thereby appears to set it in contrast to Modernism ("half-tints and exquisite music", a movement "in some way foreign to the Castilian genius"); at another moment he sees it as a movement that includes Modernism as a stage at which the "national sources for literature were in abeyance"; at yet another moment he accepts the terms Generation of 1898 and Modernism as synonymous.¹ Northup, also in 1925, opts for the inclusive view and to Azorín's proposed membership adds figures as diverse as Menéndez Pidal and Villaespesa, Altamira and Juan Ramón Jiménez. In their artistic as opposed to their social programme, he declares, "the Generation of 1898 has been termed 'el movimiento de bien escribir' [...]. Many of the group became modernists".² Petriconi, in the following year, also opts for an inclusive view but, like Camilo Bargiela, chooses Modernism as his comprehensive term. Basically, he claims, Modernist literature (by which he means "die *gesamte* Literatur der gegenwärtige Periode") is idealistic, in contrast to Realist literature, which is materialistic. Its essential spiritual unity reveals itself in three main, complementary aspects: Symbolism (with Darío and Valle-Inclán as the two leaders), Naturalism (represented especially by Galdós, Felipe Trigo and Baroja) and Activism (which includes the romantically critical 98 Generation, Ganivet being the great prophet and Unamuno and Azorín the principal members of the Generation).³

Romera-Navarro in 1928 and Jean Cassou in 1929 both place their principal emphasis on the term 1898 Generation: Romera-Navarro with an echo still of Right-wing condemnation of the Generation's anti-traditionalist aspects, Cassou with a hint still of Left-wing applause of those same anti-traditionalist aspects. For Romera-Navarro, Modernism is a coexisting but short-lived movement with its origins in France; for Cassou, who prefers the term Symbolism to refer to the type of literature commonly

¹ Aubrey F. G. Bell, *Contemporary Spanish Literature* (1925), reprinted New York, 1966. On the above see especially pp. 22, 24-25, 199-200, 231.

² G. T. Northup, *An Introduction to Spanish Literature* (University of Chicago Press, 1925), pp. 412-17.

³ H. Petriconi, *Die spanische Literatur der Gegenwart seit 1870* (Wiesbaden, 1926), especially pp. 71, 73, 98-127, 156-73.

associated with Rubén Darío, Modernism is merely a continuation of this Symbolist literature by Marquina and Villaespesa. Romera-Navarro and Cassou, then, both suggest the coexistence of two different but apparently interacting movements: the 98 Generation, with primarily national preoccupations occasioned by the Disaster of 1898, and Modernism—or Symbolism—with primarily aesthetic concerns prompted by Rubén Darío and by French Parnassianism and Symbolism. The distinction, however, is not clear, especially in view of Romera-Navarro's inclusion of Baroja as a Modernist and Cassou's inclusion of Valle-Inclán (“ [qui] n'a jamais appliqué son attention au Problème National et ne s'est jamais préoccupé que de littérature pure ”) as a member of the 98 Generation.¹

Valbuena Prat, in 1930, makes the first notable attempt to draw a clear distinction between the two movements. Modernism, he declares, was a poetic movement led by Rubén Darío. It was romantically sentimental, cosmopolitan and formally innovating. The 98 Generation, on the other hand, well named after the symbolic date of Spain's colonial disaster, was a group of writers characterized by their concern with the problem of Spain (though many earlier writers reveal similar concerns), by their profound pessimism, “ causado en gran parte por la desconfianza en las fuerzas tradicionales de la raza ”, by their critical attitude, and by their love of the hitherto unknown earth, especially the austere landscape of Castile. Among Valbuena's proposed list of Spanish Modernists one notes especially the names of Rueda, Villaespesa, Marquina, Manuel Machado and (in his early period) Valle-Inclán; among his proposed members of the 98 Generation he includes Unamuno, Azorín, Baroja, Zuloaga, Antonio Machado and Pérez de Ayala.² Independently of Valbuena, and in the same year, the notion of the separate

¹ M. Romera-Navarro, *Historia de la literatura española* (New York, 1928), especially pp. 615-17, 670; Jean Cassou, *Panorama de la littérature espagnole contemporaine* (Paris, 1929), especially pp. 29-30, 49-51, 57, 97-98, 104, 173. As examples of what I refer to as earlier Right-wing condemnation and Left-wing applause one might recall, respectively, Julio Cejador y Frauca, *Historia de la lengua y literatura castellana*, x (Madrid, 1919), 49-50, and J. B. Trend, *A Picture of Modern Spain* (London, 1921), pp. 46-48.

