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CARLISM IN VALLE-INCLÁN'S *JARDÍN UMBRÍO (THE SHADED GARDEN)*

One of the more prominent themes in Ramón del Valle-Inclán's selection of short stories *Jardín umbrío (The Shaded Garden)* is Carlism, an important political ideology in nineteenth-century Spain. These short stories were written at the turn of the century, a period when Spain was suffering from a crisis of image, and social and political upheavals. Democracy and Liberalism, the main political ideologies throughout Western Europe, had also reached Spain. However, these political ideologies are not reflected within these short stories. Instead of embracing one of these forward-looking political ideologies, Valle-Inclán chooses to look backward and embrace Carlism. What is Carlism and which sector of society supported it? Another question we must ask is why Valle-Inclán turns to Carlism as the solution to his discontent with his own world? In answer to the second question Ignacio Elizalde, who writes that Valle-Inclán "se refugia en su culto para manifestar su desagrado, su profundo descontento con la política que a él le tocó vivir. Su esperanza renovadora se basaba en una vaga y arcaica sociedad medieval que tenía más de utópico sueño que de posible realidad" (67), (took refuge in his writing talents in order to manifest his distaste and profound discontent with the politics of his day. His only hope was based on a vague and archaic medieval society, that was more of a utopian dream than a possible reality). This 'utopian dream' would come to fruition through Carlism. Nineteenth-century Spain seemed to be in constant political turmoil. Two Carlist Wars erupted—the first lasted from 1833 to 1840, the second from 1870 to 1876. It can be concluded that Carlism had enjoyed a certain amount of support for many generations. What is Carlism and why was it so popular? The Carlists came into being when King Ferdinand VII acquiesced to his wife's plea to break with Salic Law (in accordance with which the inheritance of the throne passed only through the male line), and declared his infant daughter, Isabella, to be his rightful heir. Many violently opposed this and leaned towards Ferdinand's brother, Don Carlos, as the rightful successor, thus becoming known as Carlists.[1] Carlism, then, was an ide-

[1]According to Gerald Brenan, Don Carlos was not the rightful heir to the throne: "Don Carlos' claim to the throne rested upon the question of whether

ology that demanded an absolute monarch, here Don Carlos, to rule over Spain, a Spain that would tolerate no change and be inimical to any liberal reform. Liberalism had been brought in with the French Revolution. The Carlists feared that its forward-thinking ideology would bring many changes to the **Antiguo Régimen** (feudalism) and as such was seen as the enemy of the state. Gerald Brenan writes:

> They (the Carlists) were taking up arms against Liberalism, which in their eyes was but a second wave of the old Lutheran heresy, to resist which Spain in the past had given her life-blood. Any concession to new ideas, any mitigation of the old Church and State absolutism would, they saw, let in the poison. (204)

According to Casimiro Martí, Carlism was also:

> contra el progresismo a ultranza, el carlismo aspira a la revitalización de las viejas herencias medievales que se entenderán como consustanciales con el ser de España. Contra el federalismo abstracto representado por Pí y Margall, el carlismo propugna la restauración foralista de aquellas entidades nacionales que se confederaron en tiempo de los Reyes Católicos. Contra la libertad religiosa, la integridad católica. Contra el desamparo del proletario industrial, el recurso a los antiguos genios. (177)
>
> (against progress at all costs, Carlism aspires to the revitalization of the old medieval legacies that are seen as inseparable from Spain. Against the abstract federalism of Pí y Margall, Carlism proposes the restoration of the "fuero", the municipal law codes, which had been in existence since the era of the Catholic kings. Against religious freedom, catholic integrity. Against the helplessness of the industrial proletariat, returning to the old ways is the only recourse.)

