

## FEIJOO AND MR. SINGER: NOTES ON THE *ABURGUESAMIENTO* OF FORTUNATA

I want to suggest a reading of *Fortunata y Jacinta* at odds with current accepted Galdós criticism. My point of departure is the notion recently propounded by Geoffrey Ribbans that Fortunata undergoes a change in the novel and may become a member of the middle classes.<sup>1</sup> Ribbans' original and sensitive perceptions have opened the door for us to a new apprehension of Fortunata. It is time for other readers to step through after him. Moreover, his judgment may be needlessly tentative. I submit that without question Fortunata ends her days as a member of the social group at once loved and despised by Galdós. Hers is an astonishing example of social mobility; moreover, it is not irrelevant to our appreciation of the novel. Fortunata's upward journey socially and economically tells us a great deal about her growth as a character and as a figure of life.

Let us begin with some facts from the text itself.

Fortunata, who is illiterate, learns to read. Fortunata, who is ignorant, learns to tell time. Fortunata, who is poor, eventually becomes independently secure and lives from an investment income. Fortunata, who cannot do anything but clean house, learns to sew. Fortunata, who finds history meaningless, discovers her own. Fortunata gets a Singer sewing machine. Fortunata climbs a stair and dies.

To the reader of Galdós, many of the facts just stated have no relation to each other. Indeed, many critics *deny* these facts. Engler, Rodríguez-Puértolas and Blanco Aguinaga, for example, all insist that Fortunata is a daughter of the *pueblo*, an orphaned member of the lower classes crushed under the heel of middle-class capitalism in the person of Juanito Santa Cruz.<sup>2</sup> To a certain extent Stephen Gilman concurs. Fortunata is without a past, without history, says Gilman.<sup>3</sup> To these idealizations, and they are

<sup>1</sup> Pérez Galdós: *Fortunata y Jacinta* (London: Tamesis, 1977), p. 68.

<sup>2</sup> Kay Engler, "Notes on the Narrative Structure of *Fortunata y Jacinta*," *S*, 24 (1970), 111-27, esp. 126; Julio Rodríguez-Puértolas, *Galdós. Burguesía y revolución* (Madrid: Turner, 1975), pp. 13-59; Carlos Blanco Aguinaga, "On 'The Birth of Fortunata,'" *AGald*, 3 (1968), 13-24. See also John H. Sinnigen, "Individual, Class, and Society in 'Fortunata y Jacinta,'" pp. 49-68 of *Galdós Studies*, II, ed. Robert J. Weber (London: Tamesis, 1974).

<sup>3</sup> "The Birth of Fortunata," *AGald*, 1 (1966), 71-83, and his *Galdós and the Art of the European Novel: 1867-1887* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1981), esp. ch. X. On pp. 307-8 he states that Fortunata "has



idealizations, critics have added embellishments such as an illegitimate birth, deprivations and so on.<sup>4</sup> The critical overlay of values on the literary text is always a dangerous possibility, an occupational hazard. Yet because *Fortunata* tends to be idealized by critics, because critics create myths of the literature they attempt to elucidate, a more complete understanding of the novel still eludes us. As critics, we first and foremost must be good readers. And as readers, we must begin not with themes or chapters, but with the words themselves. We accept the latter admonitions as obvious, yet somehow it is the obvious, and not the subtle, which continues to evade our intelligence.