² Angel Valbuena Prat, *La poesía española contemporánea* (Madrid, 1930).

identity of the 98 Generation within the general panorama of the literature of the time is given further support by José María Salaverría with his emphasis on the basically Basque membership and character of the Generation : notably in its neo-Romanticism —“ exageración del individualismo, exaltación de la personalidad, yoísmo delirante, espíritu de rebeldía y de demolición ”—and its emphasis on ethical values.¹

Finally for our present section, reference must be made to a notable article published in 1929 by Antonio S. Pedreira. Pedreira follows Baroja and anticipates a number of recent scholars in urging the outright rejection of the term 98 Generation, “ que si tiene en su favor prerrogativas suficientes para llamarse *generación*, no tiene bastante fundamento para apellidarse *del 98*, ya que una generación literaria no empieza, ni se forma, ni se desarrolla en un año como por arte de encantamiento, y la que ahora nos ocupa, ni se proclama, ni culmina, ni es *del 98* ”. The year 1898, he maintains, had no special relevance for the most commonly accepted members of the Generation. “ El criticismo demoledor ”, “ el anhelo de revisar los valores ”, “ el cambio estético que dicen haber logrado los hombres del 98 ”—all existed before the Disaster year. What we have witnessed in Spain, he suggests, is a “ resurgimiento ” that can be divided into two periods : the first from 1850 to 1890 or 1892 (erudite and traditionalist, orientated towards the national past : Menéndez y Pelayo, Galdós, Pereda) ; the second from 1892 to the present (iconoclastic and renovating, orientated towards the European present : Baroja, Azorín, Maeztu, Ganivet). It is the second that is commonly referred to as the 98 Generation. Pedreira prefers the term “ la generación finisecular ”. This generation, he claims, “ responde a la necesidad surgida ante la crisis de ideales de toda Europa en los últimos años del siglo XIX ”.² Five years later Federico de Onís will propose an almost identical explanation of Modernism, interpreting it in a similar, all-embracing, generational sense :

¹ José María Salaverría, *Nuevos retratos* (Madrid, 1930), pp. 49-98 (“ La generación del 98 ”).

² Antonio S. Pedreira, “ ¿La generación del 98? ”, in *Revista de las Españas*, iv (1929), 315-20.

" El modernismo es la forma hispánica de la crisis universal de las letras y del espíritu que inicia hacia 1885 la disolución del siglo XIX ".¹

In the history of the study of the 98 Generation the 1930s are notable for the application of Petersen's generational factors : first by Hans Jeschke in 1934, then by Pedro Salinas in 1935.

According to Jeschke, misuse of the term 1898 Generation and objections to it have their origin in Azorín's failure to offer a clear definition. His own aim is to fill the gap.² Applying Petersen's notions, he seeks to demonstrate that the Generation really did exist and to establish its membership. After erudite discussion he affirms that Unamuno, Ganivet and Rubén Darío were predecessors, that Maeztu, Manuel Machado and Bueno were " celebridades del instante ", that Villaespesa, Marquina, Martínez Sierra and others were " simpatizantes ", and that the Alejandro Sawas, Ricardo Barojas, Camilo Bargielas, Luis Bellos, Gómez Carrillos and others composed the " gran coro ". The members of the 1898 Generation itself were Benavente, Valle-Inclán, Baroja, Azorín and Antonio Machado. Even apart from Jeschke's total disregard up to this point of internal evidence (the writings themselves) and a possibly over-selective use of external evidence (notably that pertaining to *tertulias*) it is difficult to accept that Jeschke's proposed generational grouping follows logically and necessarily from his erudite arguments. His emphasis on the impact of the Disaster serves to exclude Ganivet, who died in 1898, but it is doubtful whether the absence from or presence at *tertulias* is sufficient to justify drawing the birth-line for membership between Unamuno (b. 1864) and

¹ Federico de Onís, *Antología de la poesía española e hispanoamericana (1882-1932)* (Madrid, 1934), p. xv. Compare also Isaac Goldberg's view, expressed fourteen years earlier : " In its broader implications [Modernism] is not a phenomenon restricted to Castilian and Ibero-American writers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, but rather an aspect of a spirit that inundated the world of western thought during that era [. . .]. It is an age of spiritual unrest " (*Studies in Spanish-American Literature* (New York, 1920), pp. 1-2).

² Hans Jeschke, *La generación de 1898 (Ensayo de una determinación de su esencia)* (Halle, 1934 ; Sp. trans., Santiago de Chile, 1946), 2nd Sp. ed., Madrid, 1954.

Benavente (b. 1866), especially since Sawa (b. 1863) is at least admitted as a member of the contemporary "gran coro". Another point: how does one distinguish between a member of a generation, a "celebridad del instante", a "simpatizante" and the "gran coro"? Literary merit? But from a historicist, generational point of view a "celebridad del instante" may be more significant than many a writer whose fame lives on. Besides, Jeschke has chosen to ignore the internal evidence on which an estimate of merit might be based.

The rest of his book is happily very different. In a comparative study of the aesthetic theories, literary models and stylistic features of his alleged members of the Generation Jeschke finds notable similarities. His study of the vocabulary and syntax of six works published in 1902-3 is particularly impressive and breaks exciting new ground: the vocabulary of decadence, the emphasis on sense perceptions, the evidence of concern for precise expression, delight in the phonic value of words, the frequent use of subjective, pre-substantival adjectives, the manifest preference for simple paratactic expression. The case is extremely convincing. It is difficult, however, to find any significant connection between these various features and the Disaster of 1898 to which Jeschke attributes so much importance. Indeed, one is reminded frequently, as one reads these chapters, of Azorín's pre-1912 emphasis on his generation's "romanticismo" and "idealidad" rather than of his later, 1898-linked emphasis on national disaster. Jeschke's study suggests a number of such problems, and few of them have been explored. Regrettably, Jeschke is remembered principally as the purveyor of Petersen's generational factors and it is this aspect of his work that has attracted most scholarly attention.