What Carlism stood for was the "old" way, that is, the **Antiguo Régimen (**feudalism**)**. It wanted to keep the people in their allotted stations to prevent any change within society. The Carlists felt that the peo-

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the Salic Law, which had from all time regulated the right of succession in the Bourbon family, should apply in a country such as Spain which had never admitted that law. It was true that, at the time of the Treaty of Utrecht, Philip V had issued a decree by which it was declared that the throne could not descend through the female line, nor could any prince born out of Spain inherit it. The object of this decree was to prevent any possibility of the union of Crowns of France and Spain. But some seventy years later, when the possibility had vanished, Charles IV, who had been born in Naples, called a secret meeting of the Cortes to ratify the abrogation of this decree. This Pragmatic Sanction was published in 1830 by Ferdinand. Thus, even if, as the Carlists maintained, one king could not with the assent of the Cortes annul the decree of another, Don Carlos was still not the rightful heir, for his father, having been out of Spain, had no legitimate right to the throne (204).

ple were much happier in a state of ignorance. In this way the aristocracy and the church would maintain its stranglehold on the rest of society. They disagreed with the liberal tendencies of the political parties, such as the *progresistas*, who were to be incorporated in 1872 into the Radical Party, which wanted to deplete the power of the church and the aristocracy and give more to the burgeoning bourgeoisie and industrialists.

Ignacio Elizalde gives an explanation of Carlism's importance to Spanish life in the nineteenth century:

> Dentro de la problemática española, la guerra carlista es el acontecimiento cumbre del siglo XIX español. España vivió durante este siglo en continua guerra civil, sólo interrumpida por corto períodos de paz superficial. La calma del conformismo que infecta la vida española del ochocientos es una delgada capa que cubre la ebullición interior que desgarra la vida de la nación. El carlismo, los pronunciamientos liberales y conservadores, y los motines populares, no son manifestaciones esporádicas del descontento nacional, sino muestras de la convulsión vital que sufre la vida española en perpetua revolución. (61)
>
> (Within the problematic situation of Spain, the Carlist War is the most significant event in the Spanish 19th century. Spain lived in continuous civil war during this century, only interrupted by short periods of superficial peace. The calm of Conformism which infects Spanish life in this century is a thin cover which hides the internal churning state that is ripping up the nation's life. Carlism, the Liberal and Conservative risings, and the popular revolts are not sporadic manifestations of national discontent, but rather, the signs of the turbulence that Spanish life is suffering because of this perpetual revolution.)

Thus it seems that Valle-Inclán sought refuge in Carlism to demonstrate his displeasure with the politics of his time. His solution lay within an archaic society.

The Carlist strongholds were basically maintained in the mountainous and rural areas through guerrilla warfare. With this type of warfare it was easy to elude the government forces, however this very isolation was the reason that their sphere of influence did not move beyond these areas. There was no support for Carlism on the east coast, for example. According to José Barreiro Fernández, although the urban areas did not openly support the Carlists, there was a conspiracy that manifested itself by means of passing on important news, money and other necessities to the guerrillas, thus enabling them to maintain their attacks. The government's army, became aware of this conspiracy and sought to sever this link, thus crippling the Carlist movement. Deprived of supplies, the guerrillas were obliged to get whatever they could from the countryside and its peasants. This caused great friction between the countryside and the guerrillas. From 1837 the skirmishes between the guerrillas and the country folk intensified (151-3). Valle-Inclán does not

give an historical account of the Carlist Wars, but rather he hints at events and, as in the case of "Un cabecilla" (A Rebel Leader), he tells a story that has been told to him second-hand. According to José Pérez Fernández,

> Valle, en puridad, no hace Historia de España; recoge las escorias históricas que han llegado a la calle. No cuenta la verdad ni la mentira, sino lo que el pueblo sabe o inventa"
>
> (Valle is not writing the History of Spain; he gathers the stories/tales that have reached the streets. He is neither telling the truth nor lying, but rather tells what the people know or invent. (*Valle-Inclán (humanismo, política y justicia) (Humanism, politics, and Justice)* 111).

Valle is giving the reader the version he heard of those Isabeline years that was still circulating in the streets of Madrid.

