

## ABSTRACT

Title of dissertation: IGNACIO ZULOAGA AND THE PROBLEM OF SPAIN

Dena Crosson, Doctor of Philosophy, 2009

Dissertation directed by: Professor June Hargrove  
Department of Art History and Archeology

This dissertation examines the career of Ignacio Zuloaga (1870-1945), a highly successful and influential artist during his lifetime, in the context of nationalism and the political and cultural conditions that informed his artistic persona. Positioning himself to both Spanish and foreign audiences as the “painter of Spain,” his style and subject matter simultaneously exploited foreign preconceptions about Spain while serving as a lightning rod for the critical nationalist discourse preoccupying Spanish political and cultural leaders during the first decades of the twentieth century. In the 1910s and 1920s the vernacular nationalism he practiced was not opposed to modernism. But by the 1930s, nationalism had become associated with rising fascist movements both in Europe and in Spain. Through a series of case studies this dissertation problematizes the issue of modernism in art and fills an important gap in the study of the critical role of nationalism for the struggle between tradition and modernity in the arts in early twentieth-century Spain. Chapter One examines Zuloaga’s influence in France through his affiliation with a group of French artists known as *La Bande Noire* and describes his important contribution to the rediscovery of El Greco in the last years of the nineteenth century.

Chapter Two explores Zuloaga's discovery of the province of Castilla in 1898 as a subject for his work. It charts the significance of Castilla for the nationalist project of the Generation of 98 as well as for the regenerationist Institución Libre de Enseñanza (Free Institute of Learning). Chapter Three maps the growing links between Zuloaga and traditionalist and fascist ideologies, both in France and in Spain, in the 1910s and 1920s. Chapter Four investigates Zuloaga's career both in the context of the foundation and fall of Spain's Second Republic (1931-1939) and the Spanish Civil War and its aftermath. Zuloaga's career provides a significant case study for the *gradual* alignment, of what *became* traditionalism, with right-wing political ideology, an alignment by no means necessarily apparent before the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in 1936.

IGNACIO ZULOAGA AND THE PROBLEM OF SPAIN

by

Dena Crosson

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Advisory Committee

Professor June Hargrove, Chair  
Professor William Pressly  
Professor Marjorie Venit  
Associate Professor Renée Ater  
Associate Professor José M. Naharro

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## Introduction

Ignacio Zuloaga (1870-1945) was the toast of the town at his 1925 exhibition at the Reinhardt Gallery in New York. The show of 52 paintings drew thousands of visitors and glowing reviews during its month-long run.<sup>1</sup> Zuloaga was fêted at a gala dinner hosted by the Spanish ambassador and met President Calvin Coolidge at the White House. He was no stranger to such success. Zuloaga was a Basque-born painter with little academic training celebrated in Europe and the Americas for his vivid images of Andalusian themes such as bullfighters and gypsies, as well as for his dark depictions of still-backward rural Spain. His style and subject matter simultaneously exploited foreign preconceptions about Spain while serving as a lightning rod for the critical nationalist discourse preoccupying Spanish political and cultural leaders during the first decades of the twentieth century.

Zuloaga's life was punctuated by a series of enormous political upheavals. The defeat in the 1898 Spanish American War was a shattering event that engendered rising nationalist and separatist movements in Spain during the first years of the twentieth century. The response of Spain's small intelligentsia to the loss of that nation's last colonies was an effort at self-examination in an attempt to define the Spanish nation and spanishness itself (*hispanidad*) as a means of bringing regeneration and cultural cohesiveness to a highly disordered, fractured nation. Zuloaga's self-identification as "the

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<sup>1</sup> Enrique Lafuente Ferrari, *The Life and Work of Ignacio Zuloaga*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, (Madrid: Planeta, 1972/1991) 337-339. Philip MacMahon, "Some Aspects of Ignacio Zuloaga," *Art Bulletin*, 7, 1925, 117. "The applause [for the exhibition]...continued....when 75,000 people visited the galleries at Fifth Avenue and 57<sup>th</sup> Street."

painter of Spain” was a deliberate strategy that placed him squarely within this debate as to the nature, quality and condition of the Spanish nation. He was affiliated by friendship with members of the Generation of 98, a group of writers and poets, who advocated a romantic idealization of the Spanish landscape and character, based on inward, nostalgic celebrations of Spain’s Golden Age. The 98ers, while liberal in their thinking, did not advocate any specific political program. At the same time Spain’s weak parliamentary monarchy struggled with the perceived necessity for political and economic reforms to bring Spain to the level of modern nations in greater Europe. Nationalism, both of the right and the left, dominated political and cultural discourse during this turbulent era in Spanish history. While recent scholarship has explored the implications of nationalist ideologies for the visual arts in France, these same issues for the arts in Spain have received little scrutiny.<sup>2</sup> This dissertation will examine Zuloaga’s career in the context of nationalism and the political and cultural conditions that informed his artistic persona.

Enrique Lafuente Ferrari’s biography *The Life and Work of Ignacio Zuloaga* remains the only monograph on the artist. Ghislaine Plessier’s *Ignacio Zuloaga et ses amis français* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 1995) and *Etude critique de la correspondance échangée entre Zuloaga et Rodin de 1903-1917* (Paris : Edition Hispaniques, 1983) are confined to Zuloaga’s French connections. Maya Milhou’s *Ignacio Zuloaga et la France* (Le Bousat: M. Milhou, 1981) also investigates Zuloaga’s career and relationships in the context of France. More recent exhibitions of his works include *Catálogo de la exposición de pintura de Ignacio Zuloaga, 1870-1945* (Victoria: Eusko Jaurlaritza, cultura eta turismo saila, 1985), Suzanne Stratton’s *Ignacio Zuloaga in America 1909-*

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<sup>2</sup> Matthew Affron and Mark Antliff, *Fascist Visions: art and ideology in France and Italy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), and Neil McWilliams, *Order and Tradition: The Aesthetics of Action Française*, (CASVA, Washington, DC: National Gallery of Art, 2002).

1925 (New York: Spanish Institute, 1989) and *Sorolla, Zuloaga dos visions para un cambio de siglo* (Madrid: Fundación cultural Mapfre, 1998). I have relied on letters, both published and archival, between Zuloaga and numerous correspondents. These include *Correspondencia de Ignacio Zuloaga y su tío Daniel*, Mariano Gómez de Caso (Segovia: Diputación Provincial, 2002) which is very useful for Zuloaga's early career. *Correspondencia entre Falla y Zuloaga 1915-1942* (Granada: El Ayuntamiento, 1982) and *Zuloaga y Unamuno: glosas a unas cartas inéditas*, José Ignacio Tellechea Idígoras (Zumaya: Museo Ignacio Zuloaga, 1987) provide important primary documentation for Zuloaga's relationships with these important figures. *Ignacio Zuloaga: epistolario* (San Sebastián: caja de ahorros municipal, 1989) contains letters to numerous correspondants, including Pablo Picasso (1881-1973). Zuloaga's life-long correspondence with his American patron, Alice Garrett, are archived at the Evergreen House Foundation, Baltimore and provide an especially rich source for Zuloaga's thinking on art and politics.

Several critics published essays on his work during his lifetime. These include Christian Brinton, *Exhibition of paintings by Ignacio Zuloaga* (New York: Redfield-Kendrick, 1916), Léonce Bénédite, *Ignacio Zuloaga* (Paris: Librairie Artistique Internationale), Camille Mauclair, *Ignacio Zuloaga* (Paris: 1925) and Juan de la Encina, *El Arte de Ignacio Zuloaga* (Madrid: sociedad española de librería). A handful of Spanish publications between the time of Zuloaga's death in 1945 and the end of the Franco regime in 1975, including Father Juan José, *La Incognita de Zuloaga* (Burgos: Editorial el monte, 1951), Jesús Arozamena, *Ignacio Zuloaga, el pintor, el hombre*, (San

Sebastian: Sociedad guipuzcoana, 1970) and Jesús Rodríguez del Castillo, *Ignacio Zuloaga, el hombre* (Zarauz: Icharopena, 1970) provide little of interest.

Zuloaga was a highly successful artist who lived and worked in France and in Spain. He knew or had friendships with Paul Gauguin (1848-1903), Emile Bernard (1868-1941), Auguste Rodin (1840-1917), Eugène Carrière (1849-1906), Camille Mauclair (1872-1945) and Maurice Barrès (1862-1923) in France, as well as writers Miguel de Unamuno (1864-1936) and José Ortega y Gasset (1883-1955) in Spain. He promoted himself as the living heir to the great triad of Spanish artists of the past: El Greco, Velázquez and Goya. Zuloaga was as famous for his unflinching images of wasted landscapes, diseased peasants, witches and superstition-ridden villagers, as for his glamorous portraits of wealthy patronesses dressed *à l'espagnole* in mantillas and fans. He often painted figures of friends or villagers against the backdrop of cities such as Avila, Toledo and Sepúlveda, all places celebrated by the 98ers as exemplars of essentialist *hispanidad*. His version of Spain arose from a kind of vernacular nationalism: regionalist, ethnic and pre-republican, in opposition to state nationalism, based on modern political and civic institutions.<sup>3</sup> His signature images of Spain's harsh realities – *España Negra* - along with tourist-familiar paintings of gypsies and bullfighters, had many detractors at home. *La cuestión Zuloaga*, a polemic in the early years of the twentieth century, found critics arguing that the artist merely pandered to foreign perceptions of Spain propagated in the nineteenth century and that his paintings presented a false view of the Spanish nation as backward and outside the European

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<sup>3</sup> See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1991) for a discussion of vernacular versus state nationalism.

community.<sup>4</sup> His work was defended by Spanish thinkers Unamuno and Ortega y Gasset, for whom *hispanidad* necessarily contained resistance to modernity, a willing barbarism that defined the Spanish soul.<sup>5</sup> Zuloaga's oeuvre gave visual focus to this debate as Spain struggled to regain a sense of national unity after the final loss of its imperial identity.

Zuloaga's reception in Europe and the United States carried very different meanings. Foreign audiences and artists were impressed by his brio and readily accepted him as "the painter of Spain." He maintained a Paris studio where he spent part of each year, moving easily in French artistic circles. Zuloaga's significant role in the revival of El Greco at the turn of the twentieth century gave him modernist credentials in France, while continuing to ground him in his Spanish identity. But he never wished for entrée into the avant-garde, preferring to ally himself with French artists such as Jean-Louis Forain and André Dunoyer de Segonzac.<sup>6</sup> At the same time Zuloaga formed friendships and associations with French right-wing nationalists, such as Barrès and Georges Sorel (1847-1922) who praised his traditional subject matter and rooted *hispanidad* (discussed in Chapter Three.)

By the 1930s, the kind of vernacular nationalism practiced by Zuloaga had become associated with rising fascist movements both in Europe and in Spain. His support for the Franco rebellion in 1936 was immediate. His 1936 painting, *Siege of the Alcázar of Toledo*, celebrates a Nationalist victory and stands in utter contrast, artistically

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<sup>4</sup> *El País*, December 18, 1904 quoted in Lafuente Ferrari, *La Vida y el Arte de Ignacio Zuloaga*, 310. "Zuloaga has painted a fanciful and contemptible Spain; he has helped to foment the errors in judging us and describing us committed by Dumas, Gautier, Merimée and others from across the Pyrenees."

<sup>5</sup> José Ortega y Gasset, *Obras Completas*, 1, 529-538.

<sup>6</sup> Evergreen Foundation, Baltimore, letter to Alice Garrett, May 10, 1928. "Forain est, à mon avis, le plus grand artiste Français de nos temps." "In my opinion, Forain is the best French artist of our time."

and politically, to the most famous work of art of the Spanish Civil War, Picasso's *Guernica* (1937).

This dissertation will fill an important gap in the study of the critical role of nationalism for the struggle between tradition and modernity in the arts in early twentieth-century Spain.<sup>7</sup> An examination of social and political conditions during Zuloaga's career will yield a deeper understanding of the role of nationalism in shaping his choices and his reputation. His connection to the Generation of 98 and their *mal de siècle* has never been fully traced or analyzed. *La cuestión Zuloaga*, an important issue for the role of art in defining *hispanidad*, has received little scrutiny. The positive European response to his work (especially in France) has never been examined in the context of right wing regionalist and nationalist movements. Zuloaga's link with conservative and ultimately fascist ideology has put him outside the mainstream of scholarly investigation, yet his *oeuvre* provides a rich and untapped opportunity to uncover important intellectual, social and historical constructs surrounding modernism and nationalism during a crucial period in the history of Spain.

My approach in this dissertation is partially monographic, in tracing Zuloaga's career, but does not attempt a full-scale artistic biography. Through a series of "case studies" I analyze Zuloaga's artistic practice within the ideology of nationalism. In so

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<sup>7</sup> I define "modernism" as an artistic practice in opposition to Renaissance classicism, emphasizing the physical qualities of a given work of art, i.e. lack of spatial depth, visible facture and arbitrary color. Modernist art is produced by an individual who operates independently in the field of western capitalist society. "The modern artist...is a full-time professional, dedicated to his work...and recognizing no jurisdiction other than the specific norms of art." Mary Gluck, *Popular Bohemia Modernism and Urban Culture in Nineteenth-Century Paris* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005), 5. Traditionalism is defined as a concern for classical ideals of compositional balance, order and harmony in terms of esthetics; it also means a reverence for art of the past. In the context of this dissertation "modernity" refers to the human and societal transformations associated with industrialization and urbanization beginning in the nineteenth century. Charles Harrison, "Modernism" in *Critical Terms for Art History*, ed. Robert S. Nelson and Richard Shiff (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996).

doing, I problematize the issue of modernism in art. I argue that current art historical practice, in privileging the history of the avant-garde, pays insufficient attention to the profound debate between modernism and traditionalism as practiced by artists in Europe in the years before World War II. Zuloaga's career provides a significant case study for the *gradual* alignment, of what *became* traditionalism, with right-wing political ideology, an alignment by no means necessarily apparent before the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in 1936.