But Pedro Salinas's lecture of 1935, available in Spanish before Jeschke's work, has attracted more.¹ Starting, like Jeschke, from disagreements about the existence or non-existence of the 98 Generation, Salinas proceeds to examine the validity of the term. His approach, however, is different: whereas Jeschke purports to arrive, via Petersen's categories, at the

¹ "El concepto de generación literaria aplicado a la del 98", in Pedro Salinas, *Literatura española, siglo xx* (2nd ed., Mexico, 1949), pp. 26-33.

establishment of a generation, Salinas invokes Petersen's categories merely to test an already existing intuition, that of Azorín in 1913. And as the reader is unconvinced in Jeschke's apparently more inductive study that Petersen's categories do enable him to establish a valid generation grouping, so also he may be unconvinced in Salinas's study that Petersen's categories offer a sufficient test of Azorín's intuition. Here as in Jeschke's opening chapters one has an uneasy feeling that the categories adapt too easily to the desired result and that ultimately the literature itself has been disregarded in favour of an erudite sleight of hand. It is an uncommon feeling to have about Salinas's writings. Three years later, for example, he establishes a most suggestive Valbuena-type distinction between Modernism and the 98 Generation : the Modernists, he claims, essentially Latin American, were jubilant, outward-looking, sensual, synthesizing and cosmopolitan ; the men of 98, on the other hand, in the steps of Giner, Costa and Ganivet, were sad, inward-looking, intellectual, analytical and orientated towards Spain.¹ The difficulty comes when he seeks to bring Modernism and 98 Generation together. For here as in 1935 he claims that Modernism in Spain is merely the language of the 98 Generation, though he holds now that the men of 98 subsequently found that the language of Modernism, though it marked a revolution, was not *their* revolution and therefore moved away from it. One cannot accept Salinas's findings without reservations. One must question first his basic duality Latin America (= Modernism)—Spain (= 98 Generation). Though Latin American Modernism undoubtedly made a great impact on Spanish poetry, Modernism stemmed ultimately from France, and French poetry did not reach Spain only through Latin America. Salvador Rueda already reveals much of Modernism before 1898. Next, even if one accepts Salinas's distinction between Modernism and the 98 Generation, can one accept also the associated chronological distinction? Were Unamuno and Baroja ever Modernists? Were Villaespesa and Manuel Machado ever members of the 98 Generation? And is one not rather surprised to find so

¹ “ El problema del modernismo en España, o un conflicto entre dos espíritus ” (op. cit. pp. 13-25).

sensitive and sophisticated a critic as Salinas suggesting that the language of the jubilant, outward-looking, sensual, synthesizing, cosmopolitan Modernists could ever be seized upon as appropriate to the preoccupations of the sad, inward-looking, intellectual, analytical, nationally orientated members of the 98 Generation?¹

During the 1940s the most notable study on the 98 Generation was Laín Entralgo's *La generación del noventa y ocho* (Madrid, 1945). It marks a significant advance on anything previously published. Writers generally considered to be *noventayochistas* had made invaluable comments on what they felt to have been the principal concerns of their generation and numerous scholars had added their own notes and observations. Valbuena Prat and Pedro Salinas had attempted, rather more searchingly than their predecessors, to indicate basic differences between Modernism and the 98 Generation,² and Hans Jeschke, tacitly undermining their position, had shown linguistic and stylistic features common to writers of the 98 Generation and to others whom some critics would prefer to call Modernists. What was still lacking, however, was a comparative study of what was generally held to be the basic characteristic of the men of 98: their concern with the problem of Spain. It is this gap that Laín Entralgo seeks to fill. As he warns us in an introductory note, he proposes to place his main emphasis on Unamuno, Azorín, Baroja, Antonio Machado and Valle-Inclán, less emphasis on Ganivet and Maeztu, and to refer only occasionally to Benavente, Manuel Machado "y otros miembros de la generación". His view of

¹ With Salinas's view of Modernism as a formal revolution opportunely seized upon by the men of 98 one may usefully compare the following:

La última evolución de las escuelas líricas francesas del siglo XIX, parnasianismo, simbolismo y decadentismo, fue introducida en el castellano por el poeta de Nicaragua Rubén Darío: el amor a lo extranjero, que caracterizó especialmente a la llamada *generación de 1898*, encontró muy a propósito para su afán innovador las nuevas tendencias, y de aquí surgió el *modernismo* (Juan Hurtado and Angel González Palencia, *Historia de la literatura española* ([1921], 2nd ed., Madrid, 1925), p. 1056).

² To their names should be added, in the 1940s, that of Melchor Fernández Almagro, whose *Vida y literatura de Valle-Inclán* (Madrid, 1943) brings us even closer to the radical distinction that we shall find in Díaz-Plaja's monumental study of 1951.

the Generation, it will be noted, is wide despite his basic concern with the impact of Spain's national problem. But any misgivings we might feel about his insistence on the need for a generational approach are quickly dispelled. Laín's generational approach is very different from Jeschke's and Salinas's: his aim is not to proceed by external criteria; his aim is to look into the works themselves and thereby to establish “ la biografía del parecido generacional ”.