In her article"Galicia en Valle-Iclán", M. D. Lado focuses her study of Carlism on Galicia. She writes that Carlism was largely accepted within the rural clergy and the rural aristocracy. A large part of Galician Carlists were made up of priests and nuns, "La *hidalguía* y el clero fueron los dos pilares del carlismo en Galicia. De 532 carlistas procesados en todos los años que duró la refriega, el 65,3 % no eran campesinos" (The nobility and the clergy were the two pillars of Carlism in Galicia. Of the 532 Carlists processed during the war years, 65.3% were not peasant farmers)(50). In "Un cabecilla"(A Rebel Leader) we can easily discern the lack of enthusiasm on the part of the **campesino** (peasant farmer) when the old man "*reaparecía cargado* con su escopeta llena de ataduras y remiendos, trayendo en su compañía algún mozo aldeano de aspecto torpe y asustadizo que, de fuerzo o grado, venía a engrosar la filas" (reappears, carrying his gun, mended and patched, dragging behind him some frightened and clumsy village boy, who, by will or force, was going to become one of the rank and file) (50). According to M. D. Lado, the Galician peasant had no interest in Carlism because the peasant

> "'estaba económicamente agarrotado por un sistema socioeconómico del que eran los directos beneficiarios la *hidalguía* y el clero, es decir, los defensores del carlismo'. En Galicia, los cabecillas carlistas eran los mismos que cobraban rentas y foros, diezmos y primicias, los usureros y los ejecutores de embargos"
>
> (was economically strangled by a socio-economic system, whose direct beneficiaries were the nobility and the Church, that is to say, the defenders of Carlism. In Galicia, the Carlist rebel leaders were the same people who collected rents and tithes, the moneylenders and the executors of embargos (50).)

The peasants realized that they would gain nothing in a cause that would only empower those in already elevated positions. M. D. Lado

goes on to state that the figure of the **cabecilla** is "más bien un ejemplo del fanatismo bárbaro y brutal, que tanto le gusta pintar al autor, que un héroe legitimista" (is an example of crude and brutal fanaticism, which the author likes to depicts so much, rather than a Legitimista hero)(50).

The **cabecilla** (rebel leader) showed characteristic Carlist violence and fanaticism. According to Gerald Brenan, the Carlists manifested these characteristics because:

> they were an anachronism in a modern world that had ceased to care for the things they lived by. They believed that they were engaged in a holy war against Liberals, freemasons and atheists: all around them were the hosts of Satan, the men of the century, the madmen who believed that the rule of life must change because time moved. They alone were faithful. They alone were entrusted with the judgements of God. (214)

In "Rosarito", such a man can be found in Don Miguel, who is the enemy of Carlism and as such seen as evil. Don Benicio describes him as a " un hombre terrible, un libertino, un masón!" (terrible man, a libertine, a freemason!)(106). The outcome of the story is not surprising. The Catholic religion views liberalism as the snake and Spain as the Garden of Eden. In this story Rosarito is the innocent and Don Miguel the snake who invades her idyllic life and brings bleakness and tragedy to the garden. Michael Predmore, in his article, "The Murder of Rosarito: An Inquiry into its Mystery", states that Don Miguel's liberal leanings have corrupted him to the extent that he has become demented and violent, which leads him to rape and murder Rosarito. Predmore believes that Don Miguel seduces Rosarito not because he is a womanizer, a Don Juan, but rather because of the dementia caused by his political life:

> The insistence by the narration, therefore, on the historical and social condition of Don Miguel and on his political life and character allows us to see that his assassination of Rosarito is not the action of the Don Juan in him, as the the old rake and libertine; it is rather the action of the political man, the emigré, who represents a corrupted form of revolutionary of the upper classes. Don Miguel may be a dissolute man in his sexual life, but, more importantly, he is a man who has been terribly deformed by his political life. (263)

Predmore continues to say that Don Miguel's political life made him an enemy of his own class. His liberal ideology wanted to put an end to the old feudal system. Rosarito can be seen as the symbol of Spain and her murder can be taken as an act of destruction on the part of a liberal, a conspirator who has become corrupt and deranged (264). In "Rosarito" Valle-Inclán offers a commentary on the harm that liberalism inflicted on traditional, aristocratic life of Spain in the nineteenth century.