Chapter One traces the years 1890-1905. In 1890 Zuloaga established himself in Paris, joining a group of other Spanish expatriate artists, and entered into the world of bohemia as a modernist artist. His burgeoning influence as a result of his early success and distinctive style is evident in his affiliation with a group of French artists known as *La Bande Noire*. Zuloaga spent large parts of the years 1893-1898 in Andalusía, exploring Orientalist Spain; it was here that he became friends with Bernard. Zuloaga's role in the debate between naturalism and classicism is explored in the context of this friendship. Chapter One also describes Zuloaga's important contribution to the rediscovery of El Greco in the last years of the nineteenth century, when the Cretan painter became significant for Picasso and Spanish nationalism.

Chapter Two explores Zuloaga's discovery of the province of Castilla in 1898 as a subject for his work. It charts the significance of Castilla for the nationalist project of the 98ers as well as for the regenerationist Institución Libre de Enseñanza (Free Institute of Learning). Zuloaga's role in the privileging of Castilla as "true Spain" is described in depth.



Chapter Three charts the growing links between Zuloaga and traditionalist and fascist ideologies, both in France and in Spain, in the 1910s and 1920s. It describes the differing receptions of Zuloaga's work in those countries and investigates the relationship between modernist art and nationalism. Zuloaga's and Picasso's respective collaborations on set designs for musical productions by Spanish nationalist composer Manuel de Falla (1876-1946) are case studies for that relationship.

Chapter Four maps Zuloaga's career both in the context of the foundation and fall of Spain's Second Republic (1931-1939) and the Spanish Civil War and its aftermath. Nationalist rhetoric employed by the Republic is described in the *Misiones Pedagógicas*, a national educational outreach project, as well as in poet Federico García Lorca's (1898-1936) traveling theatrical company *La Barraca* (The Hut). The career of journalist and writer Ernesto Giménez Caballero (1898-1988), who was an important figure in the Spanish literary avant-garde before embracing fascism, is a case study for the role of nationalism in the shift from determinist to fascist. The exhibition histories of two works of art expressing opposing sentiments in the Civil War, Picasso's *Guernica* (1937) and Zuloaga's *The Siege of the Alcázar* (1936) are traced. Zuloaga's role as the pre-eminent artist of Franco's Spain, a position he enjoyed until his death in 1945, is described.

My use of the vexing term nationalism requires a working description, as there exists no precise agreement as to the meaning of this ideology. From Ernest Renan's 1882 *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation* to Hans Kohn's 1945 *Idea of Nationalism*, to the post World War II contributions of major thinkers on the subject, such as Ernest Gellner, Eric Hobsbawm, and Benedict Anderson, to current scholarship challenging the modernist orthodoxy of the post war scholars named above, nationalism continues to be a slippery

concept that embodies a multitude of sociological, political, historical, and cultural and attitudes and artifacts.<sup>8</sup> There is no overarching definition of nationalism in nineteenth and twentieth century Europe in part because any theory must take into account the enormous varieties in historical and political conditions in western and eastern European countries, from Ireland to Russia, from Spain to the Slavic nations. In a brief excursus into the history of the scholarship of nationalism, I endeavor to provide a context for the historical period examined in this dissertation, one in which the European age of capital came to full fruition, flanked by Marxism and threatened by what some define as the inevitable evil fruit of nationalist ideology: fascism.

Scholarship on nationalism may be loosely categorized into two opposing schools of thought: primordial or perennialist nationalism and modernist nationalism.<sup>9</sup> Modernist nationalism is the model most generally accepted by current scholars. In this iteration, nationalism and nations themselves are defined as necessary artifices arising in response to Enlightenment principles of individual liberty and freedom from subjection to a monarch. The French Revolution is considered the catalyst for a fundamental shift in which people became citizens belonging to a republic, rather than subjects of the crown, thereby requiring new identities and loyalties; the modern nation-state is the product of this profound shift in world order. For Gellner, Hobsbawm and Anderson, nationalism is a construction required by the exigencies of modernity: capitalism, industrialization, and urbanization. In Anderson's famous phrase, such nation-states are imagined communities

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<sup>8</sup> See Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983) and *Nationalism* (New York: New York University Press, 1987), Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: programme, myth, reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992) and Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

<sup>9</sup> Hobsbawm uses "primordial" and Anthony Smith uses "perennialist." Anthony Smith, *Theories of Nationalism* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971).

built on the cohesive structures of modernity; most significantly mass dissemination of common information in the form of print capitalism, which has the effect of creating a sense of citizenship and belonging in a group among strangers, and, crucially, the invention of a mythic past. Thus modernity itself dictates that nations are inevitably historically contingent and not absolute. In this Anderson come close to Renan, despite the French writer's organicist emphasis on the importance of the "soul" of a people in the formation of a nation. For Renan, "Forgetting, and I would even say, historical error are an essential factor in the creation of a nation..."<sup>10</sup> In this manner history itself is a cultural artifact in the service of nation-building.

For Gellner, nationalism is a fundamental by-product of modernity, an ideology that provides the best protection against the abuses of power of Marxism and fascism. Modern, mobile, anonymous societies create a sense of community through nationalist structures that provide civic cohesion. Nationalism is a principle in which the cultural nation and the political nation, as well as ethnic and state geographic boundaries, must be congruent.<sup>11</sup> Industrialization and its concomitant social mobility require "a common conceptual currency"<sup>12</sup> provided by mass public education in a single dominant language; this homogenization inevitably provides a larger sense of union to the nation-state and undermines regionalist cultural customs.

What is tacit in these powerfully argued and persuasive theories is an underlying sense that nationalism itself is a form of false consciousness.<sup>13</sup> For modernist nationalism,

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<sup>10</sup> Renan as quoted in David McCrone, *The sociology of nationalism: tomorrow's ancestors* (London: Routledge), 50.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 72

<sup>12</sup> Gellner, *Nations and nationalism*, 34 note 37

<sup>13</sup> Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalisms*, 122. "...nationalism in itself is either hostile to the real ways of the past, or arises on its ruins." Gellner, *Nations and nationalism*, 2. "...the political effectiveness of

it is a kind of conventional wisdom that nationalist ideology stands in opposition to larger principles of universal justice, peace, and global prosperity.<sup>14</sup> Complicating this rather reductive judgment is the division of good and bad nationalisms. As Kohn has it, western nationalism (England, France, the Netherlands and Switzerland) is primarily based on political and economic issues, with geography playing a crucial role in nation-building. Eastern nationalism (the Slavic and Islamic nations), on the other hand, is primarily based on ethnic identities that do not necessarily recognize “artificial” territorial borders. In western nations, the inhabitants are citizens, while in eastern nations, they are “folk.”<sup>15</sup> The organic, determinist nature of eastern nationalism is even more false than its western cousin and is the form that is inherently more aligned with traditionalist, and even fascist, ideology. Nationalism is “good” when controlled by the civic virtues of a (western) republic and, as we have seen with Gellner, protects citizens from the abuses of Marxism and fascism. It is “bad” when it bases itself on determinist theories of national origin and self definition.

This binary opposition cannot account for overlapping vernacular and civic nationalist ideologies that characterized Spain until the end of the Spanish Civil War in 1939. The determinist nationalism of Zuloaga and the 98ers was flanked by the Europeanizing project of the Second Republic; both relied on similar mythic constructs in attempting to unite Spain.

Spanish nationalism has received little attention among modernist theorists. Only Benedict Anderson addresses the issue in his acute and compelling discussion of creole

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national sentiment would be much impaired if nationalists had as fine a sensibility to the wrongs committed by their nation as they have to those committed against it.”

<sup>14</sup> See Dudley Seers, *The political economy of nationalism* (London: Oxford University Press, 1983).

<sup>15</sup> See Hans Kohn, *The idea of nationalism, a study in its origins and backgrounds* (New York: Collier Press, 1967).

nationalism among Spain's South American colonies. Catholic Spain, the first imperial power among the Western European proto "nations," was weak in the humanist centered Enlightenment ideologies of the post Renaissance rising powers of Britain, France, the Netherlands and Germany. But if one accepts the modernist nationalist theory that nationalism is a function of market capitalism, which in turn was fueled by imperial conquests and the opening of colonial markets, the omission of Spain in such analyses seems curious. Anderson finds nationalism (territorial and modern) emerging in the Americas first.<sup>16</sup> Examining nationalism by the lodestar of the French Revolution and focusing on those countries who dominated Europe economically in the nineteenth century narrows the field and contributes to the Eurocentric quality of modernist nationalism. Modernity itself becomes a Western (European) construct and assigns a lesser value to the non-Western. Timothy Mitchell argues that it is the interaction of the non-West and the West via colonial industry and markets that gave rise to modernity and thereby the modern "nation."<sup>17</sup>

Primordial or perennialist nationalism takes issue with the materialist conception of modernist nationalism and seeks to explain the abiding power of myth and memory in nationalist ideology, not as imaginary and contingent, as modernist nationalism would have it, but as necessary components to an authentic nation-state in which citizens share a common history and sense of place.<sup>18</sup> In this model the nation is neither absolute nor contingent, but rather an entity in which cultural cohesiveness is provided by such state

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<sup>16</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 191.

<sup>17</sup> See Timothy Mitchell, ed., *Questions of Modernity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 2-3.

<sup>18</sup> Eric Hobsbawm, "The primordial, kinship and nationality" in *When is the nation? Towards an understanding of theories of nationalism*, ed. Ichijo Atsuko and Gordana Uzelac Routledge (London: Routledge, 2005) 80.

apparatus as mass education, transportation and information dissemination, while shaped by vital ethnic and cultural artifacts necessary to a sense of identity and belonging.

For Anthony Smith, historical forgetting and nostalgia for a mythic past are crucially important in acting as a bridge between the agrarian past and the dislocations of modernity.<sup>19</sup> Such ideological constructs serve to provide continuity to the rapidly changing and powerfully disorienting forces of modernity. For Smith the ongoing strength of nationalist sentiment cannot be dismissed as a form of political brainwashing.

The nationalists may in reality practice urban modernity while extolling the agrarian life and its folkways, but their model of the nation and their inspiration for its regeneration is derived from their belief in the ideal of national authenticity and its embodiment in ‘the people.’ If we fail to grasp this we are debarred from explaining the messianic ardour of nationalism, its ability time and again to confound the formal rationality of advanced industrial societies....”<sup>20</sup>

Smith lists the necessary features of a modern nation in modernist theories of nationalism. These are a well-defined territory; a legal-political community; mass participation in social life and politics; mass public education; collective autonomy as a sovereign state; membership in an international system of nations; and legitimation through the ideology of nationalism.<sup>21</sup> These, for Smith are the characteristics not of a nation, but of a *modern* nation located in Western Europe and based on Enlightenment rationalism. This model excludes any definitions of nationalism outside of the western tradition and outside of modernity. Smith’s definition of a nation is

“...[A] named and self-defined community whose members cultivate common myths, memories, symbols and values, possess and disseminate a distinctive

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<sup>19</sup> Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism* (London: Routledge, 1998) 44.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 44.

<sup>21</sup> Smith, “The genealogy of nations: an ethno-symbolic approach?” in *When is the nation? Towards an understanding of theories of nationalism*, ed. Ichijo Atsuko and Gordana Uzelac (London: Routledge, 2005), 95.

public culture, reside in and identify with a historic homeland, and create and disseminate common laws and shared customs.”<sup>22</sup>

This definition challenges the orthodoxy of modernist nationalism by emphasizing myth and memory, rather than the structures of modernity, as fundamental to a nation.

Dudley Seers makes the point that both of modernity’s most influential political and economic systems of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries - market capitalism and Marxism - are flawed in two (among many) important ways.<sup>23</sup> First, both systems are predicated on a Utopian belief in progress towards a better world. Second, both fail to take into account the powerful issue of nationalism to the formation of a successful and viable nation-state. The false consciousness that is nationalism for modernist nationalist theorists implies an eventual withering away in a model that matches Marxism’s view of the eventual fate of post-revolution states. For Seers, modernity’s contemporary internationalism and globalization are elite viewpoints in a world still largely bound by poverty, illiteracy, and political disenfranchisement. In Seers’ revisionist theory, nationalism provides a necessary and healthy antidote to an increasingly culturally homogenous and economically stratified world order.<sup>24</sup>

Post-modernist nationalism scholar Philip Gorski’s attempts to bridge the issue of the origin of nationalism (pre-modern and perennial or a function of modernity) are of special interest for the purposes of this dissertation.<sup>25</sup> Gorski identifies four nationalist mobilizations that are not necessarily dependent on historical time. These are *discourses*

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid, 96.

<sup>23</sup> Seers, *The Political Economy of Nationalism*, 9.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 1-27.

<sup>25</sup> Philip S. Gorski, “The Mosaic Movement: an early modernist critique of modernist theories of nationalism,” *The American Journal of Sociology*, 105, March, 2000, 1428-1468.

that evoke the nation, *movements* whose goal is to preserve and expand the nation, *parties* that capture or influence the state in the name of the nation, and *regimes* that control the state apparatus and use violence against enemies of the nation, both internal and external. Gorski gives Renaissance Italy as an example of the lowest trope, *discourse* (nationalist mobilization limited to an intellectual elite via discourse) and Nazi Germany as an example of the highest trope, *regime*.

The political and historical events in Spain between 1898 (“The Disaster”) and 1936 (the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War) Spain produced all four of Gorski’s tropes of nationalist mobilization. In following Smith, Gorski and Seers I attempt to analyze Spanish nationalism and its impact on Zuloaga’s career in a way that sidesteps the issues of modernist nationalism and provides a less politically charged investigation of the career of this little-studied artist.

Imperial Spain was one of the oldest political units in Europe, maintaining the same territorial borders since the 16<sup>th</sup> century. This entity consisted of separate kingdoms with their own laws and institutions, forming a confederation rather than a nation-state. Despite the existence of these kingdoms and dominions, some, such as Catalonia, the Basque Country, and Galicia with their own languages, an ethno-patriotic Spanish collective identity, in which Castilla was dominant, prevailed. Events such as the Reconquista, the glorious unification of the peninsula under Spanish rule following the defeat of the Muslims, the “discovery” of the New World and the Napoleonic invasion called forth a Spanish patriotic response that transcended regional loyalties. The empire itself was the engine for loyalty to a larger “nation” that brought together the separate provinces into a single entity. By 1898 Spain’s once vast imperial possessions had shrunk



to Cuba and the Philippines. The whole country had benefited from the captive markets of these last remaining possessions; their loss exposed the weakness of the government no longer able to provide economic, military, and national stability.<sup>26</sup> Transformed by necessity from the Spanish empire to the nation of Spain, a new definition of the monarchic state was required.

