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## How To Be A Writer for the Press – and How to Write about It

Rhian Davies

During the nineteenth century the press did more than act as a valuable source of communication and publicity. It had a dramatic impact upon how writers wrote. In considering this issue, I will explore the potential avenues open as to how future scholars might read, research and write about the press, frequently and unduly regarded as being of secondary importance as an area for investigation. The two primary concerns of this chapter dovetail because how we now read and write about the nineteenth-century press needs to be shaped by how people went about writing for and publishing it.

### The Historical Background: The Rise of the Press as an Increasingly Catalytic Force

In 1883, the Liberals, led by Sagasta, passed a new *Ley de policía de imprenta* [Law on the policy of the press], which introduced greater freedom. Thereafter the number of “periódicos científicos y literarios” [journals of scientific and literary interest], particularly those which appeared monthly, increased, whilst the number of political publications gradually decreased. A number of other developments benefited the press, including a decrease in the illiteracy rate and an improvement in communications, as the period saw Spain’s connection to the French telegraphic system in 1846, the opening of lines between Madrid, Barcelona and Seville, and the extension of the Spanish railway network. Other significant advances included the establishment of news agencies, such as the *Agencia Fabra* (founded by Nilo María Fabra in 1870) and the introduction of technical developments, such as stereotyping, the iron press, the application of steam power, mechanical typesetting and typesetting, and new methods of producing illustrations, together with the use of the rotary press, which helped to lower costs and hence increase output. Thus, towards the end of the

nineteenth century, the press, less severely hampered now by issues such as political restrictions, illiteracy, technical backwardness and communication problems, came to play a crucial role in Spanish life.<sup>i</sup>

The press assumed multiple identities and was described as “[un] cuarto poder” [a fourth estate], “un sacerdocio” [a holy ministry], a form of daily bread, whilst, for the celebrated mid-century poet and writer Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer, it was a valued friend, closely entwined with his intellectual life:

Al periódico que todas las mañanas encontramos en Madrid sobre la mesa del comedor o en el gabinete de estudio se le recibe como a un amigo de confianza que viene a charlar un rato [...]. Tan íntimamente está enlazada su vida intelectual con la nuestra, tan una es la atmósfera en que se agitan nuestras pasiones y las suyas.

[One receives the newspaper that we find every day on the dining table or in our study in Madrid as one would a trusted friend who comes by for a brief chat [...] so closely linked is its intellectual life to our own, to such an extent is the atmosphere in which our and its passions are stirred one and the same.]<sup>ii</sup>

It was an important outlet for the work of many writers during this period, often providing them with a much needed supplement to their income: in the words of the novelist Emilia Pardo Bazán, “El periodismo [...] es hoy, como el pan, alimento indispensable y diario” [Journalism (...) is these days, like bread, a necessary, daily food].<sup>iii</sup> The press encouraged writers to be flexible in their styles and ways of writing and fuelled their prolific tendencies, whilst frequently obliging them to write rapidly in order to meet stringent publication deadlines. Furthermore, it offered them the opportunity to practice and to

experiment, serving, at the same time, as a valuable source of stimulation and an opportunity to publicize their works. As the established novelist Juan Valera noted,

[...] en él [el periódico] se anuncian, se avisan las cosas, se llama la atención con bombos, se chilla para llamar a los curiosos, etc. etc. El buen paño en el arca se vende; pero puesto en escaparate se vende más [...]. La prensa es máquina de divulgación y de publicidad.<sup>iv</sup>

[in the newspaper announcements are made, events listed, matters can be well publicised, one can shout out to draw the attention of those who might be interested etc. etc. Good wine needs no bush, but when it is placed in the shop window, it sells better [...]. The press is a broadcasting and publicising machine.]

Thus the late nineteenth-century thinker Miguel de Unamuno informed the influential novelist, Leopoldo Alas (Clarín) that writing for the press was “un modo de mantener fresca la firma y de obtener un suplemento al sueldo” [a way of keeping one’s signed work fresh and of topping up one’s income]<sup>v</sup> and the scholar Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo urged Valera to continue to send articles to the *Revista de España*: “porque de esta manera se obliga usted mismo a escribir y no siente tentación alguna de suspenderlo o dilatarlo. [...] Usted necesita el estímulo de la publicidad para no cansarse ni distraerse a otro asunto” [because this way you make yourself write and you don’t feel tempted to stop or to put off writing. [...] You need the stimulus of exposure to the public so that you don’t get bored or distracted by something else].<sup>vi</sup>

In many cases it is clear that contributing to the press was an opportunity for writers to record their thoughts and responses to a particular event or ideology contemporaneous with

the period in which they were living, to reflect and share their concerns and views, be they in embryonic or mature form. It was an indispensable vehicle for communication between writers as they frequently urged each other to read and to respond to current events, to new ideas and opinions published in the press. In a sense it served as a kind of tertulia [literary get-together], or a meeting in a café that had managed to overcome the barrier of physical distance.