Brenan, for his part, explains that there was also an economic reason for the Carlists' violence. Since the Carlists were hiding in the mountainous and rural areas, they did not enjoy the same conditions as the royal army. The Carlists had no means of raising money and had to rely on their supporters. But even so they were driven to live upon the countryside and basically prey on the towns and villages in order to acquire whatever they needed. This situation did not sit well with the peasants, leading, as Brenan puts it, to "a deterioration in the character of the war" (214). Because of their dire circumstances the guerrillas became nothing more than a pack of bandits. This caused flagging spirits within the Carlist ranks. Some of these men who robbed did so for the cause, as did the priest of San Rosendo de Gondar, in "El rey de la máscara" (King of the Masque). He is said to ". . . machacar la plata de sus iglesias y santuarios para acudir en socorro de la facción" (have wrested the money from their churches and sanctuaries in order to aid the faction) (*Jardín umbrío, The Shaded Garden,* 58). There were also mercenaries who joined the Carlist ranks in order to gain whatever they could (Brenan 214).

Elizalde points out the religious aspect of Carlism in Valle-Inclán's trilogy *"Las guerras carlistas"* (*The Carlist Wars*) that can also be applied to these short stories: "Valle-Inclán advierte de manera clara el aspecto religioso y militante del carlismo" (Valle-Inclán draws attention to the religious and militant aspects of Carlism in a clear manner)(75). Valle-Inclán realizes that Carlism involved much more than than the issue of a legitimate heir. It involved a way of life, a social and economic order that was to be maintained. What the Roman Catholic Church wanted was a civil government with which it could be intimately united. The Carlist credo was: Dios, Patria, Rey (God, Country, King) and in this order. Consequently we can see how Carlism is directly linked with the Catholic Church since it was its biggest supporter. The Church was intent on regaining its lands previously appropriated by Mendizábal's government in the 1830's and Carlism provided a vehicle for their goal. In the short stories of *Jardín umbrío (The Shaded Garden),* we can see the relationship between the Church and Carlism in the role of the clergy during both wars. Barreira Fernández writes, "nunca faltaron sacerdotes en las guerrillas. Cuando unos caían otros ocupaban su lugar. Ni los bandos, ni los procesos, ni los fusilamientos pudieron detenerlos. El clero se entregó al carlismo con una generosidad sin límites" (there never was a lack of priests within the guerilla faction. When lives were lost, others took their place. Neither edicts nor threats of prosecution or execution could deter them. The priests gave wholly to the Carlist cause with a generosity that knew no limits (163). Basically they were fighting for their survival.

In "Beatriz", the Countess= personal confessor is Fray Ángel. He is described as:

> un viejo de ojos enfoscados y perfil aguileño, inmóvil como tallado en granito. Recordaba esos obispos guerreros que en las catedrales duermen o rezan a la sombra de un arco sepulcral.(36).
>
> (an old man with sullen eyes and a sharp-featured profile, motionless as if cut from granite. He reminded one, of those warrior bishops who sleep or pray in the shadow of a sepuchral arch found in cathedrals.)

In the story it is stated that Fray Ángel had been not only a Carlist sympathizer but also a leader of a faction:

> Fray Ángel había sido uno de aquellos cabecillos tonsurados que robaban la plata de sus iglesias para acudir en socorro de la facción. (36)
>
> (Brother Ángel had been one of those tonsured rebel leaders who stole money from their churches in order to fund the faction.)

Such was his devotion to the cause that even years after the war he dedicated masses for one of the most famous leaders of the Carlists in the first war, Zumalacárregui. Obviously Beatriz's mother has knowledge of his political leanings and since she is also a sympathizer she has given him a place in her home as her personal chaplain.

In "Rosarito" Don Benicio is the personal chaplain to the Countess of Cela. He admits his past as a Carlist:

> Los años quebrantan las peñas, Señora Condesa. Cuatro anduve yo por las montañas de Navarra con el fusil al hombro, y hoy, mientras otros baten el cobre, tengo que contentarme con pedir a Dios en la misa el triunfo de la santa Causa. (105)
>
> (The years erode the cliffs, Madame Countess. In my youth I walked through the mountains of Navarre with a gun on my shoulder, and now, while others heed the call to war, I have to be content dedicating masses, asking for God's help so that the Holy Cause may triumph.)