Consider for example the following passage from Part III, chapter iv, which treats *Fortunata's* affair with Evaristo Feijóo: "A poco de instalada en su nuevo domicilio, don Evaristo le compró una buena máquina de Singer, con lo que ella se entretenía mucho" (3, 333b).<sup>5</sup> How is it that with one exception this brief passage, of remarkable significance, has for so long been overlooked? The answer is that readers and critics, even the Marxists and sociologists, have not succeeded entirely in linking *Fortunata* to her social and economic contexts.<sup>6</sup> Although we tend to see this novel as an allegory of Spanish social life and of the rise of the middle classes in end-century Spain, we still tend to isolate *Fortunata* and see her more in the terms of a lover, an adulterous wife and mother; we do not see her very often as an integrated part of a social and economic system but as one who is marginated. Literarily we see her first in Part I merely as the figment of other people's imaginings and musings; she grows throughout the novel to become one of the truly great figures in world literature. Yet this *aesthetic* vision of her also tends to obscure the role she plays within her own world; her greatness overshadows the minutia, the details of everyday life out of which her own life is built and upon which, paradoxically, its greatness depends. Hence when most of us read that *Fortunata* gets a Singer sewing machine, we do not comprehend the importance of the fact. A seemingly unobtrusive detail, it slides into and out of mind with the flicker of the printed page.

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no background at all." She is "emergent from nothingness" and "Galdós chooses to tell us nothing" about her. As we'll see, Maxi will enable her to tell us quite a bit.

<sup>4</sup> E.g., Blanco Aguinaga, 18.

<sup>5</sup> Benito Pérez Galdós, *Fortunata y Jacinta (Dos historias de casadas)*, in vol. V of the *Obras completas*, ed. Federico Carlos Sainz de Robles (Madrid: Aguilar, 1961). All references to the novel will be to this edition and will include Part-chapter-section, page, for cross reference to other editions. Page numbers will be followed by the letter "a" or "b" to indicate either the column on the reader's left or right, respectively. In the case, however, of Part III, chapter iv, which treats of *Fortunata's* liaison with Feijóo, only section and page are indicated, as for example in the passage cited for this note.

<sup>6</sup> Only one critic has noted this passage and that in a fleeting comment which does not explore its significance: Pedro Ortiz Armengol, *Relojes y tiempo en 'Fortunata y Jacinta'* (Las Palmas: Ediciones del Cabildo, 1978), p. 56. Two important essays which attempt to situate *Fortunata* in her context, in addition to the works cited in nn. 2 and 3 above, are Geoffrey Ribbans, "Contemporary History in the Structure and Characterization of *Fortunata y Jacinta*," pp. 90-113 of *Galdós Studies*, I, ed. J.E. Varey (London: Támesis, 1970), and Thomas E. Lewis, "*Fortunata y Jacinta*: Galdós and the Production of the Literary Referent," *MLN*, 96 (1981), 316-39.



Now we might, I think, gain a good deal if we did attempt to look more closely at details, and try to root Fortunata more firmly not only to her amorous relations, but also to her socioeconomic context. What does it mean that Fortunata gets a sewing machine? We all remember that when we first meet her in Part II, her only skills as a worker, as a person of economic capability, are those of house cleaning. She literally falls into a reverie each day as she cleans the small apartment where Maxi is keeping her. These too are the skills of which she delights in the Micaelas; every reader recalls that it is while cleaning the convent floor that she meets and talks with Mauricia. The narrator informs us that she has neither the inclination nor the skills to sew: "Las labores delicadas, como costura y bordados, de que había taller en la casa, eran las que menos agradaban a Fortunata, que tenía poca afición a los primores de aguja y los dedos muy torpes. Más le agradaba que le mandaran lavar..." (II-vi-1, 233b-234a). Moreover, during the early stages of her friendship with Feijóo following Juanito's rejection of her, Fortunata tells the retired colonel, "Siempre que tenga una pena muy grande, le meto mano al polvo." To which Feijóo replies, "Pues, ¡ay, hija mía!, la compadezco a usted..., porque la casa está como una plata" (2, 330b). Only one response is possible, and Fortunata advises her new lover "¡Cómo ha de ser!... Sí, ésta es mi única distracción. Yo no sé ninguna labor delicada; no sé coser en fino, no bordo... yo apenas sé leer y no le saco sentido a ningún libro... ¿Qué he de hacer? Fregar y limpiar" (idem).