On some occasions, the press served as a means of bridging the generational gap as younger writers sought the support of their mature counterparts, which might well lead us to question the long-established tendency to classify, if not simplify, the period in terms of “generations.” In 1903, for example, the group of younger writers associated with the Republican journal *Alma Española* [Spanish soul] enlisted the support and aid of the great novelist of the nineteenth-century, Benito Pérez Galdós, whose leading article “*Soñemos, alma, soñemos*” [Let us dream, soul, let us dream] appeared in its first issue. More importantly, it was an important means of engaging with the wider reading public, in many cases in both Spain and overseas, notably in Spanish America, where it helped to promote a sense of joint identity and strengthened bonds. Thus both generational and geographical solidarity, which was increasingly defined by journalism, invested the press with an added authority.

Whereas earlier in the century, particularly in the 1830s, the press had generally been associated with communicating (or even imposing) narrow political opinions upon its reading public, largely in order to open the doors to a career in politics<sup>vii</sup> (see chapter 9 of this present book), as the century advanced (from around the 1860s onwards), it became increasingly immersed in cultural matters. Many periodicals engaged in campaigns, some of which were of a charitable nature and thus they could arguably be regarded as examples of cultural preoccupations. For instance Galdós, in one of the *cartas* [open letters] written for *La Prensa*

noted the charitable efforts of *El Imparcial* and *El Liberal* to raise money for those affected by the earthquake in 1884,<sup>viii</sup> and in *La España Moderna*, the collector and editor José Lázaro referred to the press's support of the family of the deceased writer Eduardo de Lustonó.<sup>ix</sup> This continued into the twentieth century as the press became involved in campaigns to save the country's heritage. In his article published in *La España Moderna* in 1913, for example, the writer Niceto Oneca urged readers to prevent a painting by Van der Goes from being sold to the German government.<sup>x</sup> Many recognized that the press fostered Spanish culture and a good number regarded the role of the periodical press as being specifically associated with education. On the last page of its first issue, the editors of *Revista Moderna* wrote, "De todo corazón saludamos á nuestros compañeros en la prensa, á los escritores y artistas que con su talento y sus obras fomentan y engrandecen la cultura española" [From the bottom of our hearts we salute our colleagues in the press, the writers and artists who nurture and magnify Spanish culture with their talent and their works].<sup>xi</sup> This association could perhaps be related to the shift from politics per se to cultural politics, possibly resulting from the widespread feeling that neither the political institutions nor the politicians were going to fulfill their promises nor would they introduce the necessary changes to guarantee Spain's regeneration.<sup>xii</sup> "La prensa," wrote the critic Edmundo González Blanco, "es hoy uno de los grandes resortes de cultura y uno de los medios más poderosos de educación y de divulgación popular" [Today, the press is one of the great mechanisms of promoting our culture and one of the most powerful means of education and of dissemination among the wider populus].<sup>xiii</sup> Embraced by politicians from all factions, philosophers and educators, liberals and conservatives, men and women, "the young" and "the old," the fin-de-siècle press could be regarded as a microcosm of Spanish society during this period. More importantly perhaps, it was frequently used by writers to influence and inspire their reading public to pursue directions that might have a decisive effect upon the country's future. It often acted as a

catalyst for new ideological currents and expressions of nationalist fervor, as noted by the twentieth-century historian Vicens Vives:

en 1893, a raíz de una escaramuza con los marroquíes de Melilla, la prensa madrileña infló el incidente hasta tal punto que la capital quedó conmovida por un exceso de exaltación nacionalista que exigía el castigo de los “moros.”<sup>xiv</sup>

[in 1893, following a skirmish with the Moroccans of Melilla, the Madrid-based press blew the incident so far out of proportion that the capital city was up-in-arms in an excess of frenzied nationalist demands that the “Moors” be punished.]

This is a striking instance of how the “cultural politics” might not aid the situation since material interest, as the driver of political action, was here displaced by perceived interest, which was largely defined and mediated by the press. Furthermore, the press influenced what could be termed as the national mood, sometimes through its choice of particular cultural terms that assumed particular attitudes towards the “Moors”, which then served as the impetus for additional (not necessarily well-considered) policy decisions. The impact of the press on attitudes towards bullfighting was also noted by the journalist Eusebio Blasco: “De la afición rayana en la locura que hoy tiene el público a los toros, no se busque otra causa que la propaganda colosal hecha por los periódicos a esta fiesta, que hace diez o doce años estaba en decadencia” [No-one should look for any other cause for the near insane love the public has for bullfighting these days than the vast propaganda carried out by the newspaper press on behalf of that fiesta, which ten or twelve years ago was in decline].<sup>xv</sup>