In "El rey de la máscara" (The King of the Masque) we encounter the priest of San Rosendo de Gondar. He is described in exactly the same language as Fray Ángel, "era uno de aquellos cabecillas tonsurados que, después de machacar la plata de sus iglesias y santuarios para acudir en socorro de la facción, dijeron misas gratuitas por el alma de Zumalacárregui" (was one of those tonsured rebel leaders that, after wresting money from their churches and sanctuaries in order to aid the faction, had free masses dedicated for the soul of Zumalacárregui) (58).

There were very few highly placed aristocrats that openly supported Carlism. According to Barreira Fernández, "la *hidalguía* orientada hacia las armas no suele tomar partido por el carlismo. Piénsese, por ejemplo, que varios de los coroneles que durante estos años dirigen la acción contra los carlistas, son miembros de la *hidalguía y* segunda nobleza" (the nobility which was trained in the military arts did not

take the side of Carlism. For example, various colonels, who, during these years, commanded the campaigns against the Carlists are members of the nobility and the secondary aristocrats (167). The reason for this was that these **hidalgos** (nobles) had no link to the land and thus Liberalism posed no threat to them. It was the rural aristocracy who supported the Carlist movement since their livelihood was linked to the land and **foro** system. The rural aristocracy's support can be seen through Beatriz's mother and the Countess of Cela, whose sympathies lie with the Carlists since they both chose former Carlist supporters as their personal chaplains. Also, we discover that Beatriz's grandfather supported this cause, and consequently the family's titles were lost:

> La Condesa era unigénita del célebre Marqués de Barbanzón, que tanto figuró en las guerras carlistas. Hecha la paz despues de la traición de Vergara —nunca los leales llamaron otra suerte el convenio—, el Marqués de Barbanzón emigró a Roma. Y como aquellos tiempos eran los hermosos tiempos del Papa-Rey, el caballero español fue uno de los gentileshombres con cargo palatino en el Vaticano. Durante muchos años llevó sobre sus hombros el manto azul de los guardias nobles, y lució la bizarra ropilla acuchillada de terciopelo y raso. El mismo arreo galán con que el divino Sanzio retrató al divino César Borgia! (34)
>
> (The Countess was the only child of the famous Marquis of Barbanzón, who figured so prominently in the Carlist Wars. When peace was declared after the betrayal at Vergara —that was the only way the loyal forces referred to the treaty—, the Marquis emigrated to Rome. And since those were the wondrous days of Pope "Blessed" Pius IX, the Spanish knight was one of those gentlemen with knightly duties in the Vatican. For many years he wore the blue cloak of the noble guards and displayed the dashing uniform slashed with velvet and satin. The same handsome dress with which the wonderful Sanzio painted the divine Caesar Borgia!)

It is because of the Marqués' fanatical support for this cause that he condemns his progeny to lives of obscurity. His last will decreed that if any of his descendants supported Isabel they would be cursed.

In "Mi bisabuelo" (My Great-grandfather) we find out that Don Manuel Bermúdez had not been imprisoned in Santiago for shooting Malvido but rather because he had been a member of a Carlist faction: "muchos años después, para una información genealógica, he tenido que revolver papeles viejos, y pude averiguar que aquella prisión había sido por pertenecer al partido de los apostólicos el señor Coronel de Milicias Don Manuel Bermúdez y Bolaño" (many years later, for some genealogical information, I had to go through some old papers and was able to confirm that he had been imprisoned for belonging to the Carlist party) (101).

"Del misterio"(About the Mystery) is a story of superstition based on the narrator's perspective as a young boy. An old lady, Doña Soledad Amarante, a friend of his grandmother's, comes over one night and they discuss the boy's father who is presently imprisoned in Santiago for being a Carlist. The old lady goes into a trance and tells his mother and grandmother that he has freed himself but at the cost of his jailer's life. He is now on the run.

