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Revisiting “Place” in a Realist Novel: “Thinking Space” in Galdós’s *Torquemada en la hoguera* (1889)

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ABSTRACT

Departing from the premise that Galdós’s close engagement with space and place deserves to be at the forefront of scholarly attention, this article provides an in-depth study of their significance in *Torquemada en la hoguera*. It begins by analysing the relationship between the novel’s locations and the real world, demonstrating that the author codes the city of Madrid to express social concerns and promote reader engagement. It then proceeds to examine the public and private spheres, before highlighting the “place of the imagination” in the novel. It reveals that, as in Galdós’s press articles, reality is used as a springboard in *Torquemada en la hoguera* and, drawing upon recent theories, it posits that places serve as a framework for engaging readers with contemporary concerns and as an imaginative springboard for Galdós. They trigger what is effectively a “thinking space” for the author and it is through unravelling their significance that we can fully appreciate Galdós’s psychological sensitivity, the novel’s modernity, its symbolic value, and imaginative depth. The article concludes by proposing that Galdós’s works deserve to be re-examined as “Novels of the Geographical Imagination” and urges readers to revisit the significance of space and place therein.

RESUMEN

Partiendo de la premisa de que el profundo interés de Galdós en el espacio merece más atención académica, este artículo analiza su significado en *Torquemada en la hoguera*. Empieza por examinar la relación entre los lugares que aparecen en la novela y el mundo real, y propone que el autor codifica la ciudad de Madrid para comunicar sus preocupaciones sociales y captar la atención de los lectores. Procede a analizar el significado de la esfera pública, junto con la privada, antes de destacar la importancia de la imaginación en la novela. Revela que para Galdós, al igual que en sus artículos periodísticos, en *Torquemada en la hoguera* la realidad sirve como trampolín imaginativo, y que los sitios desencadenan lo que es efectivamente un “espacio de pensamiento” para el autor. Cuando desentrañamos su significado, los lectores llegamos a apreciar más cabalmente la sensibilidad psicológica de Galdós, la modernidad de esta novela, su valor simbólico y su profundidad imaginativa. El artículo concluye proponiendo que las obras de Galdós merecen ser reexaminadas como “Novelas de la imaginación geográfica” e

KEYWORDS

Galdós; *Torquemada*; Madrid; space; place; realist novel

PALABRAS CLAVE

Galdós; *Torquemada*; Madrid; espacio; lugar; novela realista

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insta a los lectores a reexaminar el significado del espacio y de los sitios que aparecen en ellas.

One of the assumed trademarks of the nineteenth-century Realist novel is its setting in a real time and place as it focusses on “depicting contemporary society,” constructing a reading public “as an ‘imagined community’ united by common anxieties” (Labanyi 2000, 4 and 6) and offering social commentary. All this might suggest that Galdós’s novels could be regarded as social documents and, whilst this is apt to an extent, it has resulted in an unfortunate tendency to underestimate the contribution of the imagination to the creative processes therein. Some scholars have been inclined to regard space and place as a backdrop (or setting) of secondary interest in Galdós’s work, whilst others have focussed upon aligning the places mentioned in his novels with real locations.¹ On occasions, this has resulted in the application of an $x=y$ formula that does not interrogate their significance (or meaning) or take full account of the artistic processes at work therein.

Notwithstanding this, there have been some fascinating and successful studies on space and place in Galdós’s novels, ranging from those that examine their socio-historical significance to others that highlight their artistic import. These include Russell’s (1967) article on Madrid in *Misericordia*,² whilst Fuentes Peris (2003, 2007) and Ridao Carlini (2018) have accorded attention to the city and its socio-historical context in selected *novelas contemporáneas* (Ridao focussing, in particular, on the socio-economic transformations). Some critics have fruitfully examined the significance of Galdós’s interior spaces; worthy of attention, for instance, are Charnon-Deutsch’s article on “Inhabited Space in *Tormento*” (1975) and Wright’s article on “Secret Space” in *La de Bringas* (1982). Other engaging pieces include Risley’s article on setting (1978), Bly’s analyses of locations (2007 and 1983), such as the Royal Palace in *La de Bringas* and Toledo in *Ángel Guerra*, also the focus of Ewald’s piece, which, taking into account the impact of the disentanglements earlier in the century, “[examines] the ways in which the contours of Spanish geography were brought into alignment with the evolving power structures of the modernizing nation” (Ewald 2011, 47), and contends that *Ángel Guerra* “renders a cartography of modernity that is [...] darkened by the shadow of what might have been, but was not” (2011, 66). Scholars have also highlighted the

¹Although it is a useful study for appreciating the Madrilenian context, this is largely the approach adopted in *El Madrid de Galdós*, by Pla et al. (1987), for example.

²Russell argues that the Church of San Sebastián (with its two faces) reinforces the notion that “things are not what they seem” and writes that “The dimension of space is also an ironic indicator of Benina’s attachment to, and freedom from the world around her. Closely linked to the social hierarchies of rich and poor which surround Benina, this spatial dimension is given a special development by Galdós. Initially suggested by the position of the Church of San Sebastián, which straddles the barrios bajos and the Madrid alto, the world of space is often identified with the peculiarly appropriate topography of Madrid, in which the poor live at the lowest topographical locations. The symbolic fact that doña Paca was born in Ronda and always had nightmares about falling into the gorge there, and the further observation that she ‘no sabía mantenerse firme en las alturas: instintivamente se despeñaba’ (V, 1893), serve to prepare the downward movement in society (and in Madrid) which is marked by her moves to ever cheaper apartments” (1967, 108). Wright (2009–10, 93–94), for her part, contends that in *Misericordia*, “Galdós se libera de los confines del discurso burgués para aliarse con un nuevo modo de narrar, y así de cuestionar la realidad.” Hence we are presented with “[un] enfrentamiento entre dos caras de caridad.”

connection between places and the characters' moods and relationships; Bly, for example, writes that "the labyrinthine streets of Toledo are used [...] to chart the progressions and regressions of Ángel Guerra's spiritual odyssey" (2007, n.p.), whilst Wright maintains that in *La de Bringas*, "Galdós shows the dysfunction of the relationship between Francisco and Rosalía Bringas through a parallel dysfunction of space" (1982, 76). Risley, for his part, argues that in the novels written between 1881 and 1885, "places are utilized primarily as characterization and dramatic atmosphere, normally with moral considerations foremost" (1978, 27) and "Galdós constantly organizes and describes the background to suit the drama of his characters" (1978, 40).

Boring (1978), Anderson (1985a, 1985b, 1993, 1999) and, to an extent, Bly (1978), proceed further and stress Madrid's symbolic significance, thereby paying due homage to Galdós's affirmation, "debe existir perfecto fiel de balanza entre la exactitud y la belleza de la reproducción" (Pérez Galdós 1897, 8). Boring observes that

The fictional world of Galdós in *Fortunata y Jacinta* is a highly complex one, built on the interlacing of relationships between many characters, both major and minor. To lend unity and credibility to this world as well as to underscore the ties that exist between individuals and social classes Galdós skilfully uses the network of Madrid's streets as a structuring device underlying the action of his novel. (1978, 22)

Anderson (1985a) builds upon this, noting that in *Fortunata y Jacinta* the movement is both vertical and horizontal, linking both the physical reality (for instance, going up a hill) and the character's inner state. He maintains that *Tristana* is striking on account of the relationship between ellipsis and space, noting that "As the novel ends, the city is still missing" (1985b, 75), whilst the Villaamil family's marginalized situation is matched by the space they inhabit (1993). Bly, meanwhile, focusses on Torquemada's sallies and doorstep communication, concluding:

Galdós's careful structuring of the pattern of sallies and encounters into two similar but contrasted parts has permitted a more accurate estimation of the merits of Torquemada's charity than that hitherto advanced by a limited consideration of such aspects as Don Francisco's motives and the amount of his generosity. (1978, 29)

Anderson's later article is more ambitious as he argues that Madrid is "a source of form and a resource for generating novels" (1999, 86). It is, however, possible to go much further and, building upon the solid foundation provided by these studies, situate space and place at the forefront, not as something that is secondary to, or merely complements the characters, their moods and relationships, but as a dynamic force that exerts a powerful influence in a manner that extends far beyond the impact of the environment as perceived by the Naturalists and displays the extent of Galdós's imagination, his artistic flair and engagement with the future.