Historian Stanley Payne describes nationalism in Spain before 1936 as one of the weakest among European countries.<sup>27</sup> He ascribes this relative weakness of nationalist sentiment to several factors: the lack of foreign incursions since the defeat of Napoleon, the strong role of Catholicism in Spain as a unifying ideology, the federal structure of the central government, assigning political, legal and economic powers to various regions, and the classic liberalism of nineteenth-century political Spain. For Payne, the nationalism that existed prior to the outbreak of the civil war belongs to Gorski's *discursive* nationalism, confined to a small elite and whose political aim was monarchist traditionalism. Payne acknowledges the Regenerationist movement following the Disaster, describing it as proto-nationalist, common among political parties and civic leaders, diffuse and concerned with Spain's standing as a former great power now lacking a coherent identity.

The Primo de Rivera dictatorship (1923-1930), for Payne, was Spain's first nationalist government.<sup>28</sup> This was an authoritarian regime that wished to increase the pace of economic modernization in Spain, as did the Regenerationists, while advocating a

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<sup>26</sup> Sebastian Balfour, *The End of the Spanish Empire, 1898-1923*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 132.

<sup>27</sup> Stanley Payne, *Fascism In Spain 1923-1977* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1999). Payne is the redoubtable expert on modern Spanish history having published scores of articles and books during the course of his career. Anderson's robust discussion of creole nationalism in Spain's former South American colonies attributes the lack of a Spanish/American pan nationalism to the low level of capitalism in the early nineteenth century, and backwardness in Spanish technology in the face of the sheer size of its empire. *Imagined Communities*, 63.

<sup>28</sup> Payne, *Fascism in Spain*, 46.

nationalist ideology closely linked to the Catholic Church. This regime provided a model for authoritarian nationalism that would later come to full and successful fruition under Franco.

Payne's views perhaps give insufficient weight to the nationalist project of the Generation of 98 and the Institución Libre de Enseñanza, a significant regenerationist educational institution founded in 1876 (discussed in Chapter Two). Both the 98ers and the ILE represent an important *movement* (Gorski's trope) in the exploration of national self-identity and liberal political solutions to Spain's cultural and governmental shortcomings.

Zuloaga's early friendships with the 98ers, his later affinities with the right wing French nationalism of his friend Barrès, and his embrace of the full blown traditionalist authoritarianism of the Franco dictatorship exemplifies the shifting arc of nationalist mobilizations from *discursive* to *regimented*. Not overtly political, Zuloaga's nationalist project, led him, ultimately, to become an artist disdained by political and cultural progressives and ignored by art history. This dissertation will examine these events.

## Chapter One: Searching for Identity

### Paris 1890-1893

Zuloaga arrived in Paris in 1890 determined to try his hand at success as an artist. It was a daring move for which his background had not prepared him. He was born in 1870 in the Basque village of Eibar to a family of artisanal metalworkers.<sup>29</sup> Zuloaga's father, Plácido, worked primarily on damascene arms and armor. In an obituary published in 1910, Plácido was described as "...entrepreneurial... improvising ...active ...proud... and a volcanic artist," traits that could describe his painter son as well.<sup>30</sup>

Like many both artisanal and middle class families, Zuloaga's parents wanted him to learn a gainful trade, such as mining engineering, or to join in the family business. According to family lore a fateful visit to the Prado with his father in the mid 1880s led to Zuloaga's decision to study art and make his way as a painter. Struck by works by Velázquez, and especially El Greco, he petitioned his father for support in learning to be an artist. After a brief trip to Italy in 1889, Zuloaga settled in Paris.

Unlike Madrid, Paris was a dynamic scene and an environment in which visual experimentation was accompanied by copious writings on the meaning of modern art by artists and critics alike. Wealthy industrialists brought capital and ostentatious life styles. Artists from every country in Europe and the Americas came to the city, seeking to establish themselves in the bohemian neighborhoods of Montmartre and Montparnasse. Private galleries and dealers built an ever-increasingly active trade in modern art. Social strata were fluid. In terms of art, Paris was the capital of the world.

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<sup>29</sup> Biographical information is from Lafuente Ferrari, *Ignacio Zuloaga*.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 33.

Madrid could hardly provide a greater contrast. The city was economically and culturally backward compared to other capitals in greater Europe. There were none of the exhibition opportunities, outside of the Royal Academy of San Fernando, that were available in Paris. The sense of a failure of imagination, both artistically and culturally, in Bourbon Spain (1875-1923) was pervasive among intellectuals and artists frustrated by that country's limitations.

A unos y a otros, a los viejos y a los nuevos, los separa un concepto de su público y la realidad de una audiencia: la constatación de una complicidad entre la burguesía y los escritores de la Restauración y la apuesta por un público nuevo al margen del cerrado circuito de complacencias recíprocas; una línea, en definitiva, de ruptura artística que es también una repulsa moral y un concepción nuevo de la misión del artista.<sup>31</sup>

Only Barcelona, the capital of Catalonia, embraced change with its *modernisme* movement.<sup>32</sup> Led by Santiago Rusiñol (1861-1931) and Ramón Casas (1866-1932), centered at the *Quatre Gats* café, the *modernistes* looked to Paris for inspiration. While Zuloaga associated himself with this movement and its artists, he could only achieve his large ambition in Paris.<sup>33</sup> France offered opportunities politically, culturally, economically and artistically that were simply unavailable in Spain.

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<sup>31</sup> José Carlos Mainer, *La Edad de Plata 1902-1931, Ensayo de interpretación de un proceso cultural*, (Barcelona: Libros de la Frontera, 1975), 29. "One from another, the elders and the young, were separated by an understanding of their public and the reality of their audience: the assertion of complicity between the bourgeoisie and Restoration writers and the wager by a new public on the edges of the closed circuit of reciprocal complacency; a definite line of artistic rupture which is also a moral repulse of the status quo and a new concept of the artist's mission."

<sup>32</sup> See Marilyn McCully, *Els Quatre Gats: art in Barcelona around 1900* (Princeton: the Art Museum, 1978) and Temma Kaplan *Red City, Blue Period social movements in Picasso's Barcelona* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).

<sup>33</sup> In a letter to his uncle Daniel Zuloaga dated May 6, 1900; Zuloaga described the 1900 World's Fair art exhibition. "Te diré que visité el Palacio de Pintura y, francamente, da vergüenza ser español pues nuestro pobre país el ultimo aun peor que la Italia y el Portugal....Pero lo que verdaderamente hay de hermoso, sublime y colosal es la exposición centenaire en donde hay lo mejor de Ingres, Proudhon, David, Delacroix, Courbet Gericault, Corot, Daumier, Degas y sobre todo, Manet; solamente esto vale el viaje." Mariano Gomez de Caso, *Correspondencia de Ignacio Zuloaga con su tío Daniel*, (Segovia, Diputación Provincial, 2002), 18. "I went to the Grand Palais and frankly, one is ashamed of being Spanish because we are so

The Third Republic was defined by efforts to unify France as a single nation through emphasis on compulsory universal education and military service. The republic, threatened by both left wing and royalist parties and riven by the Dreyfus Affair, still managed to maintain a fragile coalition government that was boosted by industrial and colonial expansions. Spain, a constitutional oligarchic monarchy under the Bourbon Restoration, faced many of the same challenges: it struggled with factionalism represented by the small but intransigent right-wing Carlist<sup>34</sup> movement, as well as Basque and Catalan nationalist separatist movements, and threatened by Republicans and anarchists on the left.<sup>35</sup> But in contrast to France, the Spanish government lacked the ability to impose unifying national infrastructures. Industrialization was confined to the Basque region and to Catalonia. Large parts of rural Spain were unproductive or worked by an illiterate peasantry, rife with *caciquismo*, a system in which non-resident wealthy landlords hired corrupt local leaders to administer their vast estates. Madrid was perceived, by the peninsular periphery, as a moribund city lacking genuine political strength and bankrupt in terms of the ability to offer political, economic, and cultural reforms deemed so necessary to halt the decline of the Spanish Empire. Cultural stagnation and economic backwardness, along with the absence of a genuine art market, ensured that Madrid could not compete on any level with the dynamism of Paris.

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backward, even behind Italy and Portugal. But what is really beautiful, sublime, colossal, is the centenary exhibition in which are the best of Ingres, Proudhon, David, Delacroix, Courbet, Géricault, Corot, Daumier, Degas, and, above all, Manet: he alone is worth the trip.”

<sup>34</sup> Carlism was the movement associated in the nineteenth century with the succession to the Spanish throne of Ferdinand VII's brother, Carlos, in opposition to Ferdinand's infant daughter, Isabella.

<sup>35</sup> On Bourbon Restoration Spain see Sebastian Balfour, *The End of the Spanish Empire, 1898-1923* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997); Carlos Serrano and S. Salaun, ed., *1900 En Espagne Essai d'histoire culturelle* (Presses Universitaires de Bordeaux, 1988); José Carlos Mainer, *La Doma de la Quimera ensayos sobre nacionalismo y cultura en España* (Barcelona : Universitat Autònoma, 1988) and Mainer, *La Edad de Plata*.

In Paris, the number of exhibition venues in the form of the various annual Salons was abetted by the rising number of private dealers trying to trade on an increasingly valuable commodity: modern art. The break-up of the traditional Salon des Beaux Arts in 1881 initiated non-juried alternative salons that were created in opposition to traditional academic art.<sup>36</sup> The Société des Indépendents, created in 1884, followed in 1890 by the Société Nationale, were exhibition venues dedicated to modernism in art. Such structures were unique to France at that time. The new salons' openness and emphasis on experimentation, as they gained ever-greater acceptance, had the effect of establishing not only France as the place to make one's reputation as an artist, but French art itself as the defining arbiter of modernism. Histories such as André Salmon's *La Jeune Peinture française* in 1912, Louis Vauxcelles's *Histoire générale de l'art française de la Révolution à nos jours* in 1922 and Jacques-Emile Blanche's *Arts Plastiques* in 1931 xenophobically privilege French contributions to greatness in art. "Nos écoles de peinture, du XIX et du XX siècles, ont conféré à Paris, nommément, un prestige qu'aujourd'hui l'on ne conteste guère à l'étranger."<sup>37</sup> (Our XIX and XX century schools of painting have given Paris a prestige that no one disputes.) Only in Paris could one exhibit in such modern venues and come to the attention of the viewing public, private dealers and collectors.

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<sup>36</sup> The classical account of the relationship of the system of production and promotion of art and the avant garde is Harrison C. White and Cynthia A. White, *Canvases and Careers: Institutional Change in the French Painting World* (New York: Wiley, 1965). Nicholas Green's "Dealing in Temperaments : Economic Transformations of the Artistic Field in France in the Second Half on the Nineteenth Century" *Art History* 10 (March, 1987): 59-87 is another important contribution. Closer to the issues addressed in this dissertation are Robert Jensen's *Marketing Modernism in fin-de-siècle Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994) and Michael FitzGerald's *Making Modernism Picasso and the creation of the market for twentieth-century art*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).

<sup>37</sup> Jacques-Emile Blanche, *Les arts plastiques* (Paris : Les éditions de France 1931), introduction.

In charting the history of art in France from the beginning of the Third Republic up to the outbreak of World War I, contemporary and modern day scholars and critics alike have worked to bring order and cohesion to our understanding of the extraordinary changes in how art was being made.<sup>38</sup> Canonical art history has movement following movement in a linear progression towards abstraction. By the time of Alfred Barr's 1936 MoMA exhibition, the storyline encapsulated an internationalist version of art history that denied nationality as a function of modern art.<sup>39</sup> Nationalism, by the 1930s associated with socialist realism, was a discredited ideology that needed to be swept away in the service of a new, international and abstract art. This view, however, does not jibe with the determinist nationalism so prevalent in Europe between the Franco-Prussian war and World War I, a period during which the concept of nationalism itself was being created. Zuloaga did not have to work to position himself as the heir to Spanish artistic greatness. As a foreigner in Paris, critics routinely described his nationality as a fundamental aspect of his style, without the dismissiveness of post-modern views of nationalism as politically and culturally backward. An examination of the critical and artistic discourse of turn of the century France, prior to the establishment of abstraction as the acme of modernism, demonstrates that nationalism and nationality were not considered to be a political or artistic liability. On the contrary, during the years in question nationality was a category used as an interpretive tool, an identity seen as an important part of a given artist's patrimony and given full measure in the reception of his or her work. This essentialist

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<sup>38</sup> Christopher Green's *Art in France 1900-1940*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), provides a thorough and succinct examination of changing dynamics in artistic practice those years. *Partisan Canons*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), edited by Anna Brzyski, contains essays by James Elkins, Robert Jensen and Jenny Anger, among others, that address various aspects of the issue of canonical art history

<sup>39</sup> See Sybil Gordon Kantor, *Alfred H. Barr, Jr. and the intellectual origins of the Museum of Modern Art* (Cambridge, M.I.T. Press, 2002).

methodology is discredited today, but its presence in art criticism of the turn of the nineteenth century indicates the strength and pervasiveness of nationalist ideology even for the arts.<sup>40</sup>

Zuloaga's first studio was in Montmartre and he studied, initially, with Henri Gervex (1852-1929). At this atelier he met artist and theatrical set designer Maxime Dethomas (1867-1929), his future brother in law. Through Dethomas Zuloaga gained entrée into French artistic circles. He was introduced to Louis Anquetin (1861-1932), Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec (1864-1901), Jacques-Emile Blanche (1861-1942), as well as to the French nationalist author Maurice Barrès.<sup>41</sup> Zuloaga met Paul Gauguin (1848-1903) through his friendship with Paco Durrio (1875-1940), and he exhibited in 1891 at the Barc de Boutteville along with the Symbolists and the Nabis: Maurice Denis (1870-1943), Edouard Vuillard (1868-1940), Paul Sérusier (1864-1927) and Pierre Bonnard (1867-1947). Zuloaga painted a portrait of Symbolist poet and critic Charles Morice (1850-1932), who became an admirer, in 1891 (later adding the figure of Morice's new wife in 1898) (Fig.1.1). Zuloaga joined forces with other Spanish expatriate artists, the most significant of whom were the so-called Catalan band: Rusiñol, Casas, and Miquel Utrillo (1862-1934). Rusiñol, who became a close friend, described the young painter upon his arrival in Paris. "Llegaba de Roma Zuloaga, y llegaba con el entusiasmo de sus apenas veinte años, alto, robusto, cuadrado como esos campesinos de su patria, y con un caracter entero, noble de una sola pieza."<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> As quoted in Lafuente Ferrari, *Ignacio Zuloaga*, 76, the critic for *Le Figaro* described a work by Zuloaga : The artist has presented...a curious landscape...It is just one corner of Spain, but, looking at it , it brings to mind Spain as a whole. ...painted in the genuine tradition of Velázquez... »

<sup>41</sup> Ghislaine Plessier, *Ignacio Zuloaga et ses amis français*, 133 footnote 2.