In "A medianoche" (At Midnight) we encounter a mysterious horseman travelling by night so as to remain undetected. He is to meet a boat where he will join the others of his faction:

> —Tú, ahora te vuelves con el caballo. Yo tomo la barca.
> —Y si no se atopan allí los mozos de la partida?
> —Estará, cuando menos, Don Ramón María. No te ha dicho que me esperaba? (94)
> (— You, return now with the horse. I am taking a boat.
> — And if the men from the faction aren't there?
> — They'll be there. At least Don Ramón María will be. Didn't he tell you that he would be waiting for me?)

Another group of nobles who supported Carlism were those who were directly linked to governmental administration or certain professions such as clerks, lawyers, mayors, secretaries of the municipal governments whose prosperity were also linked with the land and the **foros.** According to Barreira Fernández, these people reinvested their money in the land, hence it was natural for them to favour the status quo, which meant supporting the Carlists.

Carlism never recovered from the last Carlist War and finally faded into a minority right-wing party. Although Carlism had been able to revive itself after 1840, it was because of the turbulent political ambiance that dogged the heels of the Isabeline government. However, with the restoration of Alfonso XII after the second Carlist war, Spain enjoyed political stability. This stability, artificial though it was, was brought about by Antonio Cánovas del Castillo. The "**turno pacífico**" as it was called, consisted of power being passed peacefully between the conservatives (Cánovas) and the liberals (Práxedes Sagasta) through elections carefully controlled by the Minister of the Interior and his "**caciques**" (bosses) who ran the government at the municipal and provincial levels. This stabilization rang the death knell for the Carlists (Blinkhorn 30-1). Thus, without any turbulence to take advantage of, the Carlist movement quietly faded away. Even though there were a few die-hard supporters, Carlism would never again raise itself to the force it once was.

In these short stories, we can remark, then, that Carlism is looked upon favourably by Valle-Inclán. He is fed up with Spain's current sit-

uation and thus in his short stories looks backward to a time when everything seemed simpler and honour was a part of life. Antonio Maravall writes:

> Lo que Valle denigra y desprecia, sobre todo, es la estólida rigidez de los funcionarios, la rancia y chismosa poquedad de los palatinos, la zafiedad de ciertos clérigos —a diferencia de la exquisita educación y liberal criterio de los grandes eclesiásticos romanos—, el inútil parasitismo de señoritos aristócratas, la *cínica* concupiscencia de banqueros y políticos, la ignorante petulancia de algunos escritores, en la sociedad superficialmente aburguesada que rodea el trono de Madrid. (243)
>
> (What Valle denigrates and scorns, above all, is the tiresome rigidity of the civil servants, the stale and scandal mongering triviality of the palace court, the coarseness of certain members of the clergy – in contrast to the exquisite education and liberal criteria of the great Roman ecclesiastics, the parasitical uselessness of the young aristocrats, the cynical greediness of the bankers and the politicians, the ignorant petulance of some of the writers, in the superficial middleclass society that surrounds the Spanish throne.)

Valle, then, had accepted Carlism as a form of violence against a society he viewed as deformed and in decay, in favour of one that in medieval times had run smoothly, where heroism, honour, and justice reigned.

In Valle's short stories we can appreciate his longing for a simpler time, when everyone's place seemed to be more clearly defined. With the coming of the Industrial Revolution these lines became blurred, producing changes that did not sit well with Valle-Inclán. Lily Litvak states that Valle-Inclán was a part of the "anti-industrial movement which prevailed in artistic circles throughout the Western World during this period" (3). One of the individuals who spread this anti-industrial sentiment was John Ruskin, who influenced Valle's view of industrialism. Ruskin believed that industrialism created ugliness and misery and dehumanized urban life. Valle-Inclán believed, like Ruskin, that a hierarchical society was the most perfect society. Thus in this pyramidal order there was no discontent - it fell in with the natural order of the universe. In Valle-Inclán's world the rich helped the poor since, in his view, the poor could not fend for themselves. They had to be protected and guided by their superiors—hose in the higher echelons of this pyramidal society. For Valle this type of society provides harmony which in turn reflects a harmonious universe (Litvak 224-5). This feudal society was a much better option than the one in which he presently lived (1890-1910). With this feudal attitude in mind, Valle recreated the old Galician **pazos** (ancestral homes) and villages. Valle felt that this type of society was a stable one, reconciling freedom and authority. That is, it gave everyone a place in society and a leader to guide him. This belief is advo-