This article, then, using *Torquemada en la hoguera* as a case study, will examine the significance of space and place therein, seeking to draw a bridge between the socio-historical and artistic dimensions of this relatively short, yet rich novel. It will initially consider the relationship between particular locations and the real world, arguing that the author codes the city in order to express social concerns and promote reader engagement before proceeding to examine the representation of the public and private spheres. Finally, it will explore the connections between this novel and the imaginative processes at work in

Galdós's press articles (*Obras inéditas*),³ revealing that reality is used as a springboard in *Torquemada en la hoguera* and that the city is, above all, an imagined construct. Drawing upon recent theories regarding space and place, the article will demonstrate that this novel invites the implied readers to critically decode Madrid and “place” more generally, and that unravelling the artistic significance of the city, which serves as a framework for advancing particular discourses *and* an imaginative springboard for Galdós, enables us to gain an enhanced appreciation of the author's psychological sensitivity, the work's modernity (in theoretical and psychological terms), its symbolic value and imaginative depth. In essence, places in *Torquemada en la hoguera* trigger a “thinking space” for the author.

Coding the City: Assumed Knowledge and Reader Engagement

From the outset, *Torquemada en la hoguera* appears to be a traditional Realist novel. It is clearly set in the capital city of Madrid and specific streets (including the calle de San Blas), squares (such as the Puerta del Sol), districts (such as Chamberí) and buildings (such as the Casa de la Moneda) are mentioned. However, even at this basic level, it is notable that, in line with Mazzoleni's words:

Buildings, streets, squares are just part of the habitat; the tip of an iceberg: the visible and tangible part. Behind and within this tangibility and visibility, there is something else which is difficult to represent with concepts and words because it belongs to a pre-logical field of experience, to non-verbal communication; it is more to do with what Minkowski calls the spaciousness of existence. The question of habitat thus becomes the question of the concretization of the great oneiric structures of our collective body (the communal body, if it has a monocentric structure, or the social body, if it has a polycentric structure). (1993, 285)

Risley recalls that Alas observed that “the details in Galdós's novels of 1881–85 did not reflect any direct and grand-scale incorporation of external reality” and that the author selected “a limited number of details to reinforce some expressed tonal quality in the total effect of [a] scene” (1978, 27 and 28). I would go further and argue that what Galdós was actually doing was coding the city and assuming knowledge in order to promote reader engagement with the issues arising from space and place. Rather than merely constituting tangible, visible, physical or material entities, then, the references to real buildings and streets in *Torquemada en la hoguera* induce the implied (contemporary) readers (particularly those familiar with Madrid) to feel a sense of affinity with “place” and facilitate their active engagement with the novel. It is for this reason that I am frequently more concerned with “place” than “space” in *Torquemada en la hoguera*, since the former is endowed with both a literal *and* a symbolic significance, in line with the definition offered by Carter, Donald, and Squires:

How [...] does space become place? By being named: as the flows of power and negotiations of social relations are rendered in the concrete form of architecture; and also, of course, by embodying the symbolic and imaginary investments of a population. Place is space to which meaning has been ascribed. (Carter, Donald, and Squires 1993, xii)

It is evident that Galdós frequently relied upon the readers' knowledge of and familiarity with the city of Madrid since there is very little description of the places mentioned in this

³Many of the articles were written for the daily newspaper *La Prensa* (Buenos Aires) between 1884 and 1894, whilst the *Memorias* (1930) were produced for *La Esfera*.

novel.⁴ In many cases, solely the name of a street or location is provided and it is left to the implied readers to fill in the “gaps,” based upon their knowledge of the capital. Those residing in Madrid during the nineteenth century would know, for instance, that beggars could be found in the areas of the calle del Carmen and Preciados and thus it is unsurprising that Torquemada should venture here to dispense charity.⁵ The novelist relies on the readers’ familiarity with Madrid in order to “decode” some references; he assumes that they will know that el Saladero was a prison,⁶ that Leganés was the lunatic asylum and so forth. He also takes it for granted that, when writing that Don Juan’s home was “un principal muy bueno, amueblado con mucho lujo y elegancia, con vistas á San Bernardino” (Pérez Galdós 1889, 73), readers will be aware that this should not be interpreted literally since “The phrase here means that house and furniture were heavily mortgaged or pledged as security to creditors” (Brooks 1973, 108).⁷ Sometimes, too, there are hidden links that the readers have to interpret. For instance, the proximity of the hospital and Torquemada’s house in the calle de San Blas suggests that Rufina probably first met her fiancé-to-be, Quevedito, in the streets in that area, since he was presumably a student at that hospital at the time. Later, in line with courting traditions, he was allowed into the family home “después de mucho *rondar* y suspiretear” (Pérez Galdós 1889, 7, my italics), which probably indicates that he then found out where she lived and ventured there.

On other occasions, more detail is provided and there is evidence of the author’s artistic eye at work as descriptions of places permit readers to survey the locations in *Torquemada en la hoguera*. As Longhurst (2003, 81) has noted in the case of *Misericordia*, “Galdós the artist seems to revel in the picturesque quality, the photogeneity almost, of the world he is describing.” More importantly, these descriptions reflect the heightened significance of the city and its buildings during a time of expansion (the *Ensanche*), as well as engaging with contemporary discussions relating to space and place.⁸

Madrid as a Canvas for “Mapping” Social Concerns: The Private Sphere, “The Home,” and “The Value of Place”

Stannard has observed that nineteenth-century Madrid suffered from “gross overcrowding in fearfully unhealthy suburbs, *barrios* from which disease, prostitution and crime threatened to extend to the rest of the capital” (2015, 8). He writes of “the increasing complexity of nineteenth-century life,” described in Darwinian terms in Maudsley’s *The Physiology and Pathology of Mind* (1867) as a “fierce and active struggle for existence” in which “the weakest must suffer, and some of them break down into madness” (Stannard 2015, 115).

⁴This might also have been due to space constraints since the novel was written for the cultural review *La España Moderna*, whose general editor, José Lázaro Galdiano, informed Galdós that he wished to publish it in one issue. (It later appeared in two parts from February–March 1889.) See Davies (1999) for more information.

⁵The location of Bailón’s religious establishment in Chamberí is equally logical since there were numerous religious institutions (which had been “exiled” following the disentailment) there. (See Anderson 1985a, 28).

⁶Bailón was imprisoned there for three months (Pérez Galdós 1889, 25).

⁷The institution of San Bernardino was founded in 1834 by Pontejos, with the aim of eliminating begging from Madrid. See Pla et al. (1987, 99). See also Fuentes Peris (2003, Chapter 4) for information on mendicity and vagrancy.

⁸See Labanyi (2000, 15–17) for information regarding Mesonero Romanos’s plans for Madrid, which included water supplies, public baths, covered markets, monuments, and street names to commemorate national heroes, and the work conducted by the Marqués de Pontejos.

Galdós reproduces the city canvas in *Torquemada en la hoguera* as readers are given an insight into working-class living conditions in the shanty town, Tejares del Aragonés, where Tía Roma lives. To an extent, this description can be paralleled with “Una visita al Cuarto Estado” in *Fortunata y Jacinta*, analysed by Fuentes (2003, 9–26), and related to the later portrayal of “el nomadismo urbano” in *Misericordia*, examined by Gold (1997).⁹ Torquemada tells the servant,

fué [Rufina] á dar allá, por donde tú vives, hacia los Tejares del Aragonés, y entró en tu choza y vino contándome, horrorizada, la pobreza y escasez que allí vió? ¿Te acuerdas de eso? Contóme Rufina que tu vivienda es un cubil, una inmundicia hecha con adobes, tablas viejas y planchas de hierro, el techo de paja y tierra; me dijo que ni tú ni tus nietos tenéis cama, y dormís sobre un montón de trapos; que los cerdos y las gallinas que criáis con la basura son allí las personas, y vosotros los animales. Sí, Rufina me contó esto, y yo debí tenerte lástima y no te la tuve. (Pérez Galdós 1889, 97)

This section of text hints at the discrepancy between the rich and the poor and, interestingly, a sense of distance (if not condescending, false superiority) is conveyed since the description is provided through the second-hand perspective as Torquemada relates what Rufina had told him. Narrative distance, then, complements the physical and financial distance between the classes and the passage stresses the alignment of the poor with the animals, indicating, by comparison, that the latter are in a superior situation (“los cerdos y las gallinas [...] son allí las personas, y vosotros los animals”). As we will see, this perverse, unexpected sense of contrast is mirrored by the topsyturviness of Torquemada’s character and is likely to provoke a sense of confusion, if not indignation, in the readers’ minds regarding the situation of the poor.