And so when Feijóo buys Fortunata a Singer, we realize that he is facilitating her rise in the world. He is providing her with capital and the opportunity to develop skills to use it. Ultimately through ownership she enters the middle classes. While living with Feijóo she learns to sew; her skill improves markedly, so that the two sisters who live in the apartment above ask her to help them out with their own needlework (5, 338b), as later she will help Aurora with fine work (IV-iii-2, 464b-465a). Mind, however, that Fortunata—unlike the woman overheard at her machine in the tenement on Mira el Río (I-ix-2, 101b), unlike her neighbors in the middle-class house on Tabernillas, unlike Aurora, her *confidante* and society *modiste*—does not have to work at her Singer; the sewing machine is a gift for personal entertainment, for diversion. Like a true woman of leisure she owns her machine and uses it as she pleases.<sup>7</sup> Thanks to Feijóo, Fortunata is living and behaving as Isidora Rufete vainly fantasizes:

Pensó Isidora, pues, que la costura, la fabricación de flores o encajes le cuadraban bien, y no pensó en ninguna otra clase de industrias, pues no se acordaba de haber leído que ninguna de aquellas heroínas se ocupara de menesteres bajos, de cosas malolientes o poco finas.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> In this Spain was similar to England and the United States in the 1880s. As a general rule women of the lower classes did not own the machine they used, even in urban areas. See Richard Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy* (Boston: Beacon, 1961), p. 25, and Jacob Riis, *How the Other Half Lives*, ed. Sam Bass Warner, Jr. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1970), pp. 79-89.

<sup>8</sup> Benito Pérez Galdós, *La desheredada*, in vol. IV of the *Obras completas* (Madrid: Aguilar, 1964), II-ii-3, 1074a-b.



Despite her ability to do so, Isidora disdains sewing common clothes. In her fantasy she forgets that she does not own a sewing machine, nor can Relimpio afford to buy one for her.

Fortunata's rise does not stop with the acquisition of this piece of capital. Finally, as we all remember, Feijóo gives her a handsome gift of stocks and other investments, plus a large sum of money which she in turn hands over to *doña* Lupe who becomes her financial manager. The latter, utilizing her usurious craft, helps render Fortunata virtually financially independent (10, 355b; IV-iii-5, 473b-474a). Even before leaving forever the Rubín household Fortunata was supporting her aunt, Segunda Izquierdo (IV-i-11, 442b). Her income, though by no means luxurious, is rather comfortable and continually growing. It is founded on money lending, the trade of *doña* Lupe and Torquemada, who collaborate in investing Feijóo's gift (IV-iii-5, 473b-474a), and on the parasitic speculation which we find so loathsome in the Santa Cruz family (*idem*).

From oppressed social outcast Fortunata rises to an appreciable level of respectability and power.<sup>9</sup> She overawes Estupiñá, manipulates him as well as *doña* Lupe, and reaches a point in her existence in which she can take a hand in the fashioning and control of her own destiny. One manifestation of this is her behavior in the final chapters of the book. When Maxi tells her that Aurora is Juanito's new lover—and there is no small irony in the fact that Aurora is a high fashion *modista*—Fortunata rises from her sickbed and goes out to seek revenge. She leaves her flat and *locks* the door. She takes the *key*, symbol of autonomy, with her.<sup>10</sup> While she is out fighting with Aurora, literally using the key as her weapon (IV-vi-6, 516a), a mass of people parade up the long flight of stairs to see Fortunata. These include Estupiñá and Guillermina, manager and owner respectively of the building. All sit panting on the top steps waiting Fortunata's return. They are kept out because she is now in possession of the key. That is, Fortunata at last is mistress of her own world. Even the pushy and egocentric *doña* Guillermina is reduced to waiting on and for her (IV-vi-6).

We must make no mistake about this. Fortunata has fully and definitively entered the middle classes, in fact the rentier classes, before she even returns to the house on the Cava de San Miguel. Thanks to the insights of Geoffrey Ribbans, we know this to be so because of her reactions to the building and its environs when she sees it again after a long absence.<sup>11</sup> As

<sup>9</sup> Ribbans, p. 68, remarks that "in some ways Fortunata is transformed [...] the ease with which she is accepted socially by the middle class is quite remarkable." He also notes that opposition to Fortunata is "on moral not social grounds."