<sup>42</sup> Santiago Rusiñol, *Impresiones de arte*, La Vanguardia, n.d., 19. « Zuloaga arrived from Rome, and he came with all the enthusiasm of his barely twenty years, tall, robust, shaped like the peasants of his country, and with a full character, noble, intact. »



During this first Paris sojourn Zuloaga left his Montmartre studio and shared quarters for a few months with Rusiñol and artist Pablo Uranga (1861-1934) on the Île St. Louis. Darío de Regoyos (1857-1913), who illustrated *España Negra*, a travel book written by Belgian poet Emile Verhaeren (1855-1916) after a tour the two took of Spain, was a frequent visitor and part of the Spanish “colony” on the island. In later life Zuloaga would write that he had received no academic training of any kind, but in addition to the Gervex studio he studied at l’Academie Huimbez with Eugène Carrière (1849-1906) in 1893.<sup>43</sup> During these years Zuloaga struggled to establish a style and an identity. His solution was to focus on Spanish artists as exemplars in style and in subject matter. This became his driving force as an artist.

For Zuloaga, whereas he venerated and studied the work of many past Spanish masters, there is no doubt that El Greco was the most significant influence in terms of his artistic patrimony. Zuloaga and Rusiñol played a key role in the recuperation of El Greco in the early 1890s as both a master artist of the past as well as a modernist hero. As described by Rusiñol in *Impresiones de Arte*, the young Ignacio contemplated photographic reproductions of works by Spanish masters, and there found his muse. “Moro, Coello y Ribera, hablánbanle de cosas grandes y concisas, entusiasmbábale el gran Velázquez; pero sobre todo el Greco, con su energía y su locura, con su sobriedad pasmosa fue desde entonces su ídolo, el santo ejemplar de Zuloaga.”<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> On the line for “education” on a membership application to the Hispanic Society of America in 1909 Zuloaga wrote “no [primary] school, nor university, nor academy....All I know of the Ecole des Beaux Arts was the view one has of it from the windows of the Louvre.” Archives of the Hispanic Society of America, New York, Zuloaga file.

<sup>44</sup> Rusiñol, *Impresiones de Arte*, 22. “Moro, Coello and Ribera spoke to him of things large and small, Velázquez excited him, but above all El Greco, with his energy and his madness, his amazing seriousness, from that time became his idol, the sainted role model for Zuloaga.”

While critics such as Théophile Gautier (1811-1872) had written approvingly of El Greco in the 1840s and Parisians were exposed to Spanish art through Louis-Phillipe's 1838-1848 *Galerie Espagnole*, which included works by Zurbarán, Ribera, and Murillo as well as El Greco, the artist remained little known to the public and critics at large before the 1880s and 90s.<sup>45</sup> Edouard Manet (1832-1883) was an early admirer, especially after his visit to Spain in 1865.<sup>46</sup> His friend Théodore Duret (1838-1927) owned *San Francisco y el hermano León* now in the Louvre. Zacharie Astruc (1833-1907) owned *Santo Domingo en oración* which he acquired from Jean-François Millet (1814-1875) (today in Boston), and Edgar Degas (1834-1917) also owned two Grecos acquired from Millet. The association of El Greco with modernism was born in France in this circle.<sup>47</sup>

The “spanishness” of El Greco was not inherent to his reputation before the nineteenth century and it was only in its later decades that Spanish critics claimed him as a son of Spain. In 1843 El Greco was listed among Venetian painters in a catalogue of works in the Prado; by 1879 the same curator, Pedro de Madrazo, gave El Greco credit for a crucial role in the development of a transition from an early foreign and Roman school to a new Spanish school characterized by naturalism.<sup>48</sup> Charles Blanc's *histoire de peinture* in 1869 identified El Greco as a pure reflection of the spirit of Castilla and Spanish mysticism.

Two anecdotes illustrate Zuloaga's early admiration for and identification with El Greco. After recognizing that his path was to follow in the footsteps of Spanish masters,

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<sup>45</sup> Théophile Gautier, *Voyage en Espagne* (Paris: G. Charpentier, 1843). For the *Galerie Espagnole* and Louis-Phillipe see Jeannine Baticle's *La Galerie Espagnole de Louis-Phillipe au Louvre 1838-1848* (Paris: Ministère de la Culture, 1981).

<sup>46</sup> See Juliet Wilson Bareau, *Edouard Manet voyage en Espagne* (Caen : L'Echoppe, 1988).

<sup>47</sup> José Alvarez Lopera, “El Greco: los caminos de la rehabilitación” in *El Greco Su revalorización por el Modernismo* (Generalitat de Catalunya, Barcelona, 1996-1997).

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

with El Greco at the top of the pantheon, Zuloaga made a special trip in 1892 from Paris to Toledo to study *The Burial of Count Orgaz* (Fig. 1.2, 1586). As Rusiñol recounts, Zuloaga arrived in Toledo at 10:00 pm to find the church closed. Haggling with the sacristan, the artist succeeded in viewing the great work by candlelight, experiencing an unforgettable epiphany that affected him for the rest of his life.<sup>49</sup>

In another story, also told by Rusiñol, Zuloaga arrived at home to their shared studio on the Ile St. Louis one day, tremendously excited with the news that he had just bought two paintings by El Greco: portraits of St. Peter and Mary Magdalen, from an antiques dealer. The paintings were delivered shortly thereafter to excitement and joy on the part of the four roommates. “Bailamos, rompimos, para hacer broma, dos jarrones de la china, braceamos y caímos los unos en brazos de los demás, en un viva entusiasta.”<sup>50</sup> Rusiñol later took the two paintings to the Catalan coastal village of Sitges to install them in the museum he founded for the celebration of Catalan art and culture, Museu Cau Ferrat. Rusiñol revived the folkloric custom of the Catalan *feste* with a *moderniste* twist. The El Greco’s were carried in a triumphal procession before being installed in the museum.<sup>51</sup>

Zuloaga saw himself as a disciple to the great master of Toledo, to the point of fanaticism. He studied El Greco’s biography and took every opportunity to view his works in reproduction. It fell to El Greco’s fellow Spaniards to disprove the popular notion of El Greco’s madness. “¡Loco el Greco! Loco porque no seguía, ni podía, ni

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<sup>49</sup> Rusiñol, *Impresiones de Arte*, 22-23

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 73 “We danced, we broke two Chinese vases just for fun, we waved our arms and threw ourselves into each other’s arms with great enthusiasm.”

<sup>51</sup> According to Robert Lubar, one of the paintings is now attributed to El Greco’s studio. “Narrating the Nation: Picasso and the myth of El Greco” in *Picasso and the Spanish Tradition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 167, footnote 45.

quería seguir las frías reglas del dibujo académico! ¡Porque idealizaba y robustecía la línea! ¡Porque sentía el horror de sujetarse á la pauta niveladora del vulgo!”<sup>52</sup>

Zuloaga had found his muse, but no worldly success in his three years in Paris. He returned to Spain in 1893.

### **Andalusía 1893-1898**

Zuloaga lived primarily in Sevilla, in the southern province of Andalusía, during these years. While he began to exhibit his work regularly in Paris starting with the 1894 Societé Nationale, his years in Spain allowed him to explore an aspect of his country by no means typical of his own Basque heritage: Orientalist Spain.

Andalusía, then and now, epitomized tourist Spain with its hot, sunny climate and architectural masterworks of Muslim Spain. Tourist Spain is also associated with flamenco dance (a product of Andalusía) and gypsies. During this period Zuloaga painted images of bullfighters, gypsies, and flamenco dancers. Zuloaga was a life-long bullfight aficionado, an amateur bullfighter in his youth, and the *corrida* is a regular theme in his oeuvre. The bullfight in particular, while not confined to the south of Spain, was more popular there than in other regions. Bullfighting was controversial in Spain with some regarding the bloody sport as a barbaric vestige of a backward culture, while others celebrated it as a national symbol deeply engrained in Spain’s history and cultural heritage.<sup>53</sup> For Zuloaga, Andalusía was exotic, Oriental Spain, with fabulous architecture

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<sup>52</sup> Rusiñol, *Impresiones de Arte*, 72. “El Greco – crazy? Crazy because he was incapable of following the cold rules of academic drawing? Because he idealized and gave emphasis to line? Because he was horrified at the idea of subjecting himself to the low level of the herd?”

<sup>53</sup> *La Revista de Bellas Artes*, Havana, 1918, 136. The Spanish correspondant to Cuba wrote “Ahodando en todos los serios problemas nacional encontramos siempre la lepra taurina. Las corridas de toros son las culpables de todas nuestras derrotas materiales y espirituales.” “As our serious national problems deepen, we constantly see the leprosy of the bullfight. Bullfighting is responsible for all of our material and physical defeats.”

as a heritage from Muslim Spain, utterly different from the gray skies and cold weather of Paris.

Spanish Orientalism had been a popular theme in France following the Napoleonic invasion in 1808. Alexandre Dumas's phrase "Africa begins at the Pyrenees" encapsulated the French sense of Spain as barbaric and backward, exotic and primitive. The appeal of Spain proved enduring throughout the century, as Spanish culture, whether art, architecture, music, literature, or theater inspired legions of hispanophile writers, artists, musicians and travelers from greater Europe and the United States. Spain was a constant source of interest, perceived as a country identified with exotic Orientalism and pre-modern civilization, while remaining within the European community. As industrialization, market capitalism and Enlightenment-based educational, secular and civic structures took hold across Europe, Spain maintained an identity as rural, Catholic, exotic, and primitive. Prosper Merimée's *Carmen* of 1845, the basis for Bizet's eponymous opera of 1875, was the acme of the highly romanticized versions of Spain that defined the country for audiences both in Europe and in the United States.

Oriental Spain could be almost as foreign to Spaniards themselves. A story in Rusiñol's *Hojas de la Vida* recounts a visit he made with Catalan friends to Andalusía as a tourist, in which seeing a flamenco performance was *de riguer*. Strangers in a strange land, Rusiñol has his group speaking "in andaluz" (not Castilian or Catalan) while enjoying the show, one in which the glamour and energy of the dance is revealed to be performed by tubercular, starving dancers.<sup>54</sup> In 1903 critic Arsène Alexandre wrote mockingly of *hispanolisme*, from which he exempted Zuloaga:

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<sup>54</sup> Santiago Rusiñol, *Hojas de la Vida*, (Paris : Garnier Hermanos, 1906), 69-80.

Une course de taureaux, une flânerie nocturne autour de la Giralda; pour les gens fastueux, l'émotion tarifée et la gloire d'avoir sa montre chipée par les gitanos de la compagnie Cook;-et voilà un ignorant de plus. Heureux quand cet ignorant ne fait pas un livre à son retour pour révéler l'Espagne aux Espagnols.<sup>55</sup>

For Alexandre, Zuloaga revealed true Spain to his audiences. In describing an exhibition in 1894 at the Barc de Boutteville, he wrote:

Dire qu'à ce moment on était encore à la notion d'une Espagne enfumée et boucanée à la façon des pseudo-Ribera et des vrais Ribot, ou d'une Espagne bariolée et criarde comme les chromolithographies des boîtes de cigares...et comme les tableaux de M. Worms [Jules Worms, 1832-1914] qui fut chez nous un excellent homme, un peintre de genre à succès, et un grand vulgarisateur des idées les plus fausses qu'un pays puisse se faire sur un autre ! [Zuloaga's work] c'était une révélation que ces grands figures sveltes, d'une élégance robuste et un peu sauvage, vêtues de couleurs claires et unies, dans des attitudes simples, sans gestes conventionnels, vraies images de race....<sup>56</sup>

Zuloaga catered to a (primarily) Parisian audience and in doing so escaped the charge that he made "tourist" art. His authenticity derived from his nationality: as a son of Spain his vision of his homeland had inherent credibility.

A work such as *Baile Gitana* is typical of Zuloaga's Andalusian work. (Fig. 1.3) Large figures are crowded to the front of the picture plane. Exotic and picturesque females dance on a balcony to the accompaniment of tambourine and guitar music. The background features a dry, medieval village. The intense flat blacks punctuate the

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<sup>55</sup> Re-printed in Hispanic Society of America, *Five Essays on the art of Ignacio Zuloaga* : by M. Utrillo, A. Alexandre, G. Mourey, R. Maizeroy and M. Gil, (New York, 1909). "A bullfight, a nighttime stroll around the Giralda, for the well-to-do, the glory of having one's watch stolen by the gypsies of the Cook Company; - and there's one more ignorant soul. A good thing when that soul refrains from writing a book upon his return that explains Spain to the Spanish."