Tía Roma’s home, amongst squalor, is hardly a “Home sweet home.” Indeed, it starkly contrasts the nineteenth-century “sanctuary of the home [...], often described as a haven, a shelter where men could find psychological and spiritual comfort in response to the pressures of the external world—a corrupted world dominated by speculation, competitiveness and immorality” (Fuentes Peris 2003, 28). It also hints at nineteenth-century concerns, as in *Ángel Guerra*, where “the Babel sons are shown to be living in the kind of insalubrious environment that was believed to breed degeneration” (Fuentes Peris 2003, 112).

In contrast to Tía Roma and her poor living conditions, we have Torquemada, whose exploits reveal that “owning places” was a worthwhile enterprise since property values were increasing and the rental yield was profitable. We read:

El año de la Revolución, compró Torquemada una casa de corredor en la calle de San Blas, con vuelta á la de la Leche, finca muy aprovechada, con veinticuatro habitacioncitas, que daban, descontando insolvencias inevitables, reparaciones, contribución, etc., una renta de 1.300 reales al mes, equivalente á un siete ó siete y medio por ciento del capital. (Pérez Galdós 1889, 3)

And later:

Al entrar en el Gobierno, en 1881, los que tanto tiempo estuvieron sin catarlo, otra vez Torquemada en alza: préstamos de lo fino, adelantos de lo gordo, y vamos viviendo. Total, que ya le estaba echando el ojo á otra casa no de corredor, sino de buena vecindad, casi nueva, bien acondicionada para inquilinos modestos, y que si no rentaba

⁹As Gold writes, “Tanto la vagancia como la mendicidad son índices de los desequilibrios estructurales y económicos que aquejan las grandes ciudades españolas en los umbrales de una modernidad difícilmente lograda” (1997, 388).

más que un tres y medio á todo tirar, en cambio su administración y cobranza no darían las jaquecas de la cansada finca dominguera. (Pérez Galdós 1889, 4)

Although Torquemada was not greatly concerned with appearances and the symbolic value of his wealth at that point, the purchase of particular tenement houses links his trajectory with political developments, revealing that the historical conditions and change of governments support the moneylender's rise. It also indicates that property is a means by which moneylenders can speculate to accumulate; in other words, it is a tool for the self-made man to gain access to the higher echelons of society in an increasingly capitalist environment.¹⁰ As Soja writes:

The very survival of capitalism, Lefebvre argued, was built upon the creation of an increasingly embracing, instrumental and socially mystified spatiality, hidden from critical view under thick veils of illusion and ideology. What distinguished capitalism's gratuitous spatial veil from the spatialities of other modes of production was its peculiar production and reproduction of geographically uneven development via simultaneous tendencies towards homogenization, fragmentation and hierarchization—an argument that resembled in many ways Foucault's discourse on heterotopias and the instrumental association of space, knowledge and power. (Quoted in Gregory 1994, 275)

It is possible, then, to read *Torquemada en la hoguera* in relation to Crang's contention (substituting the term “landscapes” for “places”) that:

we cannot see landscapes as simply material features. We can also treat them as texts that can be read, and which tell both the inhabitants and us stories about the people—about their beliefs and identity. (1998, 40)

Crang's suggestive reading of places as “texts” can usefully be applied to the home of Martín and Isidora, which resonates with nineteenth-century preoccupations concerning “place” and social status. We read, “Era en la calle de la Luna, edificio de buena apariencia, que albergaba en el principal á un aristócrata, más arriba familias modestas, y en el techo un enjambre de pobres” (Pérez Galdós 1889, 77). At one level, this refers to a physical and historical reality. The house is set up in a typical style, with different levels of wealth accommodated on each floor, perhaps in line with the Castro Plan for Madrid, which promoted the integration of all social classes¹¹ and favoured mixed housing on the grounds that:

this system is producing much good for society as a whole, for it sees the masses becoming more moral. Before, abject and abandoned by society, they were an unruly element always ready to go against those who were so little concerned for their welfare and saw in them their most powerful enemy. (Shubert 1992, 50)

We learn that the couple are keen to move to the third floor and, although their motivation is primarily practical (since the attic is “fresquita,” Galdós 1889, 79), it can

¹⁰See Ridao Carlini (2018, Chapter 2: “From Usurer to *Marqués*”) for a detailed examination of the role of Torquemada's investment in real estate “in the context of the shifting of power structures which took place in Spain from the 1830s onwards, and which constitute the backbone of the narrative of Torquemada's social ascent” (2018, 55). Ridao explains, for instance, the logic behind Torquemada's decision to purchase a property that he could rent out to poor tenants, since it is implied that he can yield a high rent by accommodating them in smaller rooms without needing to invest in the upkeep of the building.

¹¹To an extent, it also conforms with Crang's view (regarding the “practices involved in ‘homes’”) that “if we look at the West we might characterise the last three centuries as being about a process of segregation and division” (1998, 28).

be deduced that this has an additional significance since Isidora was concerned with the assumption that “where you live says something about who you are,” in other words, what her home *signified*. We can draw a parallel here with Foucault’s suggestion many years later that “we are surrounded by spaces which help form evidences of the ways we see ourselves and one another” (quoted in Gregory 1994, 277).

Galdós elaborates upon the “value” of the home in the later *Torquemada* novels as Donoso highlights the fact that property does not solely provide an income. The home has a representative significance and is directly linked to social status, something which arguably ensues from a metropolitan mentality (as will be discussed later). Hence Donoso informs Torquemada that it is imperative that, before marrying the aristocrat Fidela, he should move to a larger property and the moneylender is obliged to embrace his newfound social status and acquire the Palacio de Gravelinas, since a property of this size would demonstrate to others the extent of his wealth.¹² After undergoing a suitable “reforma,” closely managed by Cruz, it constitutes a fitting home for her and her sister, Fidela, enabling them to match a property to the status conferred upon them through their aristocratic births. In this sense, the Palacio corresponds to Lefebvre’s theory on the “politics of space,” whilst buildings in general terms can additionally be related to Mazzoleni’s claim that architecture constitutes “an extension of the body” and “a metaphor of the body” (1993, 289).

It is worth noting that this preoccupation with appearances was a major concern for Galdós’s contemporaries, notably Concepción Arenal, who, a year after the publication of *Torquemada en la hoguera*, noted the disjunction between glamorous outward show and “hygiene” in the case of buildings:

¿Es justo que en los edificios se exijan por fuera condiciones por ornato público, y por dentro se prescinda de la higiene? ¿Es justo que en los edificios se exijan por fuera condiciones por ornato público, y por dentro se prescinda de la higiene? Palacios suntuosos, cuerdas espaciosas con termómetro, invernáculos con estufas y casa donde no hay chimenea para la salida del humo, ni escusados, ni ventilación, ni aire suficiente para sus míseros habitantes. ¿La diversidad de méritos y de fortunas puede invalidar la identidad *fundamental* del hombre, que, pobre ó rico, ignorante ó sabio, muere ó enferma respirando un aire emponzoñado? (1890, 117)¹³

The preoccupation with both the size and location of one’s home is complemented by the Torquemada family’s acquisition of objects such as Rufina’s wash-stand, which are merely for show: “Rufina tenía un lavabo de los de mírame y no me toques, con jofaina y jarro de cristal azul, que no se usaba nunca por no estropearlo” (Pérez Galdós 1889, 12). Likewise, buildings’ symbolic values are deemed to be more significant than their practical usefulness, a fact that both baffles and eludes Torquemada.

We also learn that the capital is dominated by appearances and materialistic values, by those who “se dan lustre en Madrid” (Pérez Galdós 1889, 3) and lavishly offer “five o’clock teas,” despite their incumbent financial pressures. In this way, through references to space and place in *Torquemada en la hoguera*, Galdós was reflecting

¹²See Ridao Carlini (2018, Chapter 2: “From Usurer to *Marqués*”) for an analysis of this acquisition (worth 10 million reales) in the context of “social advancement” and Gold (1988). See also Surwillo (2014, 133), who notes Lévi-Strauss’s theorization of the home, “less a domestic sphere than an architectural statement of family lines, history and integration with the land (that is, the family’s feudal roots),” and examines the *indianos’ casonas* in this light.

¹³For more on hygiene, see Fuentes Peris (2003, 2007, especially 32–34, 55–59).

contemporary concerns, highlighting the obsession with appearances and the increasing tendency to collect and hoard (noted in Labanyi 2000, 156–57). This is taken to another level in the later *Torquemada* novels and examined in Gold's fascinating article on the museum (and "coleccionismo") in Galdós's work, where she declares that "the most systematic transference of the institutional structure of the museum to an individual scale is the Torquemada project" (1988, 323) and intriguingly posits that Galdós "creates novel-museums" (1988, 333). In a broader sense, Galdós was simultaneously drawing the implied readers' attention to the custom of according iconic status to particular places at a time when many new buildings and housing were being erected in the city, and a period which saw the *Ensanche*, the rise of the self-made man and increasing significance attached to materialism.¹⁴ Torquemada plays a key role in questioning whether nineteenth-century attitudes and values have become misguided in the course of such developments.