Reevaluating the Press

Notwithstanding its significance and despite the fact that we have seen an evident surge in critical interest in periodical publications in recent years, the nineteenth-century Spanish press still presents the researcher with a vast treasure trove of resources that remain unexploited. This is partly due to the mindset that leads critics to underestimate its value. There is, for instance, a frequent tendency to regard the contribution of major writers to the press as a second-rate activity, a notion sometimes promoted by the writers themselves. Galdós, for example, contemptuously referred to his early press articles as “trabajillos” [little jobs], whilst Clarín lamented the inferior quality of some of his contributions

¡Cuántas veces, por cumplir un compromiso, por entregar a tiempo la obra del jornalero acabada, me sorprendo en la ingrata faena de hacerme inferior a mí mismo, de escribir peor que sé, de decir lo que sé que no vale nada, que no importa, que sólo sirve para llenar un hueco y justificar un salario!<sup>xvi</sup>

[How many times, so as to make good on a promise, so as to hand in on time the work from this day job that will be the end of me, have I found myself in the unhappy game of demeaning myself, of writing material below my ability, of saying things I know are worthless, of no import, that serve only to fill a gap and provide a reason for paying me!]

Writers such as Menéndez Pelayo fuelled such contempt by highlighting the generally negative perception of the press, which was seen as being a frivolous money-making venture that often pandered to the demands of a superficial, fickle public. In his *Historia de los heterodoxos españoles* [History of heterodoxy among the Spanish], he described journalists as:



mala y diabólica ralea, nacida para extender por el mundo la ligereza, la vanidad y el falso saber, para agitar estérilmente y consumir y entontecer a los pueblos, para halagar la pereza y privar a las gentes del racional y libre uso de sus facultades discursivas.<sup>xvii</sup>

[a wicked, devilish bunch, born to spread superficiality, vanity, and false knowledge across the world, to stir up sterile controversy, and consume and dumb-down peoples, to flatter laziness and deny populations the rational and free use of their discursive faculties.]

This was, in some respects, typical of the attitude of this neo-Catholic historical polemicist in the early 1880s, since he was anxious to limit the prevailing cultural conversation in Spain, although he was, paradoxically, increasingly enjoying conversations with the likes of Galdós during this same period. However, if we add to such comments the frequent embroilment of journalists in duels and bribery, their associations with gossip, accusations of political one-sidedness and their increasing attention to sensationalism through their focus on gory crimes, together with the growing desire to make money by whatever means, we can come to appreciate how the tabloid press of today was born.

In addition to such negative perceptions, we often find that, rather than being regarded as material worthy of investigation in their own right, press articles are used by critics to fulfill some other purpose, usually to back up specific theories.<sup>xviii</sup> Statements from particular articles are frequently taken out of context and the articles themselves, perhaps victims of their flexible, self-contained nature, are rarely appreciated within the context of the publication in which they appeared. In adopting this approach, the press's fundamental role

and its strength as a product of collective activity is often disregarded. As noted previously, one of the unique characteristics of the press is its flexibility, especially as regards its identity. Journalists, in publishing their work in a particular periodical, did not solely retain their individuality but often additionally assumed the identity of a contributor to the *Revista de X*, in other words, they became a member of a “team” and implicitly endorsed the collective mission of that particular publication.

It could even be argued that writers’ knowledge that their piece was going to appear in a specific publication affected the very genesis of that work, both in terms of the style and contents of the work. There is, for instance, evidence to suggest that this might well have been the case with Galdós’s novel *Torquemada en la hoguera* [Torquemada at the Stake] (1889), which was written for and first published in *La España Moderna*.<sup>xix</sup> Every piece of work that is published in a periodical publication naturally gains some connection with the other articles published within the periodical, be this deliberate or not, and can, in the process, also acquire a new significance for the active reader who is prepared to reflect on this relationship. Some critics have noted that a number of authors tailored their works to meet the expectations of the relevant readers and adopted different styles for different publications. The biographer Pedro Ortiz Armengol, for example, claims that Galdós, whilst writing for *La Prensa*, adopted a particular style in his *crónica* [column]: “Contra los socialistas austriacos y la supuesta conspiración terrorista que se les achaca” [Against the Austrian socialists and the supposed terrorist plot of which they are accused]:

Está pareciendo, nos tememos, que para un público de un gran periódico burgués, Galdós acentúa el tono conservador, y que esto no es coherente con otras posiciones suyas destinadas al consumo interior y a una clientela de pertenencia casi exclusivamente liberal, “progresista,” anticlerical, muy crítica hacia las clases

dominantes, muy próxima a la clase media modesta, compuesta en gran parte por profesiones tenidas por avanzadas: clase médica, abogados.<sup>xx</sup>

[I am afraid it appears that when addressing the audience of a major bourgeois newspaper, Galdós adopts a more conservative tone, and that this is at odds with other positions he adopted with a view to internal consumption and an almost exclusively liberal, “progressive,” anti-clerical clientele which was highly critical of the dominant classes and very close to the more modest middle class, consisting primarily of professions generally held to be of advanced views: the medical profession, lawyers.]