cated in "Mi Bisabuelo" (My Great-grandfather). The peasants go to their leader for solutions to their problems. Valle feels that the generosity of the nobles towards their peasants has been replaced by selfishness and egocentricity, which is a by-product of industrialism. To Valle, industrialism instigated the decline of the human spirit (Litvak 222-3).

Valle's anti-industrial tendency manifests itself in the desire to escape to an archaic milieu, as well as to return to a more natural or primitive lifestyle. He felt a renewed interest in folklore. He returned to a more simple, childlike religious faith, i.e. the exaltation of naïve forms of religiosity considered typically rural. This would include religious folk traditions of Christ and the saints, such as the story of the Magi, "La adoración de los reyes" (The Adoration of the Kings) and of Amaro in "Un ejemplo" (An Example). The coming of industrialism changed the status of the peasant. It forced them to move from the country to the city. This was the first step in the desintegration of feudal society. Whereas before families remained close, bound by patriarchal authority, working together for the common good of the family, now they were splintered, each faction going its own way in an attempt to find its own individual economic security. The economic security of the rural family had been based upon cottage industries such as spinning and weaving, but as the younger members of the family left in search of independence and wealth, this rural economy was destroyed leaving the rural area in a much poorer economic state than before. This exodus impoverished the countryside and produced a rapid disintegration of the rural patriarchal way of life. However the new proletariat found that his life in the slums of the cities was no better, and in many cases, worse. Consequently the lack of any agricultural reform and the advent of industrialism brought the peasant to the pinnacle of unhappiness and misery (Litvak 114).

We find that these short stories represent Valle-Inclán's advocacy and idealization of Carlism. In his short stories it is the Carlist fighter who is noble and courageous. He also seems to idealize the Galician world. For example, the only distress we find is in "Mi bisabuelo" (My Great-grandfather). It is produced by the town clerk, Malvido, who is attempting to defraud the peasants of their grazing land.

It is in a rural world that Valle chooses to set his stories. According to Lily Litvak, Valle uses the Galician language to suggest this rural world. In "La adoración de los reyes (The Adoration of the Kings)" Bethlehem is replaced with a Galician setting. The peasants sing in Galician. This story opens and closes with two **villancicos** (Christmas carols) in Galician. Litvak states that in this particular story, "these popular rural elements are not only ornamental; but, being millennial traditions, they also transport the scene out of space and time into a universal rurality. The voices of these peasants are voices that have per-

petuated, throughout the centuries, a precious rural legacy" (133).

However, Valle's support of Carlism can be taken another way. According to Francisco Ayala, it was the norm for Valle's fellow intellectuals to "mystify the public with their political statements" (37). When, at the beginning of his literary career, Valle declared himself to be a Carlist, many believed Valle did so simply to shock the public, striking a pose that was not to be taken seriously. However, Ayala believes that Valle took a Carlist position because it was a lost cause, one relegated to the past (37). Later, when he develops the **esperpento**, he uses it to unmask the political situation against which the Carlists had rebelled to no avail. After having read these short stories and taking into account these opinions, one could argue that Valle-Inclán could have sincerely believed in Carlism, but then, realizing the futility of such a political movement, he continued to support it solely as a pose. Valle-Inclán uses the theme of Carlism in these short stories to describe the plight and situation of the Carlist followers which is mirrored by the dilapidation of lands and houses. The peasant workers stay, not because of any hope of payment, but rather because of familial loyalty. The relationship between the "lord" and servant still exists only because of this loyalty. Whether or not Valle-Inclán sincerely supported Carlism will always be cause for speculation. However, what he demonstrates in *Jardín umbrío (The Shaded Garden)* is that the **Antiguo Régimen** (feudalism) belongs in the past as does Carlism.

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