Navigating the Public Sphere: Urban Space, City Life and Metropolitan Impact

Torquemada en la hoguera not only references contemporary discussions but also anticipates future debates relating to space and place, as readers are invited to question the influence of urban space and city life on its inhabitants. To an extent, Torquemada can be seen as a victim of the "psychological conditions" promoted by the "metropolis," described later in Simmel's essay "The Metropolis and Mental Life" (1903):

The deepest problems of modern life flow from the attempt of the individual to maintain the independence and individuality of his existence against the sovereign powers of society, against the weight of the historical heritage and the external culture and technique of life. (Simmel 2002, 11)

It is not insignificant that Simmel argued that in the metropolis an obsession with "money economy" prevails since, to an extent, this can be applied to Torquemada, who chooses to make a living out of moneylending, and is so obsessed with financial matters that he even perceives his children in monetary terms (they are "joyas," Pérez Galdós 1889, 7) and imagines how much interest he might make if he were able to coin all the stars (Pérez Galdós 1889, 57). Simultaneously, Simmel's contention that "there is perhaps no psychic phenomenon which is so unconditionally reserved to the city as the blasé outlook" (2002, 14) is ostensibly evident in other characters, for instance as we read of "hombres de más necesidades que posibles" (Pérez Galdós 1889, 2).

The novel, nonetheless, eludes neat and simplistic interpretations as Torquemada's interaction with the urban space is both complex and fluid. At a relatively early stage in the novel we are told that he appears to be resistant to change (we read, "En su carácter había algo resistente á las mudanzas de forma impuestas por la época," Pérez Galdós 1889, 14). Hence whilst he may be perceived, on the one hand, to be a "victim" of the city's obsession with "money economy," on the other hand, it could also be posited that he somehow manages to resist the "regression of the culture of the individual" that, according to Simmel, eliminated spontaneous impulses in the metropolis:

¹⁴This was reflected in Galdós's press articles. For example, in "Divagando" he refers to the new Atocha station (1923a, 188–94) and in "La cuestión social" he wrote, "Barrios enteros surgían cada año del suelo: hermosísimas casas ocupaban los terrenos que antes eran corralones o campos yermos" (1924, 147). See Davies (2015, 168).

Punctuality, calculability and exactness, which are required by the complications and extensiveness of metropolitan life, are not only most intimately connected with its capitalistic and intellectualistic character but also colour the content of life and are conducive to the exclusion of those irrational, instinctive, sovereign human traits and impulses which originally seek to determine the form of life from within instead of receiving it from the outside in a general, schematically precise form. (Simmel 2002, 13)

In this way, Galdós exposes the complex nature of the interaction of individuals with their environment and questions simplistic assumptions that there is always a collective (if not one-dimensional) response.

There are, nevertheless, other cases where Torquemada's reactions may represent collective experiences. City life involves spatial sharing and interaction with other human beings, both from one's social class and a wider spectrum. Thus the importance and impact of café culture is touched upon as we read that Torquemada, wearing his new clothes,

pisaba más fuerte, tosía más recio, hablaba más alto y atreviase á levantar el gallo en la tertulia del café, notándose con bríos para sustentar una opinión cualquiera, cuando antes, por efecto sin duda del mal pelaje y de su rutinaria afectación de pobreza, siempre era de la opinión de los demás. (Pérez Galdós 1889, 14)

Sometimes attitudes towards those belonging to a lower class within the city can lead to certain assumptions about negative perceptions of the places with which they are associated. Consequently, we can associate Torquemada's contemptuous reference to the *tabernas* (where the poor will waste his money) with Pedro Mata's comments on hygiene, particularly the following passage from his *Tratado de medicina y cirugía legal teórica y práctica* (1866):

Las tabernas son las cajas de Pandora de donde salen todos los males. Los días festivos en los pueblos son siempre días señalados por actos violentos, riñas, palos, heridas y homicidios por estar las tabernas y botillerías más concurridas. (Quoted in Álvarez-Uría 1983, 186)¹⁵

Although this aspect is not fully developed until the later *Torquemada* novels, readers gain an insight into the crucial role played by the public sphere and meeting places (or places where characters can indulge in public display), whether this involves a walk in the Retiro,¹⁶ attending a tertulia, a debate, a banquet, or a trip to the theatre where one might "be seen." We cannot fail to recall Lefebvre's words from *La production de l'espace* that "(social) space is a (social) product" here (1974, 26).¹⁷

The private sphere (namely the home), too, is a place for receiving and entertaining guests. This is patently evident in the later *Torquemada* novels, hence Cruz's anxiety that their home should provide a suitable meeting place and a *billar* for Torquemada's business colleagues. Our awareness of the way that the public sphere encroaches upon the private also explains, to some extent, the avid (and profligate) efforts of Don Juan's wife, who "tenía unos condenados *jueves* para reunir y agasajar á la mejor sociedad," and ensured that their home was "amueblado con mucho lujo y elegancia" (Pérez Galdós 1889, 70 and 73). She was clearly not a rare case either, since her attitude matches that of Doña Pura in

¹⁵See Fuentes Peris (2003) for a detailed analysis of "The Drink Problem" in *Fortunata y Jacinta* and *Ángel Guerra* (Chapter 3) and nineteenth-century attitudes towards poverty, including questions concerning the "deserving and undeserving poor" (Chapter 4). See also Ridao Carlini (2018, Chapter 4: "The cuestión social in *Misericordia*").

¹⁶Labanyi (2000, 124–25) notes the importance of the Retiro, described in 1882 by Arturo Soria as "El pedazo más grande y sano de nuestro pulmón."

¹⁷In broader terms, the novel may also be read in relation to Lefebvre's triptych: "l'espace perçu" (perceived space), "l'espace conçu" (conceived space) and "l'espace vécu" (lived space).

Galdós's earlier novel, *Miau* (1888), who was horrified at the prospect of having to forego the luxuries adorning her drawing room since these were required to impress visitors:

¡La sala, hipotecar algo de la sala! Esta idea causaba siempre terror y escalofríos a doña Pura, porque la sala era la parte del menaje que a su corazón interesaba más, la verdadera expresión simbólica del hogar doméstico. Poseía muebles bonitos, aunque algo anticuados, testigos del pasado esplendor de la familia Villaamil; dos entredoses negros con filetes de oro y lacas, y cubiertas de mármol; sillería de damasco, alfombra de moqueta y unas cortinas de seda que habían comprado al Regente de la audiencia de Cáceres, cuando levantó la casa por traslación. Tenía doña Pura a las tales cortinas en tanta estima como a las telas de su corazón. Y cuando el espectro de la necesidad se le aparecía y susurraba en su oído con terrible cifra el conflicto económico del día siguiente, doña Pura se estremecía de pavor, diciendo: “No, no; antes las camisas que las cortinas.” (Pérez Galdós 1888, 50–51)

In his representation of these spheres, it is likely that Galdós was not only highlighting the superficiality of such lives but also indirectly alluding to the negative associations of life in the capital, which apparently fomented such undesirable customs. Although some relief (if not hope?) is conveyed via Torquemada, who, true to his multifariously unique character, expresses a degree of resistance, in so doing offering readers some light-hearted humour, it is clear that the author was also responding to his contemporaries' concerns regarding the dangers presented by the capital.

During the nineteenth century, the city was often seen as a breeding ground for crime and dirt, a point of association for collective activities, some of which could promote mob mentality and lead to negative activities involving violence (for instance in the case of riots). In *El pauperismo* (1859), M. Pérez de Molina had written:

Encerrados en lóbregas y extensas habitaciones, hacinados como rebaños de bestias en los grandes talleres, privados de respirar un ambiente fresco y puro y condenados a trabajar apenas sin descanso, noche y día, sin recrear sus ojos en el bello panorama de la naturaleza, ni participar de las amenas distracciones que el trato social ofrece; oprimida su imaginación con un peso insoportable, y no pudiendo volar en alas del ingenio a un mundo mejor [...], en el vino suelen buscar aquellos desgraciados todos sus goces, y en el embrutecimiento aspiran a encontrar su mayor dicha. (Quoted in Álvarez-Uría 1983, 175)

The reference to the poor living like “bestias” recalls the previous description of Tía Roma's living conditions, whilst the contrast with “el bello panorama de la naturaleza” is replicated in *Torquemada en la hoguera*, as nineteenth-century debates on the relationship between city and its counterpart (the country), and the escapist nature of the imagination (“volar en alas del ingenio a un mundo mejor”) are also conveyed.