The same could be said of writers such as Clarín; the critic G. G. Brown has noted that “the tone of his [Clarín’s] articles in the left-wing, anticlerical Madrid daily *El Solfeo* is very different from that of the work he contributed at the same period to the conservative, provincial *Revista de Asturias*, for example.”<sup>xxi</sup> Another striking example can be found in Unamuno’s articles, which were first published in the cultural review *La España Moderna* in 1895 and (retaining their subtitles) later became *En torno al casticismo*. Although Unamuno was writing about socialism in *La Lucha de Clases* and *El Socialista* during this period, he does not mention it in *La España Moderna*, yet *En torno al casticismo* still offers, according to Nicholas Round, “an account of Spain’s problems which made a Socialist remedy seem overwhelmingly relevant.”<sup>xxii</sup> It may, of course, have been Unamuno’s strategy to encourage the readers of *La España Moderna* to read between the lines and come to that conclusion themselves.<sup>xxiii</sup>

The periodical publication, thus, defines a public; the public and the author in a shared situation define a context; this context then predicates a conversation in which particular topics should be discussed in a particular manner. In the same vein, it could be argued that the

press profoundly affected the ways in which writers wrote and, by the same token, the way in which readers read.

In this light, then, are attempts to distinguish between authors such as Galdós as *literato*, in other words, a writer of novels, short stories, plays and so forth, and as *periodista*, a contributor to the press, justified? During this period the two terms were often interchangeable and many engaged in futile attempts to establish a clear distinction between *literatura* and *periodismo*. On several occasions the topic became a matter of debate in the Royal Academy. The journalist Eugenio Sellés, in his “Discurso de recepción” (1895), for example, pronounced, “Es género literario [...] la novela [...]; es género literario la crítica [...]; [...] ¿no ha de serlo el periodismo, que lo es todo en una pieza [...].” [The novel is a literary genre; criticism is a literary genre. Thus shouldn’t journalism also be a literary genre, since it encompasses everything in one place].<sup>xxiv</sup> Later, in his reply to Isidoro Fernández Flores’s Academy speech (1898), Valera proclaimed:

El libro es un medio de publicidad y el periódico es otro. De ambos medios se vale ó puede valerse el escritor, pero no hay, en realidad, diferencia literaria entre ambos medios. De una serie de artículos se forma á menudo un libro, y de fragmentos ó pedazos de un libro, se hacen á menudo también no pocos artículos de periódicos.<sup>xxv</sup>

[Books are one form of publicity and newspapers another. The writer does or can make use of both media, but there is, in reality, no literary difference between the two media. A book is often made out of a series of articles, and no small number of newspaper articles are made out of fragments or pieces of books.]

To an extent, Valera's description oversimplifies what was actually happening at the period in terms of the relationship between the press and literature: for instance in some cases whole novels were published in serialized form or short stories appeared in their entirety, whereas in other cases, only fragments or sample chapters appeared, probably to encourage readers to then purchase the whole book.<sup>xxvi</sup> At the same time, it is important to recognize that some writers were more effective at writing (longer) literature than press articles (and vice versa). However, if we do take into account Valera's view that there was, in essence, no real difference between publishing in a book and publishing in the press during the fin de siècle, perhaps we should then also ask whether it might be possible to regard some authors' fictional output as part of their journalistic output? It is evident that the boundaries between literature and the press were frequently blurred and the stylistic distinctions that one might expect to find in literary works and press contributions were not always visible. Thus both forms of writing were sufficiently similar to be subjected to many of the same kinds of critical interrogation. It is indeed possible that when these are applied as seriously to journalism as to the more recognized literary genres nowadays, we will encounter a revised canon in terms of writing from the period that is deemed to be deserving of lasting critical attention. There is, moreover, a general tendency to overlook what could be described as the "hidden histories" of the periodical press, namely the roles of the general editors and their collaboration with the contributors, the extent to which the business concerns affected the lives of the periodicals and the contributors, the impact of technological developments, in particular that of the visual culture of the press. Even the generic characteristics of the different kinds of periodical publications – from newspapers and reviews to ilustraciones [illustrated Spanish reviews] and almacenes [magazines] – and the structures and styles of the articles published therein (for example the crónica) would appear to have been largely disregarded.