For Laín Entralgo the men of 98 are poised between a reality that they despise and an ideal realm that they aspire to. Under the influence of their childhood reminiscences landscape is seen as part of the ideal, but, for the rest, the present—the people, the political and social situation—is distasteful. History too, that bequeathed these things, is likewise distasteful—at least, until one looks back beyond the Golden Age to the alleged purity and authenticity of medieval Spain. The aim of the men of 98, says Laín Entralgo, is to re-establish this purity and authenticity in the future. They are situated, then, in an unsatisfactory present, nostalgic for an authentic past and desirous of an authentic future.

Perhaps no scholar has come closer than this to establishing a nucleus of immediately recognizable responses to Spain, its landscape, its history and its potential. One cannot accept all Laín's findings without reservations and at times one must reject them outright. His chapter “ De limo terrae ”, for example, reveals a singularly over-selective and misleading use of evidence.¹ Nor is it sure that Laín interprets the relevant European context correctly. Moreover, in consequence of these two things, the author fails—at least in my own view—to explain adequately the various characteristics noted and to show them as mutually complementary elements in a pattern of thought and feeling peculiar to the age in which the men of 98 were formed. Perhaps his over-emphasis on resemblances stemming from the *noventa-yochistas*' “ condición de españoles ” is a relevant factor. Certainly it involves him in occasional difficulty in offering evidence from the sub-group that he sees as being closer to

¹ I deal with this point at length in a book now at press, *The 1898 Movement in Spain*, Manchester University Press [1974?].

“ literatos puros ” (Valle-Inclán, Benavente, Manuel Machado). Despite these things, however, and despite some disregard of chronology, one would perhaps still not confidently dispute Granjel’s view that Laín Entralgo’s book offers the best study to date on the Spanish 98 Generation.

Díaz-Plaja’s *Modernismo frente al noventa y ocho* (Madrid, 1951), however, offers a serious challenge with a very different case. Earlier attempts by Valbuena Prat, Pedro Salinas and Fernández Almagro to establish a distinction between Modernism and the 98 Generation are here developed to their furthest point. Faced with evidence of confusion in the use of the two terms and convinced that they represent radically opposing attitudes, Díaz-Plaja reapplies Petersen’s generational categories to justify his belief. Under all headings except the last (the common reaction against the previous generation, a negative characteristic) he finds notable differences between *Noventa y Ocho* and *Modernismo*: (1) a difference of birth-date (with the suggestion that Modernism represents a reaction against the 98), (2) a difference of educative influence (Taine’s “character”-seeking path for the men of 98; Rémy de Gourmont’s aestheticism for the Modernists), (3) a difference of personal relationship (with evidence of mutual criticism between the opposing bands), (4) a difference of generational experience (the Disaster year for the men of 98; Rubén Darío’s visits to Spain for the Modernists), (5) a difference of guide (Larra-Nietzsche-Unamuno for the men of 98; Poe-Verlaine-Darío for the Modernists) and (6) a difference of generational language (the anti-rhetorical men of 98 seeking to forge a natural, reality-reflecting, functional language in the service of intelligence and valid for all; the rhetorical Modernists creating an artificial, primarily aesthetic language in the service of beauty: sensual, musical, personal and of minority appeal). Viewed as general attitudes of the human mind, Díaz-Plaja continues, 98 and Modernism can be distinguished biologically, spatially and temporally. Biologically, the 98 attitude is basically masculine (interventionist, intellectual, transcendental; “lo racional-activo”), the Modernist attitude, on the other hand, is basically feminine (non-interventionist,

sentimental and sensorial, contemplative; “ la pasividad-sensible ”). Spatially, the 98 attitude can be epitomized in *castellaneidad* (the search for transcendental significance, for spiritual and ethical values based on lovingly observed physical reality), the Modernist attitude, in *mediterraneidad* (delight in the object of contemplation itself, valid in its own right as a “ realidad inmanente ”). Temporally, the men of 98 are obsessed with time’s passing and reflect philosophically on it; the Modernists, on the other hand, emphasize the instantaneity of separate moments of experience and seek to recreate those moments in literature.

It is impossible in a brief survey to do justice to Díaz-Plaja’s study. No other scholar has brought to the study of the 98 Generation such an impressive store of relevant erudition, or established so many suggestive parallels between Spanish and non-Spanish literature at the turn of the century, or argued so convincingly for a radical distinction between the 98 and Modernism. And yet one is perhaps not completely convinced by his case. The application of Petersen’s generational categories, in particular, prompts many questions. Is it really possible, for example, to make a valid distinction based on dates of birth? Are there really “ dos generaciones distintas ”, with Modernism as a 1902 reaction against the 98 Generation, especially since 1902 is seen both as the “ momento de aparición ” and, a few pages later, as the *central* date of Modernism (117-23)? And how is the role of Taine and Rémy de Gourmont as contrasting “ elementos educativos ” distinguishable from that of Nietzsche and Verlaine as contrasting “ guías ”? Can the “ lenguaje generacional ” be divided quite so clearly as Díaz-Plaja suggests, especially in view of Jeschke’s finding of notable common linguistic and stylistic features in writers whom Díaz-Plaja places in mutually opposing groups? Finally, in the proposed contrast between Modernist aesthetic language and 98 functional language, is there not some disregard of the basic fact that all the writers concerned seek to forge a language appropriate to the communication of their own personal—and extremely subjective—concerns? Underlying all these questions, I suggest, is the basic problem of the generational method itself, with its