“A Whole New World?: Life Outside the City”

In one of the articles that he published in *La Prensa* (15 August 1884),¹⁸ Galdós wrote of “el insondable abismo de las transformaciones industriales” in Bilbao (Pérez Galdós 1923a, 32). Later, (on December 3, 1887), he expressed his reactions to the extent of industrial development in the United Kingdom: “Un desarrollo tan colosal de la industria principia por causar admiración y acaba por dejar una impresión de hastío y tristeza.” Thus he decided not to stop in Manchester, where:

¹⁸This is the author's date. According to Shoemaker (1973, 112), it was published on October 3, 1884.

el trabajo humano llega a parecer una monomanía febril o un tic epiléptico y los hombres parece insensatos que han traspasado los límites de la obligación que la naturaleza nos impuso, haciendo de la virtud un vicio y convirtiendo la religión de la industria en idolatría de las riquezas. (Quoted in Scanlon 1976, 264)

Earlier, in *La desheredada* (1881), written at a time when “the repetitive action of industrial labor tended to cause physical deformities, which [...] was believed to further incur moral degeneracy” (Sierra 2012, 42), Galdós had depicted “the brutalizing consequences of industrialization” (Turner 2004, 405), presenting the factory as “the one space in which workers are processed by the centralized machine into mere prosthetic parts stripped of their human character” (Sierra 2012, 35). A degree of ambivalence can, nevertheless, be discerned in the author’s general attitude towards industrialization, which probably wavered between apprehension and fascination. Hence, in an article entitled “Barcelona,” written in June 1888, he acknowledged that “a la industria se debe la prosperidad, el bienestar y la cultura que admiramos allí” (Pérez Galdós 1923a, 76), and, to an extent, he appears to equate industrialization with modernization and progress; as Schyfter (1978, 62) has pointed out, “Torquemada foresees his son as an engineer, a builder of bridges, highways and canals, as part of the process necessary for the industrialization and modernization of Spain.”¹⁹

At the same time, it is evident that Galdós was familiar with contemporary claims that the countryside was much more “hygienic.”²⁰ Unsurprisingly, then, some of the characters in *Torquemada en la hoguera*, aware that life is fragile, believe that going to the countryside would help preserve their lives; Quevedito tells Torquemada:

Ya le he dicho á usted que tuviera mucho cuidado con este fenómeno de chico. ¡Tanto estudiar, tanto saber, un desarrollo cerebral disparatado! Lo que hay que hacer con Valentín es ponerle un cencerro al pescuezo, soltarle en el campo en medio de un ganado, y no traerle á Madrid hasta que esté bien bruto. (Pérez Galdós 1889, 35)

Martín, too, longs to go to the countryside, although Torquemada sarcastically reflects that the only “campo” which he will reach is “el camposanto.”²¹ It is noteworthy, in this regard, that Martín’s paintings depict places outside Madrid, including the Sierra de Guadarrama, possibly in the future Impressionist style of the artist Aureliano de Beruete,²² and, in many senses, represent *fin de siglo* views on Nature and hark back to Romanticism. Labanyi notes that Arturo Soria (in a manner reminiscent of Rousseau) recommended a “return to Nature” and, in an article published in *El Progreso* in 1882, he wrote of the “medicina” of open spaces. Later, in his 1885 essay “Paisaje,” Giner de los Ríos wrote of the regenerative effects of the Castilian countryside for the city-dweller,

¹⁹See also Fuentes Peris (2007, 29): “In various articles written for the Buenos Aires newspaper *La Prensa* in the 1880s, Galdós campaigned for scientific and technological innovations, arguing against the traditional and widespread perception of poverty as a virtue and the consequent association of material progress with immorality.” She proceeds to note that “the renowned public health expert Philippe Hauser [...] underlined the degenerative effects that the urban environment had on the city poor, which were often contrasted to the healthy lives of the rural poor.”

²⁰See Fuentes Peris (2007, 32–33): “The beneficial hygienic influence of the countryside and fresh air, and the effects of city life on the population’s physical, mental and moral health, were emphasized by hygienists during this period, who saw urban centres as a focus of physical and moral infection and diseases.”

²¹Later, however, he assures him, “Írá usted al campo [...] allá por el puente de San Isidro” (Pérez Galdós 1889, 87).

²²As highlighted by Hoar (1974), Beruete produced a painting of Orbajosa, the setting of Galdós’s novel *Doña Perfecta*, which he gifted to the author.

urging readers, “Rompamos un minuto los vínculos de la servidumbre cortesana y vámonos al campo, que está mucho más cerca de Madrid de lo que tantos se figuran” (quoted in Labanyi 2000, 249). It is equally noteworthy that it is the views of Martín, who is fundamentally a dreamer, that are called into question. His paintings of La Granja and Guadarrama are also reminiscent of the idyllic landscapes of the later Generation of 1898 and one might question whether it is apt that these landscapes should be captured in Martín’s paintings, rather than feature as part of this novel’s setting? This endows them with an ideal quality that is more closely connected with the imagination than actual reality, as is acknowledged by Isidora, who cannot identify the location of one of the paintings.²³ That Martín is dying of consumption, like some romantic heroine, is not insignificant either; one might additionally ask whether his idyllic perspective of the real world suggests that romantic perspectives are doomed and that Spain’s future lies within the city, not the (dream-loaded but escapist and unreal) countryside. Galdós’s early novel *Doña Perfecta* (1876) certainly did not portray life in the provinces in an ideal light and it might have been on account of his preference for the city that Galdós was, as Alas noted, “novelista urbano” and “no [...] principalmente paisajista” (1889, 17 and 18).

Once again, Torquemada plays a key role in challenging assumptions here. He is unconvinced and perversely fails to understand the appeal of the countryside. As we later discover in *Torquemada en el purgatorio* (1894), he prefers the city:

Su centro era Madrid: fuera de aquel Madrid [...] no se encontraba el hombre. Echaba de menos su Puerta del Sol, sus calles del Carmen, de Tudescos y callejón del Perro; su agua del Lozoya, su clima variable, días de fuego y noches de hielo. La nostalgia le consumía. (Pérez Galdós 1894, 149)

As Fuentes Peris (2007, 32) has underlined, Torquemada associates with the city with hygiene (and the opportunity to be “productive”), whilst he perceives the countryside to be afflicted by “malas aguas” and “miasmas.” In her view, the protagonist’s attitude can be attributed to the fact that (as noted by Corbin) during this period, “the utopian vision of life in the countryside began to be undermined by a more realistic one” and she argues that Galdós’s motive is to “ridicule Torquemada’s exaggerated utilitarian ethic” (Fuentes Peris 2007, 33). Going further, it is noteworthy that Torquemada’s viewpoint is consistent with other (unanticipated and unconventional) features of his character.²⁴ It is also consistent with his representation as a topsy-turvy character who subverts expectations. It could additionally be argued that Galdós was anticipating psychoanalytical theories of space, for instance Pile’s contentions that “evaluation of space [...] differs from group to group” (1997, 11) and the fact that “clearly human beings respond to their perceived environment, but their interpretations of their surrounding environments are subject to other ‘functions’ and ‘factors’” (1997, 42). Hence Torquemada distinguishes between the “real” environment and the way it is subjectively perceived, questioning the supposition that the idyllic countryside would solve all problems.

²³“Á Martín le quedan media docena de estudios muy bonitos [...] Verá usted [...] el de la sierra de Guadarrama, precioso [...] el de La Granja, con aquellos arbolitos [...] también, y el de [...] qué sé yo qué. Todos muy bonitos” (Pérez Galdós 1889, 72). Galdós also wrote about La Granja in an article entitled “Vacaciones políticas” (Pérez Galdós 1923b, 195–211).

²⁴For example, although his namesake was the Inquisitor, Tomás de Torquemada, Galdós’s Torquemada advocates a “new religion” (money) and is frequently presented as the antithesis of a religious figurehead as he curses his tenants and collects rent on Sundays.