## Potential Avenues for Future Research

Whilst much valuable research has been conducted on the press, to date this has been somewhat haphazard in its direction and piecemeal in its content. Attempts to examine the role of individual authors in relation to the press are both scarce and insufficient, although it must be recognized that conducting such research constitutes no easy task, even in the case of well-known authors like Galdós. As Antony Percival writes:

The problem facing investigators of Galdós's journalism are manifold and complex, for the history of the Spanish press in its burgeoning, politically precarious stage in the latter part of the nineteenth century is imperfectly known, copies of many periodicals are difficult or impossible to locate, and, to make matters worse, Galdós made anonymous contributions to newspapers, neglected to keep copies and cuttings of many of his articles, and in later life liked to speak of his collaboration with important periodicals like *La Nación*, *El Debate*, *Revista de España*, and later *La Prensa* and *La Nación*, both of Buenos Aires, while remaining silent about his extensive collaboration with lesser-known periodicals like *El Correo de España*, *La Ilustración de Madrid*, and *Revista del Movimiento Intelectual de Europa*. Galdós's vagueness and secretiveness concerning his early journalistic activities have led Leo J. Hoar to allege that the author's "notorious memory and attitude toward certain phases of his early career border on intentionally selective amnesia."<sup>xxvii</sup>

Percival then proceeds to assert that "the critical work [...] on Galdós's non-novelistic writings is markedly less substantial than that centering on his novels [...] despite the fact that [Galdós] contributed articles to the press in Spain and abroad throughout the whole of his

literary career.<sup>xxviii</sup> Leo Hoar's comment upon Galdós's "intentionally selective amnesia" highlights the possibility that one of the problems with which Galdós might have grappled was that writing for the press was public writing. In other words, what he wrote and published within the orbit of a particular journal committed him (and his reputation) to its ethos, reputation and ideology. He was also confronted with the dilemma that if he wished to gain or sustain a reputation or a regular income, he was essentially obliged to write for the press, even though, as noted previously, this also offered him the attractive opportunity to engage with contemporary issues and the public at a critical time when Spain embraced the challenges posed by modernity that both preoccupied and fascinated him.

Much remains to be done in the way of detailed research on individual newspapers, reviews, and magazines. It is fortunate that libraries such as the Biblioteca Nacional and the Hemeroteca of Madrid have invested in the digitization of many periodicals, enabling readers based outside Spain to access many of the important publications. Unfortunately, however, there are still no indexes of the majority of publications to highlight the contents of the publications to support researchers in their use of the press in order to trace particular ideological currents. There are also relatively few in-depth studies of specific periodicals of the turn of the century, even in the case of major publications such as *Revista de España*.<sup>xxix</sup> As well as focusing on the contributors, contents and themes of such periodicals (work which could be usefully complemented by electronic indexes), such studies could include information on the overall "mission" and the collective nature of the enterprise. Information on the history of the publication (for instance whether there were different general editors and an assessment of their influence), details as to whether articles are signed or not, or whether they are signed collectively, an analysis of the structure and style adopted (including details of the length of the publication, fixed sections, the role of illustrations and so on) and, where possible, an examination of influential elements such as readership, editors, sponsorship,

advertising and so forth could be usefully integrated to enable readers to build up a full picture of the publication and its significance. Another approach could be to focus specifically on particular kinds of periodicals (namely whether they are reviews, newspapers or magazines, particularly since varying degrees of respect were accorded to each of these publications).<sup>xxx</sup> The ilustraciones could well represent a fruitful area for research and the questions adopted could be centered on those posed in the previous section. The nature and role of specific elements in the press, for instance illustrations, offer further potential avenues for research, and could either involve the analysis of the illustrations printed in one particular publication or a combined study of those based on a particular topic or theme. Works such as Lou Charnon-Deutsch's *Hold That Pose* (2008) could be regarded as models for such an approach. As she notes, "The weekly magazine became an important ingredient of the collective life of the city, acting like a visual and discursive testimonial to its current heterogeneity as well as a kind of souvenir of its idealized urbanity."<sup>xxxix</sup> Alternatively, research could be centered on illustrations or photographs of particular individuals, adopting the methodology fruitfully employed by Maryellen Bieder in relation to Emilia Pardo Bazán,<sup>xxxii</sup> and applying it to other major writers of the period. A fourth possibility would be to center on particular themes in the press, for example the depiction of women, Spanish America or crime (for the latter, see chapter 6 of this present book). It would also be possible to focus, as mentioned previously, on particular authors, possibly, as a cross-bearing, highlighting the significance of particular works in the context of the periodical in which they appeared. In a similar vein, one could study the reception of particular authors and their works in the press. An evaluation of critics' reviews on Galdós's work, notably on his plays, including *Electra* has already been particularly enlightening in this regard.<sup>xxxiii</sup>

Of equal worth would be studies on the role of particular editors, something that has often been undervalued, despite the fact that, as Gómez Aparicio points out, during the