<sup>56</sup> Alexandre, *Five Essays on the Art of Zuloaga*. "At that time one still had the idea of a smoky Spain like those pseudo-Riberas and real Ribots, or a Spain garish and strident like the chromolithographs on cigar boxes...and like the paintings of M. Worms who was an excellent man, a successful genre painter, and the biggest vulgarizer of the falsest ideas that any country to apply to another! [Zuloaga's work] was a revelation with the large slender figures, robustly elegant and a little bit wild, dressed in light and unified colors, in simple poses, with conventional gestures, real images of their race...."

composition, which has an overall garish quality that is both decorative and assertive. Zuloaga drew constantly but also handled color and texture with great aplomb. Compared to Worm's *Danse à Grenade* (Fig. 1.4) Zuloaga's modernist technique and powerful handling of his theme makes a break with earlier nineteenth-century French interpretations of Spain.

The culminating work of this period is *Vispera de la Corrida* (Eve of the Bullfight, Fig. 1.5). It was exhibited in Barcelona in 1898, where it won a first place medal. Zuloaga sold it to Rusiñol at the Catalan artist's request. Rusiñol submitted it to the Spanish jury of the 1900 Paris Exposition Universelle, who rejected it. Meanwhile Joaquín Sorolla, the impressionistic painter of the Mediterranean seashore, was awarded a Medal of Honor for his *Cosiendo la Vela* and *Comiendo en la Barca* (*Repairing the net* and *A meal in the boat.*) This episode had long repercussions for Zuloaga. Sorolla, the painter of light and water, was celebrated for his Impressionist-style, high-key paintings, and he too was strongly identified with Spain – so called “white Spain” which, in critical eyes, included sun-filled scenes of Andalucía and the Eastern coast from Valencia to Barcelona.

The subject of Zuloaga's offering was problematic only for the Spanish jury: they did not want Spain to be depicted at its most barbaric.<sup>57</sup> For non-Spanish audiences, the barbarity was precisely the appeal. The rejection embittered Zuloaga, who did not submit his work to Spanish national exhibitions for many years. *Vispera de la Corrida* was later exhibited in Belgium and bought by the Belgian government, a vindication for Zuloaga. The positive reception of this intensely Spanish subject outside of Spain confirmed that

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<sup>57</sup> As quoted in Lafuente Ferrari, *Ignacio Zuloaga*, 309. A critic for *Nuevo Mundo* wrote “Zuloaga, loyal to his system of painting for foreigners, not the real Spain but the Spain which they, through their prejudices, imagine it to be like....”

the market for his works could not be in his native country. Rusiñol's validation of *Víspera de la Corrida*, coming from a leader of the Barcelona *modernisme* movement, is evidence too that Zuloaga's work was valued by a progressive artist committed to the overthrow of academic art. With this painting, Zuloaga was positioning himself as both a modernist and the incarnation of the soul of Spanish art and history.

During this Andalusian period Zuloaga met Bernard, whose work had been included at the Barc de Boutteville exhibition in 1891. In those years Bernard was still painting in the *cloissoniste* style of Pont Aven, yet the two artists shared an interest in subject matter: peasants and regionalism versus cosmopolitan Paris. Their life-long friendship was cemented during the years 1896-1897 while Bernard was living in Andalusía, searching for exotic and primitive subject matter and a cheap mode of living. Bernard, today seen as little more than conduit and correspondent to those giants of modernism, Gauguin and Cézanne, followed a path away from symbolism and towards exoticism and classicism after breaking with Gauguin. Zuloaga painted a portrait of Bernard, in 1897 (fig. 1.6) and was godfather to Bernard's son Fortunato, who was born in Sevilla. The two painters shared an interest in Spanish art of the past. In a letter to Bernard dated February 22, 1898, Zuloaga describes a painting by Zurbarán that he has just bought and goes on to say "Je le trouve plus ferme que Velasquez, plus naïf, Espagnol. Velasquez est de tous les pays..."<sup>58</sup> ("I find him stronger than Velasquez, more naïve, more Spanish. Velasquez belongs to all countries.") The concept of the naïve or primitive, so crucial for the Pont Aven school, was also important for Zuloaga's understanding of the tradition of Spanish painting. El Greco's *Burial of Count Orgaz* was its embodiment.

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 19.



“Es ese dibujo ingénuo, esa falta de ciencia, ese colmo de pasión de una mano que corre por orden del pensamiento, torpe á veces, á fuerza de obedecer, y grandiosa de lo que llaman locura los pobres hombres correctos.”<sup>59</sup> The painting also represented a spiritual authenticity. “Refleja este cuadro el espíritu de la raza, la tristeza y el misticismo regionales, y representa, como el Quijote, poesía de la realidad y de la vida diaria.”<sup>60</sup> The issue of spirituality was of great concern for Bernard.

### **Naturalism versus Classicism**

Bernard painted actively throughout his life but also wrote copiously on art. His views on the proper way of making art included the belief that the artist must not paint only what he sees, but rather what is in his soul. The “eye” of Impressionism was totally discredited, for Bernard, because painting only a visual record ignores the deeper reality: meaning in art derives from the union of the artist’s soul with nature and with God.

Bernard expressed the limitations of the Impressionist style.

L’époque claire fut sa plus malheureuse; elle fut de contrainte d’ailleurs. Il avait rencontré Monet qui ne rêvait que soleil et lumière et il succomba à son tour aux charmes des grandes clartés ; mais il reprit peu à peu son calme et sa pondération, et il revint plus complet et plus savant à son point de départ.<sup>61</sup>

The magazine *La Rénovation Esthétique* (1905-1910) was Bernard’s personal mouthpiece for reaction against Impressionism and the avant-garde. The goal of this publication was stated in its introduction: “Rénovation signifie donc: rattachement aux principes qui, de tout temps, ont présidé aux manifestations créatrices; dans l’ordre

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<sup>59</sup> Rusiñol, *Impresiones de arte*, 75. “[The burial of Count Orgaz]... is a naïve, untrained drawing, the lack of science, the excess of passion of a hand that moves quickly at the command of the mind, sometimes awkward in its obedience, and superb as an example of what those silly rule-bound men call madness.”

<sup>60</sup> Manuel Cossío, *El Greco* (Barcelona: Hijos de J. Thomas, 1908), 10. “This painting reflects the spirit of our race, the regional sorrow and mysticism, and it represents, as does Quixote, the poetry of reality and daily life.”

<sup>61</sup> Bernard in *Les Hommes d’Aujourd’hui*, 8, n. 587, 1892. “The light period was the worst; it was fought against. Monet dreamed only of sun and light and succumbed to the charms of clarity.”

esthétique – qui nous occupe spécialement – elle veut dire: retour vers la tradition éternelle de l’Art.”<sup>62</sup> (“Thus renovation means: regaining principles which, for all time, have presided over creative acts in an esthetic order, which is of special interest to us – it means return to the eternal traditions of Art.”) He believed that art-historical traditions handed down from the great masters should inform modern art and only by doing so could truly modern art be made. Rusiñol shared this view. Modern art is

...estética para los ojos, poesía para la vida, ideas para el espíritu y arte íntimo para nuestro consuelo; versa que á través de los desengaños de hoy nos gusta recorrer la herencia del pasado para buscar sus flores y formar con ellas un arte modernista; un arte serio que no deslumbré á los pobres de espíritu con telas y sederías de guardarropía y de cromo; un arte espiritual lleno de originales delicadezas y bellas filigranas; un arte que quisiéramos ver admirado en nuestra tierra; y del cual nosotros seríamos los primeros devotos y los últimos artistas.<sup>63</sup>

Artist and critic Denis was also a significant contributor to this debate. In the course of his career he traveled far from his days as a member of the Nabis. In discussing Rodin’s *St. John the Baptist* and Puvis de Chavanne’s *Poor Fisherman*, Denis described the artists’ transformation of mere nature. What they had achieved was “Triomphe universel de l’imagination des esthètes sur les efforts de bête imitation, triomphe de l’émotion du beau sur le mensonge naturaliste.”<sup>64</sup> (“Universal triumph of the imagination of esthetics over stupid imitation, triumph of the emotion of beauty over the naturalist lie.”)

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<sup>62</sup> *La Rénovation Esthétique*, no. 1, 1905, Paris., 3.

<sup>63</sup> Rusiñol, *Hojas de la vida*, 8 « esthetics for the eyes, poetry for living, thoughts for the spirit and intimate art to console us; in the face of the lies and tricks of today we like to recall the heritage of the past to find its flowers and make a modern art, serious, that doesn’t confuse those poor in spirit with its fabrics and velvets, with reproductions, a spiritual art full of original delicacy and beautiful filigrees, an art that we would like to see admired in our own country; and of which we would be the first devotees and the last artists.

<sup>64</sup> Maurice Denis, *Du symbolisme au classicisme Théories* (Miroirs de L’ Art, Paris : Hermann, 1964), 45.

Denis reviewed the 1901 salon with an approving mention of Zuloaga. He described a painting titled *Promenade après la course de taureaux* which received intense critical praise in the French press, and also cited Zuloaga's 1889 *Mi tío y mis primas*, (Fig. 1.7) as being a better painting. "C'est M. Zuloaga qui tient les promesses qui nous a faites Anquetin.... [D]e plus en plus nous apparaît l'importance de la qualité du dessin dans l'œuvre d'art."<sup>65</sup> ("It's M. Zuloaga who is keeping the promises that Anquetin made to us.") In privileging line over color Denis continued to fight the battle between classicism (line) and romanticism (color). In repudiating Impressionism, the inheritor of Romantic color, Denis called for a modern art that had structure - that honored the past - was more than merely optical - and challenged the tired orthodoxies of academic art. In his own 1907 article discussing Cézanne, Denis found a Spanish master of the past as a significant source: El Greco.<sup>66</sup> Cézanne, unlike the Impressionists, was classical. But it was through El Greco that he had made his art new. El Greco had transformed the decadence of Titian into "le système de dissonances et de déformations passionnées qui furent l'origine de la peinture espagnole."<sup>67</sup> ("The system of passionate dissonances and deformations that were the origins of Spanish painting.") This system led to the "robuste et saine" style of Zurbarán and Velázquez. For Denis, El Greco reacted to the naturalism of Titian to produce a new, great art - just as Cézanne, like the Cretan master, reached his best work in reacting to the bankrupt naturalism and romanticism of the Impressionists and Delacroix. Zuloaga represented Spanish art in turn-of-the-century Paris - an art understood, by modernist artists reacting against

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<sup>65</sup> Maurice Denis, *Théories 1890-1910 Du Symbolisme et de Gauguin vers un nouvel ordre classique*, (Paris : Bibliothèque de L'Occident, 1912), 65.

<sup>66</sup> Denis, *Du Symbolisme au classicisme*, 237-253.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

Impressionism, as both non-academic and classical in the larger sense of its seriousness in structure and line. He was front and center at the heart of this debate.

Zuloaga's early and enduring success as an artist was in stark contrast to Bernard's chequered career. Bernard may have believed that his association with the highly successful Spanish artist would help his own reputation. He wrote to Zuloaga: "En Allemagne on trouve que ce que je fais vient de vous. Je trouve cela assez surprenant. Qu'en pensez-vous? Nous sommes si différents de technique et de conception...Mais nous faisons tous deux des pauvres, des mendiants....comme Velasquez...etc."<sup>68</sup> ("In Germany they say that you are an influence on me. I'm surprised by that. What do you think? We are so different in technique and conception...but we both paint the poor, beggars, like Velasquez...etc.") Bernard's *Musiciens Espagnols* of 1897 (fig. 1.8) provides insight into numerous aspects of the French artist's shifting style and thinking about art. Retaining the theme of the authenticity and rootedness of peasants as primitive, authentic subject, this work also indicates the influence of both Zuloaga and Velázquez in the large, frontal figures placed in a composition with little foreground or background. The figure to the right, the boy holding a bowl, is cross-eyed, a physical defect that is typical of subjects painted by both Velázquez and Zuloaga. The style is realist but the figures exist as symbols of Spain, while catering to nostalgia for the authenticity of a non-modern era embodied by peasant paintings. The blue palette is a modernist technique that goes back to the arbitrary coloration of the Pont-Aven school.<sup>69</sup> For Bernard, Zuloaga's technique and subject matter was a potent source for a kind of modern classicism.

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<sup>68</sup> Plessier, *Ignacio Zuloaga et ses amis français*, 39.

<sup>69</sup> Picasso biographer John Richardson describes the color blue as common to the Symbolist movement *A Life of Picasso, Vol. 1, 1881-1906*, (New York: Random House, 1991), 216. "But symbolist Paris had been

## Return to Paris 1898-1905

Perhaps emboldened by his success with *Víspera de la Corrida*, Zuloaga returned to Paris in 1898 and rented a studio on Rue Caulaincourt in Montmartre which he was to maintain throughout his life. In the same year, as will be discussed in Chapter 2, he began to share a studio in the Castilian city of Segovia with his uncle, Daniel.

Zuloaga's three 1903 salon offerings, *Preparativos para la corrida*; *Gitana y Andaluza*, and *El Piropo*, were very successful. All three contained Spanish exoticism and Orientalism. The stupendously popular reception of the three paintings, as they traveled from Paris to Dusseldorf to the Venice Biennale, almost overwhelmed the young painter. Zuloaga received international acclaim and almost instant fame with more than 500 positive reviews in countries across Europe. The following quote from an unsigned review in *Art et Décoration*, 1903, can stand as an example for many, many positive reviews of the three paintings Zuloaga exhibited.

Le talent de Zuloaga exerce sur moi un attrait irrésistible; ce mélange de brutalité et de raffinement, l'intensité de pittoresque et de vérité, l'acuité de vision, l'originalité documentaire des scènes de mœurs, des types qu'il excelle à peindre, de plus, la belle sûreté de son métier, l'ampleur grasse de la touche, tout cela me trouble étrangement l'esprit et le sens. *Les Préparatifs pour la course de taureaux*, (*Preparativos para la corrida*) autant que *Gitane et Andalouse* (*Gitana y Andaluza*) et *Un Mot Piquant*, (*El Piropo*) suggèrent mille sensations, mille évocations de soleil, de parfums, de musique, de perversité et de mort; ce réalisme a des complexités psychologiques, des ardeurs passionnées à la suggestion desquelles il est impossible de ne pas se laisser prendre.<sup>70</sup>

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in the throes of a blueish obsession ever since the early 1890s. Art nouveau artifacts are pervasively blue – peacock blue, Madonna blue, ice blue.”