Torquemada's love of Madrid also reflects Galdós's personal fascination with the city. The author could perhaps be regarded as a *flâneur* in his *Memorias* as he relates how he abandoned his University lectures to explore the capital, which provided him with far more inspiration and education than the Law degree for which he had enrolled. In a lecture delivered at the Ateneo in 1915, he revealed that he had launched himself into the streets:

movido de un recóndito afán, que llamaré de higiene o meteorización del espíritu. Ello es que no podía resistir la tentación de lanzarme a las calles en busca de una cátedra de enseñanza más amplias que las universitarias; las aulas de la vida urbana, el estudio y reconocimiento visual de las calles, callejuelas, angosturas, costanillas, plazuelas y rincones de esta urbe madrileña, que a mi parecer contenían copiosa materia filosófica, jurídica, canónica, económico-política, y, sobre todo, literaria. (Quoted in Caudet 1983, 619)²⁵

The use of the term “higiene” is significant here since, in addition to linking to the concerns of contemporaries such as Arenal (mentioned previously), it serves as a reminder that, in representing Madrid in his fiction, Galdós's intention was not merely to mirror it or to reflect contemporary concerns; there was a lot more to it. The term “espíritu,” too, underscores his emotional and imaginative engagement with space and place.

Like the countryside, locations outside Madrid, whilst representing the wider real world outside Spain, often acquire an imaginative significance and, in addition to drawing upon both historical events and contemporary debates and customs, to a degree they may be perceived as the “exotic Other” (Crang 1998, 137). It is implied that the Spanish city of Málaga, briefly mentioned, is a “city of revolution”²⁶ and Europe is specifically referenced both in relation to aspirational cosmopolitan customs, notably Parisian fashion,²⁷ and as the heart of practical concerns, such as advancements in the field of hygiene, which are associated with both the French capital and London.²⁸ During this period, reflections on the outside world, which were sensitized through greater travel opportunities that facilitated an enhanced appreciation of one's own space and the wider world. Unsurprisingly, then, the influence of Galdós's travels and his appreciation of Italy's cultural heritage are subtly conveyed through the references to the Sistine Chapel ceiling in *Torquemada en la hoguera*.²⁹

Interestingly, it appears that dreams and the quest for the exotic can only be fulfilled outside Spain. Hence Torquemada claims that if Valentín lived, he would engineer railways “que irían de aquí á Pekín en cinco minutos” (Pérez Galdós 1889, 51) and Puerto Rico features as the land of hope as Martín declares that he has an aunt there who will help him.³⁰ Even though they may be idealistic, such references convey

²⁵Labanyi (2000, 21) notes that, whilst researching *Fortunata y Jacinta*, Galdós visited lodging houses accompanied by a police escort and also went to brothels disguised as a medical inspector.

²⁶The fact that Bailón gave up the habit in 1869 in Málaga (Pérez Galdós 1889, 24) may well link to historical events during that year, when the Republicans fought troops in the streets.

²⁷Don Juan's wife, “la tarasca aquella tan *fashionable* encargaba vestidos á París” and, in line with English customs, “invitaba á sus amigas para un *five o'clock tea*” (Pérez Galdós 1889, 70).

²⁸We read, “Platicaban mucho también de reformas urbanas, y como Bailón había estado en París y Londres, podía comparar. La higiene pública les preocupaba á entrambos” (Pérez Galdós 1889, 29). This draws upon the obsession with hygiene following the cholera epidemic of 1884–85.

²⁹The Sistine Chapel is specifically mentioned (see Pérez Galdós 1889, 28) and there are also references to the characters on the ceiling and particularly the similarity that Bailón shares with the Sybil of Cumae: “En aquel momento tenía el hombre actitud muy diferente de la de su similar en la Capilla Sixtina” (Pérez Galdós 1889, 66).

³⁰“Amigo, ¿cree usted que mi tía, la que está en Puerto-Rico, ha de dejarme en esta situación cuando se entere? Ya estoy viendo la letra de cuatrocientos ó quinientos pesos que me ha de mandar. Le escribí por el correo pasado” (Pérez Galdós 1889, 84). It is notable that, in addition to writing many articles for Spanish American readers, Galdós created characters who ventured there to make their fortune. (These include José María in *El amigo Manso*

the fact that Galdós was acutely aware that Spain was part of a wider world and his attitude contrasts sharply with what could be regarded as “the Inquisitorial mentality,” when it was generally believed that Spain had been cut off from the rest of the world. At the same time, Torquemada’s comments remind readers that hopes and the imagination play a major role in aspirations for the future.

The “Place of the Imagination” and the “Meaning of Place”

Going further towards unpacking the “meaning of place,” it is worth examining in greater detail the “place of the imagination” in Galdós’s work. It appears to be frequently forgotten that in his press articles Galdós often used real life and real experiences as a springboard to launch himself into the world of his imagination, with the result that the two intersected and became confused. In *Memorias*, for instance, he relates that this process informed his memory (which assumed the form of a character) and confesses, “Es que lo imaginario me deleita más que lo real” (Pérez Galdós 1930, 63). Likewise, in “Recuerdos de Italia,” he writes, “En mi mente se confunden los lugares que vi” and proceeds, “En nuestra mente se entremezclaban, peleándose al verse juntas, las visiones pasadas y las que nos anticipaba nuestra imaginación” (Pérez Galdós 1930, 124 and 125).

A closer look at *Torquemada en la hoguera* reveals that the same processes are at work in this novel and that the symbolic references accorded to space and place are far more significant than might at first appear. Useful parallels can be drawn with the observations made by Gaston Bachelard in *La Poétique de l’espace* (1958, later translated as *Poetics of Space*), but unlike Wright, who confines himself to highlighting the links between Bachelard’s work and *La de Bringas* as evidence of Galdós’s appreciation of “emotional space,” it is my contention that applying Bachelard’s ideas to *Torquemada en la hoguera* not only enhances our understanding of the references to space and place in the novel, but also enables us to appreciate the creative processes at work. In particular, it helps us to reconcile Galdós’s psychological sensitivity and his imaginative powers with the complexity of his task as a Realist novelist engaging with Spain’s transition to modernity and trying, in the words of Marshall Berman, “to make oneself somehow at home in the maelstrom.”³¹ Moreover, it encourages us to think more deeply about Galdós’s intentions and the role of the imagination, and to appreciate that it was largely through the imaginative dimension of his works, where places serve as dynamic springboards rather than static, mirror impressions, that Galdós could focus more sharply on the future than on the present. This might initially seem at odds with the general assumption that Realist novels focus on *present* time and space, but it was

and “Pepet” in *La loca de la casa*.) Other “exotic” lands in the novel include Egypt, as Bailón claims: “Yo fui sacerdote en Egipto, ¿se enterá usted? allá por los años de qué sé yo cuántos [...] sí, señor, sacerdote en Egipto” (Pérez Galdós 1889, 30) and there is also a reference to a land steeped in age and history through Tía Roma’s claim that she is older than Jerusalem (1889, 101), although, as critics have noted, she probably means Methuselah. See Brooks (1973, 109, n.72) and Round (1971).

³¹According to Marshall Berman, to be modern “is to find ourselves in an environment that promises adventure, power, joy, growth, transformation of ourselves and the world—and, at the same time, that threatens to destroy everything we have, everything we know, everything we are. Modern environments and experiences cut across all boundaries of geography and ethnicity, of class and nationality, of religion and ideology; in this sense, modernity can be said to unite all mankind. But it is a paradoxical unity, a unity of disunity; it pours us all into a maelstrom of perpetual disintegration and renewal, of struggle and contradiction, of ambiguity and anguish.” (From *All That Is Solid Melts Into Air: The Experience of Modernity*. Quoted in Morley and Robins 1993, 4).

nonetheless integral to Galdós's desire to represent contemporary society and problems with the aspiration that this might incentivize *future* change and improvement. As Bachelard wrote: "By the swiftness of its actions, the imagination separates us from the past as well as from reality; it faces the future" (1994, xxxiv).

It is noteworthy that in Galdós's press articles, space and place are inextricably bound with the past, as the author notes that history was effectively preserved in particular places. Visiting these locations, then, helped Galdós "the traveller" to travel back in time and immerse himself in the past. In "Recuerdos de Italia," the author begins by recalling his visit to Italy in 1888, but is interrupted as his "ninfa" reminds him of the recent sinking of an Italian steamship off the coast of Las Palmas in March 1889. Thus "mi ninfa y yo nos trasladamos con la imaginación al lugar de la catástrofe" (Pérez Galdós 1930, 132). His visit to Pompeii, too, enables him to embrace history and imagine its former inhabitants, whilst he writes in "Las generaciones artísticas en la ciudad de Toledo" that Toledo is "una historia de España completa" (Pérez Galdós 1928, 44, quoted in Davies 2015, 168).³² History, place, and fiction are often confused and, when visiting Venice, he wonders whether the pigeons are the same that had fed from Othello's hands (Bly 2007, 7). This might be overlooked initially but *Torquemada en la hoguera*, in effect, operates in a similar manner as the narrative takes us on a journey from the nineteenth century back into the times of the Inquisitorial fires and tortures that are graphically described in the opening paragraph.