Restoration period, “cada periódico [...] era, en realidad, un hombre” [each periodical publication [...] was, in reality, one man].<sup>xxxiv</sup> Writers such as Unamuno also recognized the crucial role played by general editors, writing that “en la historia de la cultura humana hay editores que significan muchísimo más que los más de los autores a que editaron” [in the history of human culture there are editors who matter much, much more than the authors that they published].<sup>xxxv</sup> Whether this is tackled on an individual or a collective basis, it is likely that we will encounter two main types of editor in the late nineteenth century: first, the politically-motivated editors, the literary enthusiasts, those seeking personal influence and promotion and, second, the businessmen, who, during a period that saw the employment of full-time reporters and staff,<sup>xxxvi</sup> recognized the potential to make money and cash in on the press’s development as a commercial industry.<sup>xxxvii</sup> Others, such as José Lázaro Galdiano, were keen to use their publications to embark on the ambitious mission of regenerating Spain and, as such, engage with ventures that might be aligned with the general preoccupation with charitable missions during this period (particularly those relating to the need for social and moral improvement), albeit with the aim of addressing cultural, rather than practical and social concerns (such as those which Concepción Arenal, for example, addressed in relation to the subject of prison reform).<sup>xxxviii</sup>

As might be expected, the role of the general editor could be positive (as it was in the case of Lázaro Galdiano) or it could be negative, since some editors were dogmatic and exploitative in their dealings with writers.<sup>xxxix</sup> The publisher Rafael Calleja, in his lecture on “El editor,” wrote about:

Un hombrecillo sórdido y abyecto, rapaz inculto, sin entrañas, podrido de millones atesorados y guardados con avaricia insaciable, que tiraniza sin piedad al pobre

escritor, querubín purísimo, infelice avecilla, víctima escuálida del atroz vampiro, de quien por necesidad o por longanimidad, se deja chupar la sangre mansamente.<sup>xi</sup>

[A sordid, abject little man, an uncultured youth, heartless, rotten with the millions he has stored up and kept in his insatiable greed, mercilessly tyrannizing the poor writer, that purest of cherubs, that unhappy little bird, squalid victim of the dread vampire, letting his own blood be gently sucked away out of need or forbearance.]

Whatever the case, the general editor had the final say regarding what was or what was not published in “his” periodical,<sup>xli</sup> although this could be justified on the basis that the general editor was probably more preoccupied by financial issues and more acutely aware of the need to satisfy public demand.<sup>xlii</sup> Related studies could usefully involve an analysis of the legal and business matters of running a periodical, perhaps in the style of Maryse Villapadierna’s work on the financial concerns of *La España Moderna*, where she highlighted José Lázaro’s valiant but futile attempts to “break even” when devoting his publication to the mission of promoting Spain’s regeneration.<sup>xliii</sup> It goes without saying that this should include analyzing any surviving business correspondence. Researchers could likewise consider the press from a historical perspective and, taking into account its role within the more general publishing industry, attempt to map the development of periodicals in relation to books or to consider collective responses to individual crisis points, for instance responses to the 1898 War. Although research on this aspect is more advanced than in some other dimensions of the nineteenth-century press, to date it has generally taken the form of articles and essays rather than whole books.

Critics could also usefully engage in studies comparing and contrasting the press in other countries. It is notable that nineteenth-century French periodicals often served as

models for Spanish publications during this period (La España Moderna, for example, explicitly set out to model itself on *Revue des Deux Mondes*)<sup>xliv</sup> and a comparison between the two, attempting to elucidate the extent to which there was a specifically Spanish press could be fascinating. It would be worthwhile to take into account the importance of reporting on articles first published in other publications via pieces such as the “*Revista de revistas*” [Review of Journals] section of *La España Moderna*, where we gain a sense that the contributors were comparing notes, possibly modifying the way in which particular issues were reported and encouraging readers to take into account different views before arriving at their own conclusions. Additionally, it would be worth looking at whether the practices of second-hand reporting in themselves alter the ways in which texts are perceived. Additional comparative studies could be conducted in relation to the work of particular journalists, for instance it would be possible to compare Dickens’s journalistic career with that of Galdós. Finally, it would be possible to adopt an “outsider” perspective and, focusing on literary materials as primary sources, analyze the portrayal of the press and journalists in fiction, for example in particular novels. This could be related to the image of “the writer in the garret” and the controversies associated with journalists, which sometimes led to duels.<sup>xlv</sup>

Whatever methodology is adopted, as is the case with the press in other European countries,<sup>xlvi</sup> it is clear that the Spanish press is an indispensable vehicle for enhancing our understanding of this period. The influence it exerted upon writers, readers, if not the whole country, was substantial, to the extent that it could even be argued that all research on this century will, in some way or another, explicitly or implicitly, have to take into account the role of the press or it might well be missing a central part of the jigsaw.

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i All translations are mine or by the editors. See Chapter 1 of my book *La España Moderna and regeneración: A Cultural Review in Restoration Spain* (Manchester: Cañada Blanch Publications, 2000).