<sup>70</sup> Zuloaga family archives, Zumaya, Spain “Zuloaga’s talent has an irresistible attraction; that mix of brutality and refinement, the intensity of the picturesque and the realism, the acute vision, the documentary originality of the events he depicts, types that he excels at, plus, the beautiful confidence of his style, the ample stroke, all that troubles both spirit and mind in a strange way. *Preparations for the Bullfight*, *Gypsy and Andalusian Girl*, and *Flirting* suggest a thousand sensations, a thousand images of sunlight, perfume, music, perversity and death, his realism has psychological complexity, passionate ardor which it is impossible to ignore.” In 1905 *Paris Illustré* was devoted to Zuloaga and described the female figure in *El Piropo*, which was illustrated, as “La rieuse...au type de petite singe pomponnée et maquillé....” (The laughing girl...like a little made-up monkey...) Gabriel Mouray, *Paris Illustré*, no. 43, August, 1905.

Alexandre devoted an entire, highly laudatory edition of *Le Figaro Illustré* to Zuloaga that same year. Clearly the romance of Orientalist Spain continued to carry great power in the first years of the twentieth century; it must have seemed to Zuloaga that he had a golden touch in both style and subject matter to his audiences in greater Europe. His reception in Spain was more problematic, with positive and negative views of his work. Critic Modesto Pineda wrote

Cuanto se ha dicho de este artista, es legendario y falso. La gente del oficio y los aficionados superficiales que se pagan del relumbrón, han divulgado que la pintura de Ignacio Zuloaga es el parto de un cerebro desequilibrado ; que hace obras llenas de disparates, y que sus triunfos en el extranjero hijos son de la moda...más que del mérito...por propia conveniencia, es preciso que acaba la leyenda forjada en contra de Zuloaga, y dijo por propia conveniencia, puesto que solo a los españoles les toca al hacerse que se olvide la cruel frase de Dumas, y eso no se consigue sino aclamando lo que verdaderamente vale, lo que nos honra lejos de España, todo lo que pueda, en fin, contribuir á resucitar los prestigios de nuestra raza, no tan decaída como se dice, ya que todavía podemos enorgullecernos con sabios como Puigda y Cajas, novelistas como Pérez Galdós y pintores como Ignacio Zuloaga.<sup>71</sup>

An article in *La Nación* also took exception to the idea that Zuloaga painted a false Spain. “El es el pintor de la tierra y de su tradición...”<sup>72</sup> But *Nuevo Mundo* published an article titled “La España de Pandereta” which translates, roughly, as “The

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Certainly such a comment speaks to the French view of Spain as exotic and barbaric. An article in the *Gazeta del Norte* described Zuloaga as an artist who did not exhibit in Spain and whose popularity was outside of his homeland, and criticized the 1900 Spanish jury for rejecting *Víspera de la Corrida* for the World’s Fair. *Gazeta del Norte*, August 12, 1903.

<sup>71</sup> Zuloaga family archives, Zumaya, unidentified newspaper clipping dated April, 1903. “What has been said about this artist is false. Office workers and superficial fans who pay lip service to these ideas have said that Zuloaga’s paintings are from a disturbed mind; that he paints works full of nonsense, and that his foreign triumphs are based on faddishness, not intellect...however, these falsities are fading; only the Spanish themselves can learn to forget Dumas’s cruel phrase, which can’t be done without realizing what Zuloaga’s work really is worth, that it honors us outside of Spain, and that it can contribute to resuscitating our native prestige, which is not as decadent as is said, and we can take pride in the example of the wisdom of Puigda and Cajas, novelists such as Pérez Galdós, and painters such as Ignacio Zuloaga.”

<sup>72</sup> *La Nación*, September 17<sup>th</sup>, 1903. “He is the painter of the earth and its traditions....”

Spain of the Foolish Follower” and goes on to criticize Zuloaga for his false version of Spain.<sup>73</sup>

Zuloaga’s first Paris Salon exhibition had taken place in 1894. His style, once developed, became consistent. He used a heavy, choppy, divided brushstroke with thickly laid paint. He favored strong color contrasts, vivid color, heavy use of black and of black outline. His canvases are usually quite large. Most of his work is figurative with an insistent physicality both to the figure and to the canvas and paint itself. There is an overall sense of aggression in his paint handling, as well as in his compositions and figural presentations. For Parisian audiences, a work such as *Mi Tío y mis Primas* was primitive and exotic. Zuloaga’s figures “...ont la grâce forte des animaux et des plantes poussés en pleine liberté....tout ce que Barrès appelle ‘les vraies délices de l’Espagne.’”<sup>74</sup> (...have the powerful grace of animals and plants that live in complete freedom...all that Barrès calls ‘the true delights of Spain.’”

Zuloaga’s 1899 marriage to Valentine Dethomas was a love match. The bride’s father, Jean Albert Dethomas, was a member of parliament and sat on the board of directors of the *Journal des Débats*. It was a well-to-do and distinguished family; and through his marriage Ignacio gained entrée into a level of society that otherwise would have been closed to the son of a Basque metalworker. Eugène Carrière – who might have been the person who introduced Zuloaga to Rodin, another friend, was best man at his wedding along with Spanish composer and musician Isaac Albéniz. Arriving in Paris in 1890 at age 20, by 1905 Zuloaga had established himself in the heart of the Parisian art scene and was connected by shared artistic interests, friendships, and family with many

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<sup>73</sup> *Nuevo Mundo*, September 3, 1903. “Pandereta” is a tambourine and is associated with a person who is paid to follow behind a procession beating a tambourine or small drum.

<sup>74</sup> Mouray, *Paris Illustré*, 1905.

major artists, critics and members of the Paris intelligentsia. His style and subject matter – the use of black pigments in paintings depicting Spanish folk – was influential for a group of French painters who emulated Zuloaga’s approach. This group was associated with Brittany and including Charles Cottet, Lucien Simon, le Sidaner and Andre Dauchez. They painted in a dark, somber style that earned them the sobriquet “La Bande Noire.”<sup>75</sup>

### **La Bande Noire**

The significance of Brittany as a haven and source of subject matter for late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century French art has been thoroughly documented in the careers of Bernard, Gauguin, and the Nabis.<sup>76</sup> The “discovery” of a pre-modern French province, uncorrupted by modernity, primitive and still “authentic” was seized upon by innumerable artists, not only the French, and the story of modernism cannot be told without reference to this important source for the avant-garde. The members of *La Bande Noire* made use of these themes in works less daring than those of Gauguin, yet still modernist in their approach. They exhibited at the Barc de Boutteville and at the Georges Petit Gallery beginning around 1895. In opposition to Impressionism, these artists took part in the debate in those years surrounding the purpose of art: whether to record nature, as the Impressionists were seen as having done, or to bring emotion and spirituality to a work of art. {Un tableau doit être plus}...qu’une surface colorée, qu’il satisfait aussi

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<sup>75</sup> Jacques Dupont “la Bande Noire” in *L’Amour de l’Art, Histoire de L’art Contemporain*, ed. Rene Huyghe, (New York : Arno Press).

<sup>76</sup> Without including bibliography on Gauguin’s Brittany period, the concept of Brittany and primitivism is examined in Griselda Pollock’s and Fred Orton’s “Les Données Bretonnantes: la prairie de representation,” *Art History*, III/3, 1980, 314-344. Another important contribution to this subject is Michel R. Orwicz’s “Criticism and Re-presentations of Brittany in the Early Third Republic” *Art Journal* 46 (Winter 1987) 291-298. This author has announced the forthcoming publication of *Gauguin's Brittany: Representations of Regionalism, Nationalism and Modernism* (Yale University Press, forthcoming.).



l'esprit.”<sup>77</sup> (A painting should be more than)...a colored surface, it should also satisfy the spirit.”)

Charles Cottet (1863-1925), forgotten today, was associated with the Nabis, as well as with Zuloaga.<sup>78</sup> Cottet was described as a student of Alfred Roll and Puvis de Chavannes in the 1889 catalog of the Salon des Artistes Français.<sup>79</sup> He received a Gold Medal at the Exposition Universelle in 1900 and had a retrospective exhibition at the Georges Petit gallery in 1911 with 492 works, a show which received critical acclaim. He was awarded a Grand Prize at the Venice Biennale in 1924, the year before his death. His work was collected by the Russian collectors, the Schuchkin brothers, so important historically for their championing of the avant-garde. While Cottet is no longer included in the standard list of the Nabis, Maurice Denis wrote “Cottet fut le mieux doué de notre groupe des Nabis: à Pont Aven Gauguin, Emile Bernard tenaient son oeuvre en haute consideration.”<sup>80</sup> (“Cottet was the most gifted of our group of Nabis: in Pont Aven Gauguin and Emile Bernard held his work in high esteem.”) In 1902 Félix Vallotton painted *Les Cinq Peintres* (Fig. 1.9) depicting, from left to right, Bernard, Félix Vallotton, Vuillard, Cottet and Ker Xavier Roussel. Cottet painted many seascapes and

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<sup>77</sup> Dupont, « La Bande Noire », 60. Maurice Denis's famous dictum “Se rappeler qu'un tableau, avant d'être un cheval de bataille, une femme nue ou une quelconque anecdote, est essentiellement une surface plane recouverte de couleurs en un certain ordre assemblées.” makes the case for a pictorialism unmediated by emotion or narrative content.

<sup>78</sup> For the Nabis see *Beyond the Easel: decorative paintings by Bonnard, Vuillard, Denis and Roussel, 1890-1930*, Gloria Lynn Groom et al, (New Haven : Yale University Press, 2000), Patricia Eckert Boyer, *The Nabis and the Parisian avant-garde*, (New Brunswick : Rutgers University Press, 1988), Claire Frèches-Thory *The Nabis: Bonnard, Vuillard and their circle*, (Paris: Flammarion, 1990), Agnès Delannoy *Symbolistes et Nabis: Maurice Denis et son temps: dix ans d'enrichissement du patrimoine*, (Saint-Germain-en-Laye: Musée départemental, 1996) and Claude Jeancolas *La Peinture des Nabis*, (Paris : FWV Edition, 2002). There is very little bibliography for Cottet.

<sup>19</sup> Quoted in “Après Pont-Aven, Charles Cottet, des Nabis a la Bande Noire”, André Cariou, in *Arts de l'Ouest etudes et documents*, June, 1979.

<sup>79</sup> *Salon de 1889: Catalogue illustré: peinture et sculpture: exposition de beaux-arts*. (Paris : L. Baschet, 1889).

images of poor mariners and their families. His version of Brittany emphasizes the rugged terrain, the treacherous sea and the poverty of the land and its people.<sup>81</sup> His *Victimes de la Mer*, 1898, is a major work that exemplifies Cottet's subjects and style. (Fig. 1.10) Both a Pietà and a vernacular scene of hardship, death and sorrow, the painting is defined by intense contrasts in black and white and a balanced figural group framed by geometric architectural elements. The use of black, and the overall dark palette in Cottet's work is specifically linked to the influence of Zuloaga, with whom Cottet formed a close friendship in the 1890s.<sup>82</sup>

The members of *La Bande Noire* were seen as classical artists. In an undated review one critic wrote of them

Tous ont fait de solides études, l'esprit de l'antiquité comme celui du grand siècle leur est familier....Parmi ces peintres, aucun qui tienne d'un sang méridional ou nordique, le pouvoir de briser cette retenue si française. Tel ne verra les formes qu'à travers Claude ou Poussin....Une toile de Cottet, où tous les gestes contribuent à l'effet autant qu'à l'équilibre des masses me fit souvenir des lettres à Chantelou, où Poussin avec patience explique ses intentions...L'amour de la terre, de la glèbe ancienne allait reprocher les artistes de la bande noire,....Une terre aride toute primitive encore de l'aspect, un chaos de rochers qu'entasse une mer furieuse, des landes caillouteuses...un pays pauvre et mélancolique...et avec cela la gaieté des fêtes, les pardons joyeux, telle la Bretagne s'offrit à eux avec son âpreté....<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> An article in *Harper's Magazine* on Lucien Simon described both Cottet's and Simon's subject matter. The Breton people are "...strange in race, spray cast upon this remote spot of France by some receding tide of Tibetan or Mongolian invasion. And the strangeness of their Asiatic origin still inures in their stocky build, prominent cheek-bones, narrow eyes, yellow complexions...as a result of decadence, they are slow-witted, narrow-minded, crude in their passions, and profoundly superstitious; strange, joyless, incommunicative folk..." Charles H Caffin, "The Art of Lucien Simon," *Harper's Magazine*, January, 1910, vol. CXX, no. 716.

<sup>82</sup> Cariou, *Après Pont-Aven*, 49.

<sup>83</sup> Dupont, *La Bande Noire*, 60. "They all did solid studies, they were familiar with the spirit of antiquity of the great century...no one with southern or northern blood could break into that so-French group. They only saw through the lens of Claude or Poussin...A canvas by Cottet, where all the gestures as well as the compositional masses contribute to the overall effect makes me think of the letters of Chantelou, or Poussin patiently explaining his intentions...Love of the earth of the ancient glebe affected the artists of the black band...A primitive, dry land, with chaotic boulders around a furious sea, rocky fields...a poor and melancholy country...and along with that the gaiety of the celebrations, the joyous pardons, that is what Brittany offers with all her bitterness..."