Read in this way, the underlying potential associations of particular locations named in *Torquemada en la hoguera* can be seen in a new light as they acquire both a realist and symbolic meaning. A useful example is the aforementioned name of the street where Martín and Isidora live, the calle de la Luna. On the one hand, this corresponds to a real street but it is also an apt location for the couple, given the moon's associations with madness and the couple's preference for dreams over reality. Readers of *La desheredada* would be familiar with Isidora's past (as she believed that she was of aristocratic birth) and, furthermore, know that her father had gone mad and had been sent to Leganés. Likewise, the potential associations of the callejón del Perro, the home of Doña Silvia's mother, "señá Rufinica," merit consideration. Galdós's press articles reveal that the author was fascinated with the legends associated with particular places and the name of this specific street originated from the legend that an evil-eyed guard dog once lived there and "fue durante mucho tiempo el rincón que más temor despertaba entre los madrileños" (Manu 2017, n.p.). This animal association enables Galdós to allude to the dehumanizing tendencies that pervaded Spanish society in the battle for survival, as well as the bestial characteristics of "señá Rufinica" and her family, simultaneously submerging the characters in an ominous atmosphere. It also alludes (perhaps humorously) to Naturalist views (for instance, those advanced in Zola's novels) with a dual force, as it intermingles their obsession with animality with their contentions regarding the influence of environment. Señá Rufinica's daughter, Doña Silvia, appears to have acquired something of a celebrity status in this area ("doña Silvia se engalanó con un abrigo de pieles que parecían de conejo, y dejaba bizca á toda la calle de Tudescos y callejón del Perro cuando salía con la visita"; Pérez Galdós 1889, 13) and, in referring to her mother as "señá Rufinica, la del callejón del Perro" (Pérez Galdós 1889, 102), our attention is drawn to the fact that sometimes places became subordinate to the people with whom they were associated. This, too, is apparent in the author's press articles

³²When visiting "el llamado Baño de la Cava" in Toledo, Galdós also writes, "parece que aun suenan las maldiciones que el propio río lanzó a la faz del desdichado don Rodrigo, último Rey de los Godos" (Pérez Galdós 1930, 144).

published in *Viajes y fantasías* (1928), where both real and fictional people become the centre of particular places in Italy; Dante is the centre of Florence, whilst Shakespeare's Juliet is the centre of Verona. The reference also subtly implies that "no matter where your life takes you, you will always be bound to your origins," a theme that is explored in *Torquemada y San Pedro* (1895), particularly at the end, when Torquemada ventures back to his working-class origins. Again, this could be linked to the Naturalists and those who had a predilection for Determinist theories although, as we have seen, Galdós also challenges such views.

With regard to the impact of place upon characters, Torquemada's attachment to the city, mentioned previously, clearly shows that the moneylender, through his homesickness, has a designated space where he feels "at home," in other words "en su casa." Place, then, is invested with significant meaning for Torquemada. As well as indicating that he has overcome the aforementioned challenge of making himself "at home in the maelstrom" (of modernity), this corresponds to Bachelard's definition of "felicitous space," "the space we love," "eulogized space":

Attached to its protective value, which can be a positive one, are also imagined values, which soon become dominant. Space that has been seized upon by the imagination cannot remain indifferent space subject to the measures and estimates of the surveyor. [...] it concentrates being within limits that protect. (1994, xxxv–xxxvi)

It is worth revisiting the house (or home or "la casa") at this point. On one level, Torquemada's home can be related to the concept of gendered spaces and the situation of women in nineteenth-century Spain. Doña Silvia and Rufina evidently manage their household successfully,³³ and, as such, they undertake what Fuentes Peris (2003, 29) terms:

the role of women as guarantors of order within the home [which] was fundamental in a world where industrialization and urban overcrowding were perceived by sections of the bourgeoisie as having a disintegrating effect on the family—the domestic unit and the maintenance of domestic order being considered the basis of social stability.³⁴

In furnishing their properties in a particular style, Don Juan's wife, Isidora and, to an extent, Torquemada can also be linked to what Bachelard has termed "the function of inhabiting" (1994, 4), examined by Wright in connection with *La de Bringas* (1982, 76).³⁵ However, probably on account of the novel's relative brevity, in *Torquemada en la hoguera* Galdós does not, as argued by Surwillo in the case of *El amigo Manso* (1882), accord detailed attention to "the home" as "domestic space, women and family," wherein "the narrator's

³³See Davies (2017).

³⁴We read that Doña Silvia "gobernaba la casa con magistral economía" (Pérez Galdós 1889, 5), and, following her death, "Rufina había sacado todas las capacidades domésticas de su madre, y gobernaba el hogar casi tan bien como ella" (Pérez Galdós 1889, 7).

³⁵The moneylender is somewhat distinct from the female characters since he is less concerned with appearances and is a hoarder—hence the reference to his rummaging through the cabinet drawers and multiple jewellery boxes whilst looking for the pearl in Chapter 8. However, even this apparently minor incident can be deemed significant, since it is revealing of his personality when read in relation to Bachelard; for instance his statement that "For many people, the fact that there should exist a homology between the geometry of the small box and the psychology of secrecy does not call for protracted comment" (1994, 82). We can also link the reference to Torquemada's searching through the drawers to Bachelard's comment (drawing on Bergson) that "Concepts are drawers in which knowledge may be classified" (1994, 75). Might Torquemada's search, thus, symbolically express the moneylender's desperate desire to find (and embrace) some ready-made concept that might somehow justifiably explain his son's illness?

world is grounded rather insistently” (Surwillo 2014, 74).³⁶ Nor does it appear to be the case that this particular novel offers us an insight into potential connections between “the home” and nationalism, as also contended by Surwillo, again in relation to *El amigo Manso*.³⁷ *Torquemada en la hoguera* does, nonetheless, draw upon the broader significance of “la casa” as “both a place and an idea, [which] is complex and multifaceted. [...] Home operates at a variety of overlapping scales indicating how and where people feel a sense of belonging,” as the editors of *The People, Place, and Space Reader* put it (Giesecking et al. 2014, 147).

According to Bachelard, “the house image would appear to have become the topography of our intimate being” (1994, xxxvi), and is one of the “greatest powers of integration for the thoughts, memories and dreams of [human]kind” (1994, 6). He notes its significant impact on the individual as “our corner of the world [...] our first universe, a real cosmos in every sense of the world” (1994, 4), hence “the house images move in both directions: they are in us as much as we are in them” (1994, xxxvii); houses are “dwelling-places of the past that remain with us for all time” (1994, 6). This goes some way towards explaining why Torquemada feels so lost and disorientated when he is forced to leave his comfort zone and why he is never happy at the Palacio de Gravelinas, despite Cruz’s renovations, possibly because, “as Baudelaire said, in a palace, ‘there is no place for intimacy’” (Bachelard 1994, 29). Rafael del Águila arguably suffers from a similar form of nostalgia and psychological turmoil, but this time in the opposite direction, when he finds himself outside his former home in *Torquemada en la cruz* (1893) from which he has been ousted. In this situation he corresponds to Bachelard’s description, “being thrown out, outside the being of the house, a circumstance in which the hostility of men and of the universe accumulates” (1994, 7). This has a dramatic effect upon him because he has literally and metaphorically lost his comfort zone; as Bachelard remarked, “When we dream of the house we were born in, in the utmost depths of reverie, we participate in this original warmth, in this well-tempered matter of the material paradise. This is the environment in which the protective beings live” (1994, 7). Rafael cannot move forward because:

Memories of the outside world will never have the same tonality as those of our home and, by recalling these memories, we add to our store of dreams; we are never real historians, but always near poets, and our emotion is perhaps nothing but an expression of a poetry that was lost. (Bachelard 1994, 6)

³⁶Surwillo (2014, 74–75) highlights “Irene’s nascent domesticity: ‘Tenía afanes de decorar bien el recinto donde viviese y de labrarse el agradable y cómodo rincón doméstico que los ingleses llaman *home*.’ [...] Manso hopes that Irene might embody the ideal bourgeois domesticity that is failing in Spain.”