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ii Gustavo Bécquer, *Cartas desde mi celda*, II (1864), cited in Pedro Gómez Aparicio, *Historia del periodismo español* (Madrid: Ed. Nacional, 1981), I: 505. Regarding the association between the press and the priesthood, see, for example, Edmundo González-Blanco, *Historia del periodismo: Desde sus comienzos hasta nuestra época* (Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 1919), 251.

iii *Nuevo Teatro Crítico* (1891): 9.

iv Letter to Menéndez y Pelayo dated 26 April, 1887, in *Epistolario de Valera y Menéndez y Pelayo, 1877–1905*, ed. M. Artigas Ferrando & P. Sainz Rodríguez (Madrid: Espasa Calpe, 1946), 371.

v Letter dated 25 March, 1900, in *Epistolario a Clarín: Menéndez y Pelayo, Unamuno, Palacio Valdés*, ed. Adolfo Alas (Madrid: Escorial, 1941), 72.

vi Letter dated 22 December, 1886, in *Epistolario de Valera a Menéndez Pelayo*, 335.

vii See Ramón Martínez de la Riva, *Luca de Tena: La obra magnífica de una poderosa voluntad y una gran inteligencia* (Madrid, n.d.), 56-57.

viii “Fenómenos sismológicos” (Madrid, 17 January, 1885), in *Obras inéditas*, ed. Alberto Ghiraldo (Madrid: Renacimiento, 1924), vol. 6: *Cronicón* (1883-86), 137-38.

ix “Crónica general,” *La España Moderna* 8 (August 1889): 187.

x Niceto Oneca, “El cuadro de Van der Goes,” *La España Moderna* 293 (1913): 62.

xi *Revista Moderna* 1 (6 March, 1897): 16.

xii According to Jaime Vicens Vives, out of the 296 practical plans proposed, only about thirty were actually carried out. *Coyuntura económica y reformismo burgués, y otros estudios de la historia de España*, 4th ed. (Barcelona: Editorial Ariel, 1974), 203.

xiii González Blanco, *Historia del periodismo*, 251.

xiv Vicens Vives, *Coyuntura económica y reformismo burgués*, 183.

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xv La *Época* (1 August, 1888), cited in María Cruz Seoane, *Oratoria y periodismo en la España del siglo XIX* (Valencia: Castalia, 1977), 408.

xvi Cited in Martínez Cachero, “Introducción a *Palique* de Leopoldo Alas, Clarín,” *Palique* (Barcelona: Labor, 1973), 10.

xvii Cited in César Antonio Molina, *Medio siglo de prensa literaria española, 1900–50* (Madrid: Endymion, 1990), 17.

xviii With the exception of Yvan Lissorgues’ *Clarín político* (Oviedo: KRK, 2004), even in the case of admirable scholarly studies, for instance the work of Lily Litvak and Celma Valero, attention is mainly placed upon the contents of the periodical publications, which communicates the sense that articles appear to be regarded as source materials rather than pieces that are worthy of attention in e.g. stylistic and structural terms. See Lily Litvak, *España 1900: Modernismo, anarquismo y fin de siglo* (Barcelona: Anthropos, 1990); María Pilar Celma Valero, *Literatura y periodismo en las revistas del fin de siglo: Estudio e índices, 1888–1907* (Madrid: Ediciones Júcar, 1991).

xix See Rhian Davies, “The Background to *Torquemada en la hoguera*,” *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies* (Glasgow) 76 (1999): 399-413, and *Galdós y Lázaro: una breve y fructífera colaboración (1889-91)* (Madrid, Fundación Lázaro Galdiano/Ollero y Ramos, 2002).

xx Pedro Ortiz Armengol, *Vida de Galdós* (Barcelona: Editorial Crítica, 1996), 411.

xxi G.G. Brown, “Introduction” to *Clarín, Cuentos escogidos* (Oxford: The Dolphin Book, 1964), 10.

xxii See Nicholas G. Round, “Approaches to the 1898 Generation,” *Vida Hispánica*, 24, no. 2 (1976): 5-14 (12).

xxiii See Round (above) and also Rafael Pérez de la Dehesa, *Política y sociedad en el primer Unamuno* (Madrid: Ciencia Nueva, 1966).