emphasis on motivating and consequential criteria and with its disregard of the area between : the basic response of the writers concerned to the world in which they are immersed. Díaz-Plaja's "Tres claves discriminadoras" do much to fill the gap. One may hesitate to accept his polarities masculine-feminine, Castilian-Mediterranean, but the distinctions he offers under these headings are extremely suggestive, as is his temporal distinction. And yet, again, is not the proposed overall division too rigid? Is there quite such a clear distinction as Díaz-Plaja suggests between the alleged collective concerns of the men of 98 and the Modernists' cultivation of the *yo*, between the former's alleged intellectualism and the latter's alleged neo-romantic idealism? And how does one distinguish between the 98's "temporalidad" and the admitted melancholy of the Modernists at the flight of things (355)? Is Antonio Machado, for example, simply a man of 98? And, very especially, is one satisfied with Díaz-Plaja's proposed redistribution of the characteristics noted by Azorín in 1913 (94-95)? *Modernismo frente al noventa y ocho* is without doubt one of the most important studies to date on the 98 Generation and probably the one to which subsequent scholars have been most indebted. It is not sure, however, that the author makes a completely convincing case.

Díaz-Plaja's separation of Modernism and 98 into clearly distinguishable sub-groups represents a manifest narrowing of Azorín's original concept. Since 1951 Luis S. Granjel has carried the narrowing process further. In the titles of his two panoramic studies of the Generation he accepts the term "Generación del 98".¹ His central thesis, however, is that the term is inappropriate because it tends to link all young writers of the time with a national event that in most cases made little impact on them. Strongly influenced by the more extra-literary of Petersen's generational criteria, Granjel begins by emphasizing the historical context of the age. Thereupon, having affirmed—initially without evidence—the separate existence of a *noventa-*

¹ *Panorama de la generación del 98* (Madrid, 1959); *La generación literaria del noventa y ocho* (Salamanca, 1966).

yochista group (Unamuno, Baroja, Azorín and Maeztu) and a *modernista* group (led by Benavente and Valle-Inclán), he seeks to justify his grouping by reference to chronology (with emphasis on the impact of the Disaster, which serves to exclude Ganivet) and by reference to *tertulias*, collective acts of homage and protest, and contributions to periodicals. Despite teasing references to “disparidades ideológicas” and “gustos estéticos distintos”, we are given little indication of what these differences are held to be, though we are offered two firm, interacting guide-lines on the *noventayochistas*: that they were profoundly affected by the Disaster of 1898 and that they were much preoccupied with Spain. But this does not, perhaps, take us very far. Significantly, Granjel’s conclusion is that his four *noventayochistas* were linked ultimately not by their literature but by their brief (1898-1905) Disaster-prompted “intervención juvenil” [!] in Spanish political life, “suceso desligado del quehacer literario”. If this is so, two things seem to follow: firstly, that the term *noventayochista* is irrelevant to Spanish literature and, secondly, that Granjel’s earlier references to the different aesthetic and ideological standpoints of *noventayochistas* and *modernistas* were also irrelevant, for what he should have been asking himself, it now appears, was not how *noventayochistas* could be distinguished from *modernistas*, but how, in the brief “aventura política” that allegedly united them (“bien alejada de su condición de literatos, de su verdadera vocación”), his four *noventayochistas* could be distinguished from the host of other *regeneradores* of the period. In one form or another, in their writings or in their political activism, do the men of 98 belong together as a distinctive group? If so, what are their common, distinguishing characteristics? As we reach the end of Granjel’s erudite historical surveys we are not noticeably nearer an answer.

Carlos Blanco Aguinaga’s *Juventud del 98* (Madrid, 1970) is modestly presented as a contribution to an eventual first chapter in the study of the 98 Generation. His guiding thesis can appropriately be presented in his own words: “que en su juventud, durante los años claves que van de 1890 a 1905, en

momentos no del todo coincidentes, los escritores que luego llamaríamos de la generación del 98 se enfrentaron con 'el problema de España' desde perspectivas socio-políticas radicales que van desde el federalismo intransigente hasta el marxismo" (xii). Thus, the problem of Spain, central to their concerns, was seen during this early period not as a problem of spiritual values rooted in the centuries-old conflict between Europeanizers and Traditionalists—a notion fostered by the ruling class—but as a problem of political, economic and social realities: "burguesía, capitalismo, proletariado, miseria, lucha, imperialismo" (38). The men of 98, he declares, were the first generation of leading Spanish intellectuals to go over to the enemy. In the following five chapters Blanco Aguinaga illustrates his case with studies on the generally little known early writings of Unamuno, Azorín, Maeztu, Blasco Ibáñez and Baroja. All these writers, he claims, adopted socialist or anarchist standpoints at some time between 1890 and 1893 and, except for Blasco Ibáñez who maintained radical views until 1905, all abandoned them at some time between 1897 and 1899. In his final chapter Blanco Aguinaga considers the subsequent flight from history ("y, concretamente, de las atosigantes contradicciones puestas claramente al descubierto en la España de fin de siglo por la cada vez más intensa lucha de clases", 296) towards a contemplative attitude to Spanish landscape and old towns ("un refugio de armonía intemporal y de nobles tradiciones frente al hecho global de 'la civilización moderna'", 297).