³⁷Surwillo (2014, 75) refers to Catherine Hall and Sonya Rose, who “have written in the case of England [that] the cultivation of home, with its coherence and sense of belonging, goes hand in hand with the creation of nationalism as a similarly imagined place of belonging and enclosure.” Related to this, she posits that “the home that Irene creates at the end of *El amigo Manso* conforms to traditional Spanish values and leaves the narrator utterly disillusioned” and “stands in contrast to Lica’s distinct and ultimately permeable house that is more a stage than a private sphere” (2014, 75). Surwillo then proceeds to argue that “Home and abroad are particularly confused when metropolitan life depends on Cuban money channeled through *indiano* mediators whose rapacious behavior has its roots not in colonial ‘barbarity’ but in the Peninsula,” arguing that Galdós dramatizes this in *El amigo Manso* and, through characters such as Lica, who struggles with her husband’s infidelity, poses questions such as “Where and what is ‘home’?” (Surwillo 2014, 80). Ultimately, in this novel, “Galdós collapses the imperial and the domestic into a single space, confusing the lines between center and colony in a struggle for control over the *home* (and its limits). [...] He] suggests a paradigm in which the rupture of nation from home throws the centrality of Madrid into question and begs a reinterpretation of the domestic space created by the women in the novel” (Surwillo 2014, 83).

Bachelard highlights the security and safety of the house: “the house shelters day-dreaming, the house protects the dreamer, the house allows one to dream in peace” (1994, 6). It is, in essence, “a large cradle” (1994, 7) and although he does not explicitly draw the analogy, he implies that it is not dissimilar to the comfort of the womb, which complements the frequent presentation of Rafael as a child who is pampered by his sisters: “Life begins well, it begins enclosed, protected, all warm in the bosom of the house” (1994, 7). It is not insignificant, then, that Rafael is desperate not to relinquish these dreams and his blindness represents, in both literal and metaphorical terms, his refusal to face up to the reality of the present, wherein he has been traumatically dislodged from the comfort of his family home. Mental trauma in Rafael’s case can be deemed to be a consequence of spatial removal from his comfort zone.

Coupled with the previous descriptions of the characters’ homes, ranging from Tía Roma’s hovel to Torquemada’s “palacio,” there is ample evidence in *Torquemada en la hoguera* to reinforce the claim that “Home is a place and an idea contingent upon and always intertwined with issues of power and subjectivity, gender and class, culture and individuality” (Giesecking et al. 2014, 149). The novel also reflects, both literally and symbolically, the interaction between the public and private sphere through the representation of “la calle” and “la casa.” In Chapter 2 Torquemada launches into a new mode, recognizing that he must obtain clothes that would accord him a respectable status and we read, “echábase mi hombre á la calle y se sentía, con la buena ropa, más persona que antes” (Pérez Galdós 1889, 13–14). The term “echarse a la calle” is employed again in Chapter 6, as Torquemada gives the beggar his cloak. As Labanyi has noted, the term “has a double meaning ‘to take to the streets’ and ‘to start a revolution,’ for revolutions are made by those staking a claim to the public sphere” (Labanyi 2000, 105). It could also be regarded as the Spanish equivalent of Mary Louise Pratt’s “contact zone” and, as noted previously, it is relevant that it is the acquisition of particular “places,” in Torquemada’s case tenement houses, that enable the moneylender to accumulate the wealth which will lead to his next “revolution” as he marries into the aristocracy.

The term “la calle” is also invested with additional meanings. It involves social interaction; we read that Valentín refuses to play with the other children in the street: “No le hablaran á él de bajar á la calle para enredar con los chiquillos de la vecindad” (Pérez Galdós 1889, 17). This highlights the fact that Valentín is different from the other children, cannot interact with them and chooses to entertain himself by tantalizing members of the public in the street:

Sus travesuras eran pacíficas, y consistieron, hasta los cinco años, en llenar de monigotes y letras el papel de las habitaciones ó arrancarle algún cacho, en echar desde el balcón á la calle una cuerda muy larga con la tapa de una cafetera, arriándola hasta tocar el sombrero de un transeunte, y recogiénola después á toda prisa. (Pérez Galdós 1889, 17–18)

Significantly, his location here (in other words, his physical distance and height) can be aligned to Bachelard’s comments: “From the top of his tower, a philosopher of domination sees the universe in miniature. Everything is small because he is high. And since he is high, he is great, the height of his station is proof of his own greatness” (1994, 173). Thus it may be construed that Valentín would not condescend to “bajar á la calle,” his high position symbolically reflecting both his intellectual superiority, as well as hinting at his premature death and marking him out as a future angel. Meanwhile,

the balcony location, a liminal space, is both “inside” the private sphere and attached to the home, yet “outside” in the public sphere, simultaneously facilitating the “insider” (Valentín) with a view of the outside world and constituting a location which can be seen by “outsiders” (the public in the street).³⁸ This parallels the ambiguous, contradictory manner in which the character is presented in narrative terms, since Valentín is described as both “angelito” and “Anticristo” (Pérez Galdós 1889, 22).

Additionally, whilst “la calle” represents a means of opportunity for Torquemada, it serves as a refuge for the tenants who wish to escape from the moneylender when he arrives to invade their private space: “algunas mujeres corrieron á refugiarse en sus respectivos aposentos, otras, que debían de ser malas pagadoras, y que observaron la cara que traía la fiera, se fueron á la calle” (Pérez Galdós 1889, 40). As far as Doña Silvia is concerned, “la calle” can also constitute a source of potential waste: “Ella defendiendo el céntimo en casa *para que no se fuera á la calle*, y él barriendo para adentro á fin de traer todo lo que pasara, formaron un matrimonio sin desperdicio” (Pérez Galdós 1889, 5, my italics).³⁹ Finally, “la calle” is associated with the potential threats and dangers of the outside world, as the desperate Torquemada tells Tía Roma, “saldré á la calle y mataré á alguien” (Pérez Galdós 1889, 64).

Conclusions

The representation of space and place in *Torquemada en la hoguera* draws on real places and, in so doing, promotes a sense of familiarity that enables readers to engage with the work. However, re-reading the novel in conjunction with the press articles helps us to appreciate that their significance is far more complex than might at first appear. Whilst they might initially seem to derive from a static mirror impression of Madrid, with the city serving as a mere backdrop to the fictional plot, real places in *Torquemada en la hoguera* are filtered through a prism, gaining a dynamic force as they combine with both fiction and the imagination, and correspond with Galdós’s personal concerns and inclinations. As the author wrote in “Nuevos viajes,” “En mis correrías, las personas y cosas imaginarias me seducían más que las reales. Siempre fue el Arte más bello que la Historia” (Pérez Galdós 1930, 206).

In *Torquemada en la hoguera* space and place function on multiple levels; they serve as a springboard for in-depth reflection on pressing issues and intersect with the world of the imagination and psychology. It is through the exploration of these multiple layers that readers are able to experience a sense of both identification and distance and it is through this process that Galdós was not only able to communicate his personal perceptions but pose key questions regarding Spain’s position in the modern world, people’s mentality during this period, and the relationship between reality and fiction. As Crang (1998, 57) has noted, “literature is not a mirror held up to the world but part of a complex web of meanings.” Essentially, it is up to the readers (both past and present) to appreciate this, to decide how to interpret the novel, just as it was for

³⁸This reading can be related to an essay by Sabine Smith, which “explores the role of the urban residential balcony as a physical, mental, and social construct and as an interstitial site at the periphery of distinct realms of lived experience, e.g. the private interior and the public exterior” in “Peruvian, English, US American and German texts” (Smith 2018, 168).

³⁹See Fuentes Peris (2007) for a detailed discussion of “waste” in the *Torquemada* novels.

Galdós's contemporaries to decide what the future might hold in this particular time and place, both of which were at the crossroads of change. The way that readers truly (and meaningfully) engage with space and place in *Torquemada en la hoguera*, then, is through appreciating that they serve as a "thinking space" for the author. This promotes active and imaginative engagement, not a passive and static absorption of what we are told. It is then that we can truly comprehend the effectiveness of the Realist novel as a springboard for reflection on a range of issues, simultaneously timebound and specific to Spain, yet also timeless and universal.

In short, *Torquemada en la hoguera* merits attention not solely as a "Novel of the Historical Imagination" (Bly 1983), but as a "Novel of the Geographical Imagination."⁴⁰ In Pocock's words, "the truth of fiction is a truth beyond mere facts. Fictive reality may transcend or contain more truth than the physical everyday reality" (quoted in Crang 1998, 45); Galdós evidently anticipated future debates and the significance that space and place would acquire for scholars, geographers, landscapers, architects, politicians, educators and innumerable others on a worldwide scale in the twenty-first century. It is thus incumbent upon readers to revisit and reassess the significance of space and place in Galdós's work, if not also in the Realist novel more broadly.

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⁴⁰Interestingly, since devising this title, I discovered Derek Gregory's book entitled *Geographical Imaginations*, inspired by the work of the geographer David Harvey, who coined the term "geographical imagination." Gregory does not, however, examine Galdós's work. (As noted by Giesecking et al. 2014, 357, "The concept of the geographical imagination expresses the literal and metaphorical ways in which people conceptualize and render space.")

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