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xxiv Discursos leídos ante la Real Academia Española en la recepción pública de Don Eugenio Sellés el día 2 de junio de 1895 (Madrid: Imprenta de la Revista de Navegación y Comercio, 1895), 10.

xxv Cited in Josep Francesc Valls, *Prensa y burguesía en el XIX español* (Barcelona: Anthropos 1988), 25.

xxvi One fascinating example is Azorín's "Impresiones españolas." These were the first two chapters of his *La voluntad* (Barcelona, 1902), which appeared in *La España Moderna* in February 1902. Surprisingly, there was no evidence nor would the unknowing reader recognize that they formed part of a larger work.

xxvii Antony Percival, *Galdós and His Critics* (Buffalo: Toronto University Press, 1985), 281.

xxviii Percival, *Galdós and His Critics*, 12.

xxix One of the relatively few studies of this major periodical includes Brian Dendle, *Los artículos políticos en la Revista de España, 1871-72* (Lexington: Kentucky University Press, 1982).

xxx According to Gómez de Baquero, the review was accorded some of the respect previously reserved for the book and this contrasted with the contempt that contemporaries expressed for the newspaper: "Escritores hay que por nada del mundo citarían en sus libros á un periódico. Para dar á un pensamiento el dignus est intrare, preciso es que haya nacido en un libro ó siquiera en una revista." E. Gómez de Baquero, "Crónica literaria," *La España Moderna*, 231 (March 1908): 164.

xxxi Lou Charon-Deutsch, *Hold That Pose: Visual Culture in the Late-Nineteenth-Century Spanish Periodical* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006), 2.

xxxii See, for example, "Imágenes visuales de Emilia Pardo Bazán en la prensa periódica: Estudio comparativo de Sarah Bernhardt y Pardo Bazán," in *Actas del Congreso*

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Internacional: Literatura hispánica y prensa periódica (1875-1931), ed. Javier Serrano Alonso et al. (Lugo: Universidad de Santiago de Compostela, 2008), 221-35.

xxxiii See Percival, Galdós and His Critics, 248ff.

xxxiv Gómez Aparicio, *Historia del periodismo español*, vol. 2, 252.

xxxv Antonio R. Rodríguez-Moñino, *Don José Lázaro visto por Rubén Darío y Unamuno* (Valencia: Castalia, 1951), 18.

xxxvi See Desvois, *Prensa en España*, 3. Devois notes that from 1887 to 1913, the total number of journals rose from 1128 to 1980, and the ratio of population to journals fell likewise from 1:15106 to 1:10076.

xxxvii Greater attention was accorded to advertising, which had advanced considerably since Émile de Girardin's early success in using advertisements to subsidize the cost of *La Presse* in 1836.

xxxviii See, for example, Concepción Arenal, "El Congreso Internacional de Amberes, 1890. Informe de Concepción Arenal. (Segunda sección)," *La España Moderna* 27 (March 1891), 28-52.

xxxix See Rafael Cansinos Assens, *La novela de un literato: Hombres, ideas, efemérides, anécdotas, 1882-1936*, 3 vols (Madrid: Alianza, 1982-95).

xl "El editor," in *Conferencia de la serie organizada por la Cámara Oficial del Mundo en la Feria de Muestras de Barcelona en marzo de 1922* (Madrid, 1922), 20.

xli Armengol, for example, notes that "aquel artículo elogiando Tormento, que finalmente Clarín escribió para *El Día*, no fue publicado por este diario porque su director, el marqués del Riscal, no gustó de ciertos párrafos del mismo," *Vida de Galdós*, 388. As regards my use of the term *his*, it would appear that the number of female general editors was extremely small, including writers such as Emilia Pardo Bazán, who was effectively the

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general editor of the *Nuevo Teatro Crítico* (1891-93), even though she was also its sole contributor.

xlii In the “Revista de revistas” section of *La España Moderna* we read, “Sería pretensión vana querer transformar la prensa; pero cambiemos nosotros, y ella cambiará. Un periódico es un negocio, y ningún comerciante vende en su tienda lo que no gusta á sus clientes.” See F. Araujo, “Revista de revistas,” *La España Moderna* 130 (October 1899): 190.

xliii See, for example, Maryse Villapadierna, “José Lázaro Galdiano (1862-947) et *La España Moderna* (1889-1914) ou une entreprise culturelle et ses implications économiques et commerciales,” in *Culture et Société en Espagne et en Amérique Latine au XIXe siècle. Textes réunis par Claude Dumas* (Lille: Centre d’Etudes Ibériques et Ibéro-américaines du XIXe siècle de l’université Lille III, 1980), 93-106.

xliv In the “Prospecto” we read, “han carecido los lectores españoles de una publicación que sea a nuestra patria [...] lo que a Francia la *Revue des Deux Mondes*: suma intelectual de la edad contemporánea, sin perder por eso, antes cultivándolo y extremándolo hasta donde razonablemente quepa, el carácter castizo y nacional.”

xlv See, for instance, Azorin’s reference to the controversy provoked by the article published in Chapter 13 of *La voluntad*. For more information on this topic see the section entitled “El honor y sus lances” in Antonio Espina, *El cuarto poder: Cien años de periodismo español* (Madrid: Libertarias/Prodhufo, 1993), 113-22.

xlvi This has been notably highlighted with respect to France in the work of Marie-Ève Thérenty. See, for example, her article “Pour une histoire littéraire de la presse au XIXe siècle”, *Revue d'histoire littéraire de la France*, 103 (March 2003), 625-635.