<sup>10</sup> She tells Encarnación: "mientras yo esté fuera, no abres a nadie... Mejor será otra cosa: yo cierro, dando las dos vueltas, y me llevo la llave. Si viene Segunda, que espere en la escalera" (IV-vi-6, 515a). Subsequently, as she casts about for a weapon, she realizes that the key will serve this second purpose: "Debiera llevar algo que duela... ¡Ah! la llave. Es mejor que la mano del almirez. Con esto y las uñas..." (*idem*). On her new autonomy see also Peter A. Bly, "Fortunata and No. 11, Cava de San Miguel," *Hispanófila*, no. 59 (1977), 31-48.

<sup>11</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 68; Bly.



she looks it over, she says to herself "Ahora es cuando conozco que, aunque poco, algo se me ha pegado el señorío. Miro todo esto con cariño; ¡pero me parece tan ordinario...!" (IV-iii-7, 477b). And when she enters the apartment which is to be her new home, where also she will give birth to her baby, the narrator advises us:

Fortunata vió el cuarto. ¡Ay Dios, qué malo era y qué sucio y qué feo! Las puertas parecía que tenían un dedo de mugre, el papel era todo manchas, los pisos muy desiguales. La cocina causaba horror. Indudablemente, la joven se había adecentado mucho y adquirido hábitos de señora, porque la vivienda aquella se le representaba inferior a su categoría, a sus hábitos y a sus gustos. (idem)

When Estupiñá cannot repair the flat, she does it at her own expense (IV-iv-1, 481a); and of course she buys her own furniture (IV-iii-7, 478a).

Fortunata, then, may die, but surely she is no victim of the middle classes, to which she firmly belongs and in which she fully participates after she leaves Feijóo. Thanks to her inheritance based on economic resources identical to those of the Santa Cruz family, she need not work. Indeed, if we pause to consider the matter, we recall that very few people in this novel besides members of the lower classes *earn* their living. Baldomero Santa Cruz did so for a while, as did Maxi temporarily. Only Ballester really works. Aurora, set up in her salon thanks to a lover's funds, cannot be said to be a stirring example of entrepreneurial energy and initiative. Fortunata's work in earlier days consisted of homemaking and concubinage except in the Micaelas (with Maxi and Feijóo she may clean house, but she does not have to, thanks to the presence of *criadas*).

Yet an appreciable rise in socioeconomic status is not the only change which Fortunata registers. Simultaneous with the *embourgeoisement* of Fortunata, indeed in conjunction with it, are important personal transformations. If Feijóo is her benefactor in these categories, she also benefited from other lovers and teachers. From Maxi, for example, she learned how to read and tell times; she learned the days of the month and the months of the year (II-ii-4, 179a). But most important, she and the reader discover her own history. It is after all with Maxi that Fortunata develops the custom, later observed also during her affair with Feijóo, of long, and usually after dinner, conversation (4, 335b). Maxi urges Fortunata to tell him all about her past affairs, including that with Juanito, as well as the details of the loss of her first child. But Fortunata finds such recollection painful and difficult. Instead, we are told, "Prefería contar particularidades de su infancia" (II-ii-2, 174b). And what is it that we, and Maxi, learn? First, that her parents were *pueblo*, on the lower reaches of Madrid society; they were traffickers in foodstuffs. Like her paternal aunt, Segunda Izquierdo, Fortunata's mother was an egg seller; her father owned a food stand in the local market. By inference we are given to understand that she has more than a first name, for she was a legitimate child, daughter of an "hombre honrado" (idem).<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Ribbans, p. 67, observes that these facts are scant. I think it is the process of their revelation, not



When she was twelve years old her parents died. In this sense she replicates Mauricia's daughter, Adoración, who also is orphaned at a tender age.