Since Blanco Aguinaga concerns himself primarily with early writings of the men of 98—writings very different from those of their maturity—and since, as Blanco Aguinaga himself admits, "la importancia de los autores de la generación del 98 en nuestra literatura—la que corresponde a cada uno de ellos—depende de sus obras de madurez" (324-5), it is difficult to refer to Blanco Aguinaga's view of the Generation as a whole. His study concludes, excitingly, amidst a series of unsolved problems to be probed in future works. Nevertheless, the main guideline of his proposed future studies seems clear: the 98 Generation in its maturity represents a flight from political, economic and social realities towards a realm of "paisajismo", "armonía

intemporal ” and “ nobles tradiciones ”. From a generational point of view this seems likely to involve the author in difficulties, the seeds of which are already apparent in the last chapter of *La juventud del 98*. Thus, on the negative side—the flight from reality—one notes Blanco Aguinaga’s indication that Maeztu (to a certain extent) and Antonio Machado (more completely) were exceptions (324, 327), and on the positive side—the quest for “ armonía intemporal ”—one notes the absence of any section on Blasco Ibáñez, Maeztu or Baroja. More significantly, perhaps, in this latter respect, Blanco Aguinaga includes in his final chapter sections on two writers not studied in the main part of his book : Ganivet (“ [que] no se preocupó nunca de lo que aquí hemos llamado realidad objetiva de la España de su tiempo ”, 296) and Antonio Machado (in whom the author finds no evidence of early “ preocupación por la situación social de España ”, 318). In other words, the evidence presented in Blanco Aguinaga’s study suggests three possible definitions of the 98 Generation, each with its own different grouping of authors : (1) writers concerned in their youth with “ historical reality ” : Unamuno, Azorín, Maeztu, Blasco Ibáñez, Baroja ; (2) writers concerned in their maturity with “ armonía intemporal ” : Ganivet, Unamuno, Azorín, Antonio Machado, and (3) writers whose concern with “ historical reality ” yielded to concern with “ armonía intemporal ” : Unamuno and Azorín. It will be interesting to see on which of these solutions Blanco Aguinaga eventually takes his stand.

This is by no means the only problem suggested by Blanco Aguinaga’s book. Others pertain to the treatment of individual authors. The study on Unamuno will serve as an example. During the years 1891 to 1897, says Blanco Aguinaga, Unamuno underwent “ una progresiva racionalización de su pensamiento que pronto excluye toda actitud contemplativa frente a la Naturaleza [. . .]. Va adquiriendo conciencia histórica y política, y en 1894, según hemos visto, se declara marxista. La visión marxista de la realidad, sin duda en algunos momentos algo confusa, sabemos, ya dura en su obra, por lo menos, hasta fines de 1896. Y aquí, precisamente, cuando descubrimos un Unamuno ocupado teórica y prácticamente por la situación

objetiva real de España, no encontramos huella ninguna del Unamuno 'naturalista' y paisajista" (299). Here as elsewhere in Blanco Aguinaga's study one thinks of the possibly contrary evidence offered by *En torno al casticismo* (1895). Does Unamuno there reveal the allegedly characteristic preoccupation of the "youth of 98" with the conflict of town and country amidst the "desarrollo caótico del capitalismo de país subdesarrollado" (294)? Surely not. Nor does the work conform easily with Blanco Aguinaga's view of the "young 98" response to the Europe-Tradition conflict.¹ Nor can one agree easily with Blanco Aguinaga's view that the presentation of nature is there notably different from that found in Unamuno's later writings. On all these points one may usefully recall Unamuno's own statement in the prologue to the first book edition of *En torno al casticismo*: "En estas páginas están en germen los más de mis trabajos posteriores". But there is still more than this, for *En torno al casticismo* not only looks forward to the writings of Unamuno's post-Marxist period: it also looks back to works of his pre-Marxist period: "Espíritu de la raza vasca", 1887; "En Alcalá de Henares", 1889; even, in the underlying—conservative—organic determinism, with emphasis on the anonymous people as the bearers of true tradition, to his doctorate and his early linguistic studies. Seen against this background Unamuno's Marxism is perhaps less basically characteristic of his early years than Blanco Aguinaga suggests. Certainly one will not easily be convinced by any attempt to attribute his subsequent move away from it to an imposition of capitalist society (xiii, 326). An immediately recognizable—and emphatically non-Marxist—personal "intrahistoria", I suggest, precedes, underlies and conditions Unamuno's brief socialist involvement. The evidence of *En torno al casticismo*, written at the height of that involvement, is surely indisputable.