This is a version of Brittany very different from either the audacious symbolism of Bernard and Gauguin, or the romantic realism of Pascale Dagnan-Bouveret. In fact it mirrors the descriptive critical reception of works by Zuloaga. French critics used words such as *rauque, âpre, caustique, éclatant et terreux, brutal*, (rough, bitter, caustic, amazing, earthy, brutal) to describe Spanish art in general, as well as the Spanish landscape, especially that of Castilla, which Zuloaga took as a subject in 1898.<sup>84</sup> Cottet traveled to Spain in 1904, visiting the picturesque cities of Castilla: Avila, Segovia, Toledo and Burgos, and visited Zuloaga in the Spanish artist's studio in Segovia in the fall of 1905. Cottet exhibited Spanish-themed works in the 1905 Paris salon, works which were hailed as an Orientalist triumph.<sup>85</sup> This concept of all of Spain as the Orient was pervasive in France. It is telling that paintings depicting Castilla, a region, except for Toledo, not strongly historically associated with Muslim Spain, would be described in the French press as Orientalist. Zuloaga, who painted many scenes of Orientalist Spain, positioned them with historical accuracy in Andalusía. Castilla, a region and a subject for Zuloaga beginning in 1898, carried a very different meaning and identity as a Spanish province. Such a sweeping Orientalist/exotic generalization of an artist's work could be unnoticed in France, but would have a very different reception in Spain, as will be discussed in Chapter 3.

Although Cottet exhibited regularly and enjoyed the respect of his artist colleagues, he never felt that his career achieved the level that he desired. His version of

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<sup>84</sup> Felicien Fagus, *La Revue Blanche*, September, 1902, part of a review quoted at length on 29 below. There are innumerable reviews describing the intense force and brutality, always associated with Spain, in Zuloaga's critical press.

<sup>85</sup> Plessier, *Ignacio Zuloaga et ses amis français*, 242.

the primitive and poor Brittany was not lightened by an impressionist palette or symbolist arbitrary and bright coloration. His compositions were anchored by symmetry and were dark in color and in spirit. Compelled by temperament towards the melancholy, the painter of *La Bande Noire* blamed Impressionism for his relative lack of success.

“L’impressionisme a rendu impossibles à jamais, bien des formes plastiques qui ont eu leur beauté aussi.”<sup>86</sup> (“Impressionism has made many beautiful and plastic forms more impossible than ever.”)

Robert Jensen uses the term “juste milieu” to describe artists, French and non-French, who employed a kind of impressionist technique in brushwork and who painted village and urban life, without belonging to what is considered today the avant-garde artists of the late nineteenth-early twentieth centuries.<sup>87</sup> He specifically cites Cottet as belonging to this *juste milieu*. These artists, of whom Zuloaga was one, are generally absent or little-studied in twentieth and twenty-first century art historical scholarship, yet they contributed to the dynamism in art-making and intellectual and artistic discourses on art so compelling in the unfolding of modern art at the turn of the twentieth century. Cottet, as a follower of Zuloaga, stands as an example of Zuloaga’s influence and prominence within the *juste milieu*. Brittany provided the anti-urban authenticity and focus on rural indigenous life that was a hallmark of *La Bande Noire*’s subject matter. For Zuloaga, as a foreign artist in living in France, the natural source for such subjects was his homeland.

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<sup>86</sup> J.E. Blanche, *Les Arts Plastiques*, (Paris : Les éditions de France, 1931) 195.

<sup>87</sup> Jensen, *Marketing Modernism*, 5.

## Zuloaga, Picasso and El Greco

At a time when artists such as Denis and Bernard were calling for the inclusion of tradition into the ongoing project of modernity and progress, El Greco provided a source in particular for Spanish artists. In France, the discussion of the significance of the classicism of Poussin for Cézanne, and the re-appreciation of Ingres, were based on French nationalist ideology that was firmly wedded to the concept of the *grande manière* as a French product that informed the creation of an authentic modern art. While El Greco was admired in France, it was only Spanish artists such as Zuloaga and Picasso who were described as being directly influenced by the Cretan artist, although, as noted above, Denis found El Greco as a forefather for Cézanne.

Zuloaga's role in the recuperation of El Greco as a great master and symbol of modernism has been insufficiently recognized by American art historical scholarship.<sup>88</sup> In discussing early twentieth century Spanish interest in El Greco, it is Picasso who has received critical study, despite the fact that Zuloaga collected works by El Greco and acted as a broker in finding works by El Greco for other collectors.<sup>89</sup> In addition, Zuloaga

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<sup>88</sup> In this section I am relying principally on the following works: Robert Lubar's erudite and thorough essay "Narrating the Nation, Picasso and the myth of El Greco" previously cited above. Lubar is one of the very few American art historians working on Spanish modernism. Other important texts are "Barcelona Blues," also by Lubar, in *Picasso the early years, 1892-1906* National Gallery of Art, (Washington, DC, 1997), and Picasso biographer John Richardson's *A Life of Picasso*. E.A. Carmean's *Picasso the saltimbanques*, National Gallery of Art, (Washington, DC, 1980) is still a very useful text on this important subject matter for Picasso. In Spain José Alvarez Lopera is the major contributor to El Greco historiography with *De Cean a Cossío: La fortuna crítica del Greco en el siglo XIX*, (Madrid: Fundación Universitaria Española, 1987) and more recently with his essay for the exhibition catalog *El Greco Su revalorización por el Modernismo catalán*, (Barcelona: Generalitat de Catalunya, 1996).

<sup>89</sup> Zuloaga acted as an advisor to Ivan Schuchkin who acquired nine paintings under Zuloaga's tutelage. According to Richardson, none are now considered authentic. In his art dealings issues of authenticity were not important for Zuloaga. In a series of correspondence in 1911 with his uncle, Daniel Zuloaga, the two discuss acquiring for resale a painting by El Greco in Spain to Georges Bernheim. Ignacio viewed the work in a photograph in Paris and warned his uncle in Segovia that it appeared to be heavily restored and therefore not valuable; his uncle assured him that was not the case. Upon receiving the painting Ignacio wrote to say that not only was it heavily repainted but that the signature was not authentic. From there he mused on how to spruce it up for the buyer, and planned to erase the signature and find an antique frame for it to assist in the still-proposed sale. *Correspondencia de Ignacio Zuloaga con su tío Daniel*, 300-308.

owned the great *Apocalyptic Vision* (fig. 1.11), a painting considered to be a crucial source for Picasso's *Les Femmes d'Alger*.<sup>90</sup> Jonathan Brown, in recounting the acquisition of the two El Greco's destined for Sitges, ignores Zuloaga completely and describes only Rusiñol's role.<sup>91</sup> Robert Lubar mentions Picasso's many visits to Zuloaga's studio to study *Apocalyptic Vision*, but gives the Catalan *moderniste* movement the significant role in exposing Picasso to El Greco.<sup>92</sup> Richardson agrees with this assessment and also cites Cossío's 1908 monograph as important for Picasso.<sup>93</sup>

In 1892 both Zuloaga and Rusiñol were active not only in collecting works by El Greco but in proselytizing on his behalf as a modernist hero. Zuloaga's fervent appreciation and advocacy for El Greco was a crucial part of his artistic persona. Critic Arsène Alexandre wrote

...[D]on Ignacio était entré en chaleureuse communication avec nous par l'intermédiaire du Greco, de qui il avait déniché de belles peintures, qu'il montrait plus volontiers que les siennes, et au culte de qui il s'efforçait d'amener, par de beaux et véhéments commentaires devant les photographies de l'Escorial et de Santo Thomé de Tolède, de nombreux prosélytes parmi nous, -apostolat qui n'était pas alors sans difficulté ni sans utilité, car il n'y a pas bien longtemps que le fougueux et grandiose maître était peu connu des uns et méconnu des autres."<sup>94</sup>

Years later Camille Mauclair echoed Alexandre: "Zuloaga a contribué plus que personne à attirer l'attention des artistes indépendants de Paris sur l'étrange génie du

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<sup>90</sup> John Richardson, *Picasso's Apocalyptic Whorehouse* (Milan: A. Mondadori, 1987).

<sup>91</sup> Jonathan Brown, "Introduction: El Greco the man and the myths" in *El Greco of Toledo* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1982), 22.

<sup>92</sup> Lubar, *Narrating the Nation*.

<sup>93</sup> Richardson, *A Life of Picasso*, 291.

<sup>94</sup> *5 essays on the art of Ignacio Zuloaga*, 28. "...[D]on Ignacio was in warm communication with us through the intermediary of El Greco, of whom he owned beautiful paintings that he showed more often than his own, and the cult he worked to build, by his beautiful and vehement comments in front of photographs of the Escorial and Santo Tomé in Toledo, there were many proselytes among us, - a brotherhood which was not without difficulty or usefulness, because it wasn't that long ago that the strange and great master was unknown."

Greco...”<sup>95</sup> By 1902 El Greco’s reputation was given official recognition in Spain with a monographic exhibition at the Prado. Surely the *festes modernistes* and Zuloaga’s own championing of El Greco were known to the curators of the exhibition. The *Salon d’Automne* of 1908 had a room devoted to a special exhibition of works by El Greco, organized by Maxime Dethomas, Zuloaga’s brother-in-law.

According to Richardson, Picasso first became interested in El Greco in 1897 as a student in Madrid, where he made copies of works by the Cretan artist in the Prado. The slower appreciation for El Greco in Spain than in France is evidenced by a comment of Picasso’s friend Bernareggi who accompanied him on the museum visits. “[T]hat was in 1897, when El Greco was considered a menace.”<sup>96</sup> Upon seeing some of the copies made by Picasso, his father told him “You’re taking the wrong road.”<sup>97</sup>

Picasso visited Toledo several times during his October 1897-June 1898 sojourn in Madrid. It is reasonable to assume that Zuloaga’s and Rusiñol’s advocacy of El Greco, shown to have begun in earnest in the early 1890s, provided a context for Picasso’s visits to Toledo.

Lubar argues that the appreciation of El Greco gave Picasso credibility as an avant-garde artist among the older, more established Catalan modernists. El Greco’s anti-classical mannerism provided a source for the bohemian rejection of academic art. Lubar places the legendary *Quatre Gats* in Barcelona as the locus for this bohemian appropriation of El Greco. Rusiñol, co-founder of the *Quatre Gats*, is today considered a member of the Catalan *Moderniste* School and Zuloaga the Spanish traditionalist, yet

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<sup>95</sup> Camille Mauclair, “Ignacio Zuloaga,” *L’Art et les Artistes*, 50, October 1924-February (1925), Paris, 187. « Zuloaga has contributed more than anyone in drawing attention to the strange genius of Greco to independent artists in Paris.”

<sup>96</sup> As quoted in Brown, *Picasso and the Spanish tradition*, 2.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*

during their lifetimes they had much in common. A poster for the *Quatre Gats* of 1897 depicts Ramón Casas and Rusiñol, along with Utrillo and Zuloaga. (Fig. 1.12) In the years around the turn of the twentieth century two things were clear for Spanish expatriates in Paris. They needed to explore a new style that was, above all, anti-academic, and the great masters of Spain – El Greco, Velázquez, and Goya – were part of their artistic patrimony.

Robert Lubar cites a Catalan review of Picasso's 1900 exhibition at the *Quatre Gats* as evidence of the awareness among artistic circles of Picasso's affinity with El Greco. "Each stroke of the pencil, charcoal or paintbrush reveals a profound faith in art and a kind of inspired fever which immediately reminds us of the best works by El Greco and Goya, the sole, undisputed masters or divinities for Picasso."<sup>98</sup> Since the critical press in France used these same parameters, along with Velázquez, as sources of inspiration for Zuloaga, such a quote reveals rather that Spanish art was handicapped, both at home and in France, by a simplicity of analysis that allowed only two versions of "Spanish" art: proto-modernist, in El Greco and Goya, and anti-classical in Velázquez.

According to Christopher Green, 30-40% of the artists living in Paris in the years 1900-1940 were foreign.<sup>99</sup> Artists from all over Europe and the United States descended on Montmartre and Montparnasse and found a welcoming environment for artistic experimentation. Yet the contributions to modernism by non-French artists was seen in the context of French art and art history: modernism was essentially French. A telling example of this mindset is revealed in a 1902 article by critic Félicien Fagus in which he

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<sup>98</sup> Lubar, *Narrating the Nation*, 167, footnote 42.

<sup>99</sup> Green, *Art in France*, 61.



wrote of a Spanish invasion in Paris. In the following lengthy quote, describing Spanish artists, he wrote:

Ils sont nombre, et chacun a et garde son individu; ...l'ensemble les accorde et caractérisera l'art espagnole actuel: Fiévreux, rauque; âpre, chaleureux, caustique; á la fois éclatant et terreux; la rudesse et la superbe; grande allure....Il leur manque la souplesse et la subtilité....Zuloaga, Nonnell (sic), Monturiol, Yturrino (sic), Anglada, etc...avec éclat divulguent aux Salons de la Nationale ces qualités typiques de leur race...ceux de là-bas travaillent sous la poussée immédiate de leur génie avec une indifférence pour le sujet qui va du détachement en quelque sorte aristocrate au mépris brutal. Zuloaga à part, ils ne composent, ne recherchent l'ordonnance décorative: ils ne choisissent pas. L'autre {Zuloaga}....."se compose" spontanément, croquis ou toile, forme tableau: il est passionné...Inné souci du style, de pouvoir d'une signification: c'est le goût français, c'est l'abstraction française....Zuloaga, qui demeure l'incontestable maître...Tous ces artistes espagnols ont du tempérament, de la race, et de l'individualité....Ils n'ont pas encore leur grand homme, le conquérant qui absorbe tout et tout renouvelle, fait dater tout de lui...Ils se souviennent avantagement de Goya, de Zurbarán, d'Herrera, s'aiguisent avec Manet, Monet, Degas, Carrière, nos impressionistes. Lequel – le moment est mûr – se fera leur Greco? Il est vrai que ce grand initiateur du grand art ibérique n'était point né espagnol; et nécessairement, qui sait? Alors...Carrière peut-être..."<sup>100</sup>

Picasso and Darío de Regoyos are mentioned in this article, along with several other artists reviewed by Fagus, as a group of painters conditioned by their "race" and cultural heritage. According to Richardson, after reading this article Picasso accepted the challenge to become the next Greco, absorbing the Cretan artist and transforming him by

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<sup>100</sup> Fagus, *La Revue Blanche*. "They are numerous, and each has and keeps his individuality...as a group they are characteristic of today's Spanish art: feverish, rough, bitter, hot, caustic, both amazing and earthy; rudeness and the superb; great allure...They lack suppleness and subtlety...Zuloaga, Nonnell, Monturiol, Yturrino, Anglada, etc...have shown these typical racial qualities with success at the National Salons...those people from over there are in close touch with their genius and have an indifference for subject matter which stems from a kind of brutal, aristocratic disdain. Except for Zuloaga, they don't compose, don't research rules, they don't select. [Zuloaga] composes spontaneously, sketch or canvas, he is passionate...innately concerned with style, with the powerfulness of meaning; it's French taste, French abstraction...Zuloaga is the uncontested master...all the Spanish artists have temperaments of their race and their individuality...they don't yet have their great man, the conqueror who absorbs all in order to transform...They look to Goya, Zurbarán, d'Herrera, are needled by Manet, Monet, Degas, Carrière, our impressionists. Who – it's hard to see – will be their Greco? It's true that the great inventor of great Spanish art was not even born Spanish, maybe necessarily so, who knows? Well....maybe Carrière..."

painting today's icon of modernism, *Les Femmes d'Alger*.<sup>101</sup> Yet it is Zuloaga, in 1902, who is identified by Fagus as the master of modern Spanish painting. In a conspicuous display of French nationalist chauvinism, Fagus singles out a French artist – Eugène Carrière – as the potential new great man. Just as El Greco was not born in Spain yet came to define Spanish art, perhaps Carrière, also not Spanish, can take on the mantle of greatness. And even Zuloaga, while an uncontested Spanish master, is actually French – “le goût français, l'abstraction française.”