It is not true, then, that Fortunata is without a past and without a history. What is true is that she is, until Maxi comes along, *not consciously aware* of her history. And if she is, factually, an orphan, her reconstruction of her past constitutes the first step in separating herself from the nameless, undistinguishable mass of the fourth estate. She is no longer "socially speaking" an orphan.<sup>13</sup> In other words, just as his marriage proposal gives Fortunata a sense of a future, of possibilities, of the chance even to become a *persona honrada*, so also Maxi is able to stimulate in Fortunata an appreciation of her own past. She learns from Maxi not only the abstract time of calendar and watch, but also the time of her own life *and* its situation along the continuum of time in society. This is a terribly important movement along the road to self-awareness, to a sense of self and other, and to a sense of change. Fortunata can measure how far she has progressed only if she understands just where it was that she originated. This comprehension of her origin is first expressed to Feijóo when, at the very beginning of their relationship, she exclaims: "*pero la cabra siempre tira al monte. Pueblo nació y pueblo soy: quiero decir, ordinariota y salvaje...*" (1, 329b, my italics). Such an utterance is not only a self-affirmation. It also betrays a sense of self and of social location, of how one relates to the surrounding world. If the temporal lessons learned from Maxi serve to awaken her consciousness, they also impart to Fortunata an especially acute sense of social and economic positioning. Finally, such words "Pueblo nació y pueblo soy" betray the loss of social innocence. Implicit in her self-appraisal is the irony that *she is no longer pueblo*.

Fortunata's changing situation, that is, her entrance into and rise through the ranks of the middle classes, is given concrete expression later in the novel when she and Guillermina visit the dying Mauricia.<sup>14</sup> Guillermina immediately sets to work tidying up and attending to the patient. Fortunata offers to help: "Como hija del pueblo, no quería ser menos que la *señora de la grandeza* en aquellos bajísimos menesteres..." (III-vi-5, 382b, his italics). Guillermina orders Fortunata to sweep up, but we are told "Apenas hubo cogido Fortunata la escoba entró Severiana, y que quieras que no se la quitó de las manos" (idem). Severiana, Mauricia's sister, perceives Fortunata as too high in status to be sweeping up. Severiana reacts first humbly, then with surprise, as their dialogue indicates: "—No faltaba más, señorita. Se va usted a poner perdida..." Fortunata replies, "Por Dios, déjeme usted que la ayude. ¿Quiere que le haga el almuerzo a su

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their number, which is important here. Lest anyone doubt what "honrado" means in Fortunata's world, see it used positively by her (III-vi-5, 383a) and negatively by Maxi and Olmedo (II-i-3, 164b).

<sup>13</sup> This last phrase in quotes is Blanco's, 18.

<sup>14</sup> Once again Professor Ribbens is to be credited for spotting this change; on p. 68 he alludes briefly to Fortunata's frustrated wish to sweep.



marido?" Severiana's shock is clear as she exclaims: "—¡Qué cosas tiene!..." (idem). At this moment, Fortunata realizes that regardless of her own ideas about herself, the *outside world* sees her as a *señorita*, a lady of the middle classes. She is constrained to impose her services upon the hard pressed Severiana: Fortunata not only must insist that she be allowed to help, she must also recite the recipe of the *tortilla* she is going to make in order to convince Severiana that she really knows how to perform so-called menial chores such as cooking (idem). When finally she is washing up, having completed her task with a remarkable efficiency, the narrator informs us: "dejóse llevar por su vagabundo pensamiento a un orden de ideas *que no era nuevo en ella*: 'Si es lo que a mí me gusta, ser obrera, mujer de un trabajador honradote que me quiera... No le des vueltas, chica; pueblo naciste y pueblo serás toda tu vida. *La cabra tira al monte, y se te despega el señorío, créetelo, se te despega...*'" (idem. 383a, my italics). The words in italics connect this utterance, directly and almost verbatim, to Fortunata's *past* conversation with Feijóo cited above. But in addition, they also are tied directly to Fortunata's *future* dialogue with herself at the end of the novel. For as we have already seen, and with almost identical words to describe her situation, Fortunata finally admits *the contrary* as she enters the house on the Cava de San Miguel near the end of her life: "algo *se me ha pegado el señorío*" (IV-iii-7, 477b, my italics).