¹ Unamuno sees the conflict as important, and not, I suggest, in terms of "burguesía, capitalismo, proletariado, miseria, lucha, imperialismo". Europe, for Unamuno, is freedom, energy, personality, youth, sympathy, "[un] remolino de escuelas, sectas y agrupaciones que se hacen y deshacen [. . .], una vida potente" (i. 862)—all very different from what Blanco Aguinaga would have us accept as the characteristic response at this period.

During the last three decades, it seems, the most substantial studies on the 98 Generation represent a progressive narrowing of Azorín's original concept. Laín Entralgo, by emphasizing the problem of Spain, tacitly underplays the role of the " literatos puros " of the generation and Díaz-Plaja eliminates them entirely as men unaffected by the collective concerns of 98. Granjel reduces the concept still further by limiting it to the short-lived extra-literary activity of four writers. Blanco Aguinaga, by emphasizing the shift from " historical reality " to " armonía intemporal ", appears on present evidence to reduce the group to two writers, Unamuno and Azorín.¹ The quest for greater precision in the use of Azorín's term, urged by Jeschke in 1934, has apparently brought us to a position where the term has virtually lost all usefulness as the name of a recognizable literary movement. It is in this context that one must consider recent studies by Rafael Ferreres and Ricardo Gullón.

In *Los límites del modernismo y del 98* (Madrid, 1964) Rafael Ferreres draws attention to disagreements both about the distinction between Modernism and the 98 Generation and about the membership of the two groups. For most critics, he continues, the poles of distinction are Castile (" sinónimo de hondura, de fina frugalidad, de melancolía ") and Paris (" cocotas, frivolidad, cafés y alcohol "). But each writer feels his own native landscape with greater affection than that of Castile and all feel the attraction of Paris. Moreover, it is French writers who exert the greatest influence on them all, both Modernists and men of 98. Enthusiasm for Góngora is invoked by Díaz-Plaja as a means of distinguishing between them, but Góngora was not really understood and esteemed until after 1925. On the other hand, Verlaine and Rubén Darío were in general esteemed by all and, as Jeschke has shown, there is evidence of Symbolist vocabulary in both the writers of 98 and the Modernists.

¹ If one emphasizes only the concern with " historical reality ", the names of Maeztu, Blasco Ibáñez and Baroja must be added, but the chronological narrowing is then even greater than Granjel's; if one emphasizes only the search for " armonía intemporal ", the components of the Generation will be Unamuno, Azorín, Ganivet and Antonio Machado, but one then disregards the early concern with " historical reality " that Blanco Aguinaga sees as extremely important.

There was no clear break with the immediately preceding generation (another failure in the case for a literary generation),¹ but all were dissatisfied with the inherited message and technique, and it was France that gave the new incentive. Ferreres concludes that the confusion that Salinas sought to dispel in his article of 1935 has become greater because of the proposed distinction between Modernism and 98. Modernism was not a school but a renovating movement that affected both the so-called Modernists and the so-called men of 98. Certainly there was a common starting-point, but then each writer developed in his own way. Collective labels are of little relevance to the human realities with which we are here concerned.

To the last point few will object, at least when there is such manifest disagreement about the underlying human realities to which the labels refer. And it is this disagreement, one suspects, rather than any general distrust of labels as such, that underlies Ferreres's article. But however desirable it might be to break down the rigidity of Díaz-Plaja's distinction between Modernism and the 98 Generation, there are surely basic differences between the prevailing attitudes of the two groups or movements. Salinas, for example, in the article referred to, makes some very good points (which Ferreres overlooks) and a possibly bad one (the form-content distinction, which Ferreres accepts, albeit with a difference). The evidence of Díaz-Plaja's "*Tres claves discriminadoras*", too, is passed over too lightly. Nor is it sure that commentators have been quite as crude as Ferreres suggests in their Castile-Paris distinction. Moreover, even if one accepts—as one surely must do—that French influence was important for both Modernists and the men of 98, must one also accept that that influence was uni-directional and therefore unifying? May not different writers look to France for different things? For Spanish writers around 1900 France was not only the country of Verlaine; it was also the country of Taine. Some looked more to the former; others, to the latter. And

¹ This point is developed by Ferreres later in his book ("*Un aspecto de la crítica literaria de la llamada generación del 98*") with dubious argument and over-selective evidence. For a brief pointer to contrary evidence, see above, pp. 464-5, 468 n. 2.

are Unamuno and Ganivet, for example, characterized by their Symbolist vocabulary? Jeschke, perhaps significantly, omitted them from his survey. Finally, does the appreciation of a poet—of Verlaine or of Rubén Darío, for example—indicate necessarily that one is significantly similar to him? Ferreres himself, at another stage in his argument, admits—indeed claims—that it does not.¹

Ferreres's dislike of the term 98 Generation is shared by Ricardo Gullón in *La invención del 98 y otros ensayos* (Madrid, 1969). According to Gullón the use of the term is both disturbing and regressive: disturbing because it attributes too much to the Disaster year and thereby introduces an artificial division in Spain's post-1880 literature of renovation; regressive because it confuses history and criticism and thereby prevents understanding of the work of art. Spaniards, he claims, have been positively provincial in their insistence on the literature of 98 as something peculiarly Spanish, and the concept of literary generations has confused the matter further. Pedro Salinas was right to see Modernism as the language of the 98 Generation, for the age was one of linguistic renovation, itself a reflection of a change in sensitivity and attitudes. The attitude of opposition emphasized by Azorín was but one aspect of Modernism; so was the desire to forge a better future. But one cannot point to any common ideological schema in the so-called 98 Generation, and Baroja, Unamuno and Maeztu denied the existence of the Generation. What is distinctive in the Modernist age is not the revolt against existing social structures (a common enough phenomenon) but that a new ethic was asserted through

¹ In seeking to play down the significance of Góngora, emphasized by Díaz-Plaja, he writes:

En realidad, Góngora sólo fue admirado por Rubén Darío. El que no se note gran influencia o la huella asimilada del autor del *Polifemo* en Rubén, nada quiere decir en contra de su patentizada admiración. Nadie conoce a Góngora mejor que Dámaso Alonso, y entre los poetas contemporáneos es el propio Dámaso Alonso el que menos se parece a Góngora: ningún contacto hay ni en estilo ni en el fondo (36).

On the other hand, in emphasizing the significance of Verlaine and Rubén Darío for the men of 98, Ferreres overlooks this point entirely. Since their appreciation was at times—to say the least—grudging, this seems a notable weakness in Ferreres's case.

aesthetics. Modernism is a renaissance in the sense in which Azorín himself defined the term, an opening up to currents from abroad, part of an international movement. Unamuno's or Machado's Spanishness is not reduced by showing that they coincided with foreign writers of the time. The opposition established between the Modernists' "exterioridad" or superficiality and the 98 Generation's "interioridad" or profundity is false. Form and content are fused. Modernism and 98 Generation are alike quests for what is "dentro del alma". Spain has lost much by the provincialism of its approach to the 98 Generation. We need to look more closely at 98 Generation *texts* and to universalize our interpretation. Biography and history offer valuable elements but they are secondary. Much of the confusion that surrounds the 98 Generation has come from the emphasis on thematic study. One needs to consider how different writers differ in the treatment of common themes. Laín Entralgo's "indefiniciones" must be explored in order to establish parallels, symmetry and divergences between Spanish and non-Spanish literature. We need to study the works themselves.

One is somewhat overwhelmed by the number of points with which one finds oneself in enthusiastic agreement: that the impact of the Disaster has traditionally been exaggerated (or at least misunderstood); that the Spanishness of the Generation has been overplayed and its Europeanism underplayed; that the application of generational criteria has been harmful; that too much weight has been given to contextual evidence and not enough to internal evidence based on the comparative study of texts; that Laín Entralgo's "indefiniciones" should be explored further; that Modernism and the 98 Generation are alike quests for what is "dentro del alma". On the other hand, it is difficult to escape from evidence that some form of upsurge of young writers did occur around 1898 and that they felt themselves to be notably different from their elders ("habitantes de distintos planetas" according to Martínez Ruiz), or from evidence in support of Martínez Ruiz's 1904 distinction between those young writers who championed art for art and those who defended art for usefulness. If, as Gullón claims, one cannot point to any

common ideological schema in the men of 98, this may in fact be because there is none and Gullón is perhaps then justified in seeking to banish the term. It is doubtful, however, whether the mere absence of a recognizable 98 group justifies the “ epochal ” use of the term Modernism. Something more positive is needed : evidence of bonds serving both to link a significant number of writers and, at the same time, to distinguish them from their predecessors (with a pivot, for Gullón, around the year 1880). The alleged assertion of a new ethic through aesthetics is not obviously helpful unless it can be shown, presumably on comparative, internal evidence, that that new ethic was similar for all. Nor, I suggest, is evidence of foreign influence helpful unless it can be shown that the same type of foreign influence operated in all cases. On the evidence so far presented by Ferreres and Gullón the blanket, “ epochal ” use of the term Modernism, which basically they both urge, is possibly as unhelpful in its vastness as the term 98 Generation has become in its narrowness.

Two notable scholars have gone some way towards filling the gap : Juan López-Morillas with his emphasis on the collapse of orthodox religious beliefs in a number of notable Spanish intellectuals during the 1870s,¹ and D. L. Shaw with his emphasis on the sense of life's lost finality in young writers of the following generation.² Since I find myself in almost total agreement with their findings I shall leave all reference to their work to the following part of my study in which I shall propose a tentative reinterpretation of the Spanish 1898 Generation.³

¹ *Hacia el 98: literatura, sociedad, ideología* (Barcelona, 1972), pp. 119-59 (“ Una crisis de la conciencia española : krausismo y religión ” [1966]).

² “ Ganivet's *España filosófica contemporánea* and the interpretation of the Generation of 1898 ”, in *Hispanic Review*, xxviii (1960), 220-32 ; “ Il concetto di finalità nella letteratura spagnola dell'Ottocento ”, in *Convivium*, xxviii (1960), 553-61 ; “ *Modernismo*: a contribution to the debate ”, in *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*, xlv (1967), 195-204.

³ The second part of this article will be published in the Autumn 1974 number of the BULLETIN.