And so, ultimately, what are the implications of that fleeting reference to Mr. Singer's machine? On one level we have seen that it serves as an index of important social and economic changes worked on Fortunata which have enhanced her status. But on a deeper level it is Galdós' way of emphasizing something absolutely crucial to understanding and appreciating this extraordinary novel. That something is this: *We* see Fortunata as a *literary* creation; but her power as such derives from the fact that *she*, and her contemporaries in her world, see her in terms of her social and economic realities. Her value to her world, her importance in it, are defined first and foremost as in ours (1) by her appearance, and then (2) by her answers to the two fundamental questions "What is your name?" and "What do you do?"

These aspects of social identification and self-definition, i.e., appearance, name, and work, correspond to Fortunata's relationship with each of the first three important men in her life: Juanito, Maxi and Feijóo. And here we see the progression characteristic of a dialectic beginning to emerge. For it is Juanito who makes Fortunata conscious of her appearance, her *external* being, and who moves her to exploit it. That is, he gives her a sense of her *immediate* self as a physical and biological entity. But this is insufficient to survive in society. Maxi, on the other hand, provides her with the means to develop as an individual *internally*. With Maxi she comes to know her *dynamic* yet *distant* self, the self from which she has been transformed and into which she may develop. First, he gives her a new name, his own; she becomes thereby *la señora de Rubín*, a "persona decente y honrada" like her parents. Then he incites her to cultivate a sense of herself temporally,



historically. She begins to understand that if she has a past, so too may she have a future. To the stasis of pure biological existence in which Juanito revels is added the dynamism of process, of becoming, of potential and possibility.

Finally, along comes Feijóo. And he gives her a sewing machine. That is, he provides her literally and figuratively with the means to survive in society. Concretely he gives her a source of economic power. Symbolically this is the power and knowledge to integrate herself into a hostile world. The nature of Feijóo's role in her life is nowhere reflected more neatly than in their postprandial talks. When she was with Maxi, Fortunata did all the talking. There the wills of the reader and the narrator coincided with Maxi's in Fortunata's self-revelation. But with Feijóo, Fortunata is also a listener as much as a speaker. Theirs is a dialogue in which her self is related to its milieu, to the world of others, to society in other words. This is the significance of the conversation in which Feijóo scolds Fortunata for her animus toward Jacinta (4, 336b). Feijóo, then, is the lover who helps Fortunata develop her *social* self.

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Now membership in the bourgeoisie is not an endpoint for Fortunata. Formerly, for example, she had wanted to be a "persona honrada" and yet was not fulfilled when that goal was reached. Similarly, being comfortably well-off and independent does not satisfy her. For her, *aburguesamiento* is simply one more step on the climb to something higher. She does not disdain her gifts and good fortune, but neither, once she possesses them, does she consider herself, as Lazarillo de Tormes did himself, to have arrived at "la cumbre de toda buena fortuna."<sup>15</sup> Rather, her *embourgeoisement* is a factor facilitating growth in other directions, just as it opens up new possibilities for her in the area of self-sufficiency.

Moreover, the *aburguesamiento* of Fortunata is important to the reader because it enables us to appreciate other, essential aspects of the novel and its protagonist. First, because the coming to consciousness of Fortunata, hand in hand with her journey out of the *pueblo* and through the ranks of the middle-classes, places in relief the dialectical structure of this novel. Second and more important, Fortunata's socioeconomic rise highlights her social and personal transformations from a lower class, objectified victim subject to the will of others, to a self-determining, decisive, and autonomous mistress of her own domain. This metamorphosis underscores the increasing depth and complexity of her relationships to her lovers, and their importance to her own self-knowledge.

Indeed, Fortunata's lovers, like the stages of her life, rise up dialectically in an ascending order of existence and experience. Looming over all is the

<sup>15</sup> This is the famous last clause of the work; see Alberto Blecua's edition of *La vida de Lazarillo de Tormes y de sus fortunas y adversidades* (Madrid: Castalia, 1979), p. 177.



symbol of that dialectical narrative structure, the famous spiral stairway in the house on the Cava de San Miguel, the building which Maxi calls "la casa de los escalones de piedra" (IV-v-3, 492a). We see the structure through Fortunata's eyes in Part IV of the novel when she returns to the house in which she spent her childhood, and in which she will die. She enters the house:

En ella, desde el portal hasta lo más alto de la escalera de piedra, veía pintada su infancia, con todos sus episodios y accidentes, como se ven pintados en la iglesia los Pasos de la Pasión y Muerte de Cristo. Cada peldaño tenía su historia, y la pollería y el cuarto entresuelo y después el segundo tenían ese *revestimiento de una capa espiritual* que es propio de los lugares consagrados por la religión o por la vida." (IV-iii-7, 477b, his italics)

Therefore let us not be misled. The return to Cava de San Miguel, number 11, the site where it all began, is not for that reason a signal of a circular pattern, nor is the structure of this novel circular. Even if she has come home, everything, including the core of Fortunata's own being, is changed. Most of all, Fortunata's perceptions of herself have changed, just as have her perceptions of that building. It is Fortunata who has come home, but she is not the same Fortunata who left. Dialectically spiralling upwards toward her death, it is she and the narrator who say it best:

"—¡Las vueltas del mundo! —decía, dando las de la escalera y venciendo con fatiga los peldaños—. ¡Quién me había de decir que pararía aquí otra vez! *Ahora es cuando conozco* que, aunque poco, algo se me ha pegado el señorío." (idem, my italics)<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See G.G. Minter's excellent study on this topic, "Halma And The Writings of St. Augustine," *Avila Galdoniana*, 15 (1975), 75-97, which examines the works of the saint (Confessions: The City of God) inspiring one aspect of Halma. No such works appear in Galdós' library, although they could have been available to him.

<sup>2</sup> Although modern galdonistas dispute the relative merits and defects of *Nazarín* and *Halma*, neither they or contemporary critics of Galdós' novels (see note 17) perceived Halma's relation to the game "Halma." Only Clario, in his review of *Nazarín* perceived something unspecifically race, involving possible game-play, perhaps unwittingly anticipating *Halma*: "...ciertas líneas demasiado atrevidas y algunas incidencias de la acción [de *Nazarín*], parecen que nos quieren decir que se trata de un juego simbólico de una humorada arcaica, de un juego lógico político, ideológico..." ("Revisión *Nazarín*," *El Imparcial*, Año 29, Núm. 18,153, 5 de agosto de 1896, p. 3). In his review of *Halma* however ("Halma, novela de Pérez Galdós," *El Imparcial*, Año 29, Núm. 18,204, 30 de diciembre de 1896, p. 1) he did not explore this further. Only one critic of *Halma* found anything unusual in it, but waxed absurd by calling it "una novela de tipo Quijote... un experimento de química espiritual" (José Verdes Abadía, "Revisión *Halma*," *La Justicia*, Año 9, Núm. 2,712, 10 de enero de 1896, p. 2).

<sup>3</sup> In another trick in *Halma*, Galdós concealed his game clue in the pseudo-aristocratic hyphenated family name of count Carlos Federico Halma-Lauenberg. The name "Halma" may probably never exist; it appears nowhere in the popular European registry of continental nobility, the *Annuaire de Gotha*, (Gotha: Justus Perthes) during the nineteenth century. On the other hand Galdós probably modified a real patronymic for the second part of the name: "Lauenberg" appears in the *Annuaire de Gotha*, 1875, and, having been the family name of the prince of Schwarzburg-Rudolstadt

<sup>16</sup> The spadework for this essay was begun while its author was supported by the program of cultural exchange under Article IV of the joint Spanish-US treaty signed in 1977. To those who administer the program for Spain, my thanks.