Zuloaga had acquired *Apocalyptic Vision* in Córdoba while on a tour of Spain in 1905 with Rodin and Ivan Shchukin, brother of Picasso's great patron, Sergei Shchukin. Rodin, who disliked El Greco, claiming that the Cretan artist could not draw, advised Zuloaga not to buy it. Rodin's recommendation is revealing of the difficulty represented by anti-classical art, even for a modernist such as Rodin. For Denis and for Zuloaga, an entirely new classicism was coming into existence by the embrace of “tradition” (art of the past) allied with anti-tradition (modernism). In defending Cézanne as a classic artist Denis wrote of “...sa persistance gaucherie, sa bien heureuse naïveté, et de là aussi les incroyables maladroitures où l'oblige sa sincérité.”<sup>102</sup> (“...his persistent clumsiness, his happy naïvete, and the unbelievable sloppiness that proves his sincerity.”) The recipe for true modern art is an awkward and naive style, anchored by anti-Impressionist structure in composition and line.

*Apocalyptic Vision* is given enormous significance among the complex and wide-ranging sources cited by scholars for Picasso's *Les Femmes d'Alger*, today considered a foundational painting for cubism. For Richardson and Lubar, Picasso's

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<sup>101</sup> Richardson, *A Life of Picasso*, 248.

<sup>102</sup> Denis, *Théories, 1890-1910*, 124.

appropriation of El Greco as a [mythical] modernist hero leads the young artist on the path of modernism and ultimately to the transgressive avant-gardism of *Les Demoiselles*. This modernism is progressive both culturally and for the art historical canon. Lubar's art historical methodology begins with the premise of Picasso's singular greatness, an artist outside of history. Yet one has only to look at the historical record of Zuloaga's reception to see that the modernism of the 1890s and early 1900s had a fluidity that allowed other Spanish artists to apply the [myth] of El Greco's modernity in ways that were equally compelling to audiences and critics of that era.

Lubar relates the modernist paradigm of El Greco as tied to Catalan nationalism, specifically through the efforts to rehabilitate him by the members of the *Quatre Gats*, noting, but ignoring, the historical reality that El Greco was associated with Castilla. For Lubar the "modernism" of El Greco, as perceived by the Catalan group and Picasso, was a mythical narrative based on Catalan cultural nationalism. This movement called for traditions that could be renewed and re-worked into an authentic modern art that honored the past while demolishing the outworn strictures of the academy, in the same kind of thinking as Denis and Bernard. The Catalan nationalist project of the last decades of the nineteenth century was a political, economic and cultural separatist movement that epitomized the overall weakness of the Spanish state. However significant, Catalan nationalism was not the only source for Spanish modernist innovation, nor the only locus of El Greco recuperation and mythification. Zuloaga, widely admired in Paris as a progressive and powerful artist, made use of typical Andalusian and, later, Castilian imagery in ways that were routinely described as owing a debt to El Greco.

For Lubar, Picasso's spanishness, in Paris at the turn of the twentieth century, was an art-market liability only if the artist needed to transcend his national heritage to achieve a global, trans-national reputation. But Zuloaga's success is clear evidence that in 1900, no such liability existed. Preparing to visit Paris for the first time, Picasso made *hispanoliste* pastels such as *Bullfight* (Fig.1.13), which was bought by Zuloaga and later sold to Rusiñol, who hung it in Cau Ferrat, and *Entry into the Arena* (Fig. 1.14). Richardson gives the acid color and popular Spanish theme to the influence of El Greco and Catalan artist Ricard Canals.<sup>103</sup> While I have been able to view *Entry into the Arena* only in a black and white illustration, Richardson describes Picasso's use of color. "...these cacophonous mauves, lime greens, sugar pinks and saffron yellows; they recall the high key of El Greco's palette."<sup>104</sup> Yet surely Zuloaga's *Víspera de la Corrida*, owned by Rusiñol at that time, would have been known to Picasso. A typical El Greco, such as the National Gallery of Art's *Madonna and Child with Saint Martin and Saint Agnes* (Fig. 1.15, ca. 1597-1599) indeed contains lime greens and saffron yellows. Zuloaga's palette is even higher, influenced by the Pont-Aven school of Gauguin and Bernard, as well as El Greco.

In 1901 Picasso exhibited (along with fellow Spaniard Francisco Iturrino) some 65 paintings at Galerie Vollard.<sup>105</sup> Among the titles of works in the exhibition are *Toledo*, *The Matador*, and *Spanish Church*. It is reasonable to assign the influence of Picasso's friend and compatriot Zuloaga to the early *hispanoliste* works. It is part of the Picasso mythology that he appropriated the work of innumerable artists in order both to dominate

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<sup>103</sup> Richardson, *A Life of Picasso*, 153.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, 54.

<sup>105</sup> Robert Boardingham, "Gustave Coquiot and the Critical Origins of Picasso's "Blue" and "Rose" Periods," in *Picasso The Early Years, 1892-1906*, ed. Marilyn McCully, National Gallery of Art, (Washington, DC 1997), 143-147.

them and annihilate them.<sup>106</sup> His c.1899 drawing, *Yo el Greco* (Fig. 1.16) is often cited as a demonstration that he was positioning himself as the heir to the Cretan artist.<sup>107</sup> It is also evidence of his youth and brashness, the conceit of a very young man. The older Zuloaga, less overtly egotistical and more wedded to bourgeois respectability, made no such explicit claim. If, as Richardson supposes, Picasso was inspired to succeed El Greco after reading the review cited above by Fagus, Picasso would have seen clearly, and perhaps have been galled by, the fact that it was Zuloaga who was positioned, strongly, to be the heir presumptive. The positioning of Picasso, by his biographer and by modernist art historians, as the singular genius fails to take into account the historical record of the artistic environment for the years in question. Picasso's absorptive strategy has been enshrined today as "postmodern" but he was not alone in claiming El Greco as part of his patrimony.

After his time in Paris in 1900, Picasso returned to Spain and made a visit, with his friend Casagemas, to Málaga. Richardson quotes Picasso's secretary, Jaime Sabartès, as believing that Picasso needed to renew his Andalusian roots after the exposure to the French school – "...to determine where he stood in relation to Málaga, Madrid and Barcelona."<sup>108</sup> All Spanish artists in Paris were outsiders with dueling identities; Spanish in France and Andalusian, Catalan, or Basque at home.

Lubar positions two different receptions of El Greco in Spain: the El Greco described by Cossío and celebrated by the Generation of 98, and the El Greco of Catalan nationalism and the *Quatre Gats*. The first is nostalgic and based on the determinist nationalism of the Madrid-based members of the Generation of 98. The second is

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<sup>106</sup> Mark Rosenthal, "Barging into Art History: Subject and Style in Picasso's Early Work," 289-297.

<sup>107</sup> See Richardson, *A Life of Picasso*, and Lubar, "Barcelona Blues," in *Picasso The Early Years*, 87-101.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, 174.

progressive and linked to the forward-thinking cultural nationalism of the Catalan revival. In this analysis Picasso rotates between the two (neither Catalan nor Castilian) in a manner utterly unique. In fact Lubar does for El Greco what he does for Picasso: he de-nationalizes him. In a new mythification, Lubar sees El Greco as providing Picasso with a tool to invent the height of modernism, *Les Femmes d'Alger*, and in so doing makes El Greco a-historical, eternal, in the [mythical] modernist paradigm of the great rupture in art, *Les Femmes d'Alger*, the pathway to cubism. If for Cossío El Greco's encounter with Castilla was the turning point away from Venetian and European styles, it was because in Castilla, harsh, rugged, and austere, El Greco in his isolation was free to invent a new style that was deeply and fundamentally *castizo* (native). For Lubar, this version of El Greco as a nationalist hero is a form of false consciousness in admirers such as Cossío and Zuloaga. It is Picasso's El Greco, the international modernist hero who inspired *Les Femmes d'Alger*, that has art historical currency.

Gary Tinterow argues that the nineteenth century saw a paradigm shift in art in which the model of Raphaelian classicism was replaced (in France) with Velázquezian naturalism, and that modernism owes its facture to Spanish art, with great repercussions for the history of art.<sup>109</sup> The influence of Velázquez's *Los Borrachos* (Fig. 1.17) for Manet's *Old Musicians* (Fig. 1.18) is long acknowledged.<sup>110</sup> Manet's debt to Spain is not the subject of this dissertation, but it is clear that for Zuloaga, the great French artist's use of Velázquezian motifs in Manet's flat facture and use of deep black was an affirmation of Spanish painting as foundational for modernism. *Old Musicians* has been

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<sup>109</sup> "Raphael Replaced: The Triumph of Spanish Painting in France" in *Manet/Velázquez The French Taste for Spanish Painting*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003).

<sup>110</sup> Wilson-Bareau, Juliet, "Manet and Spain," *ibid.*, 203-259.

acknowledged as a source for Picasso's *Les Saltimbanques*.<sup>111</sup> (Fig. 1.19) Manet's painting was exhibited at the 1905 *Salon d'Automne*. The theme of traveling players/gypsies was a popular one and gypsies are traditionally associated with Spain. The seated female figure to the right arises from a watercolor study titled *Woman of Majorca*, indicating a Spanish setting for the composition.<sup>112</sup>

Zuloaga's *El Alcade de Torquemada* of 1905 (Mayor of Torquemada, Fig. 1.20) reflects a debt both to Velázquez and to Manet in the crowding of the figures within the picture plane, the massing of figures to the right side of the composition, as well as the relative lack of modeling and of course, the rich use of black. Returning to Bernard's *Musiciens Espagnoles* of 1897 (Fig. 1.8) discussed above, the complex links and interactions with the past and present can be traced in comparing Velázquez to Manet to Bernard to Zuloaga to Picasso's *La Vie* (Fig. 1.21, 1903) as well as *Les Saltimbanques*. *La Vie*, an allegorical work, shares formal characteristics with Bernard's *Musiciens Espagnoles*. Poor, barefoot itinerant figures fill the compositions. The figures are outcasts from society. The narrative of *Musiciens Espagnoles* is one of peasant hardship, while Picasso's painting is rather an allegory of themes of fertility, barrenness, life and death. Yet the two female figures holding babies in both paintings share a physical rootedness, emblems of maternity in a life of suffering and privation. The arbitrary use of blue, common to both works, is a marker of modernism.

Richardson uses the work "picassify" to describe the assimilation of Catalan primitive art, El Greco, Poussin, Puvis de Chavannes, Carrière and Gauguin that Picasso

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<sup>111</sup> See Carmean, *Picasso Les Saltimbanques*, for a discussion of sources for *Les Saltimbanques*.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*

drew on for *La Vie*.<sup>113</sup> He describes Picasso as needing to exploit other artists in order to exorcise their power, thereby increasing his own. The artist who emerges from these years is Picasso – the Great Synthesizer - who in so doing becomes the most original artist of the twentieth century. Picasso’s Blue Period has become reified into the overall legend of the Great Artist.

In this ambitious painting by the young Picasso, as in *Alcade de Torquemada*, marginalized figures inhabit a void. Zuloaga’s composition is more daring, and less classical than Picasso’s. The empty space at the left side of the composition is highly ambiguous, while Picasso anchors his painting with the seated female figure to the right. Both canvases are very large: *The Alcade de Torquemada* is 77 ½ x 73 inches, *Les Saltimbanques* is 83 ½ x 90 inches. *Les Saltimbanques* was acquired by dealer André Level in 1909 for La Peau de l’Ours, a group of collectors/investors in modern art. *Les Saltimbanques* was too large to hang in a typical Parisian home and was stored in a coach house before being acquired by Galerie Thannhauser in 1914. It was bought by the American collector Chester Dale in 1931, and was hung in the stairwell of his home in 1938, surrounded by paintings by Zuloaga, whom Dale also collected.<sup>114</sup> (Fig. 1. 22) Clearly, for Dale, the spanishness of the two artists trumped any formal issues.

By 1931 the cubist wars, in which Zuloaga and Picasso were opposed, were over. Picasso had become internationalized as a genius of modernism while Zuloaga continued in his role as “the painter of Spain.” Yet they fit comfortably together for the Dale collection. Zuloaga takes his place, quite naturally for Dale in those years, as a modern Spanish artist.

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<sup>113</sup> Richardson, *A Life of Picasso*, 269.

<sup>114</sup> Dale owned five paintings by Zuloaga including portraits, a landscape of Sepúlveda, and a portrait of a female matador. I am indebted to my colleague, Dr. Jorgelina Orfila, for this image.



It can be argued that many threads bound together artists such as Picasso, Rusiñol and Zuloaga. The nationalist project of young Spanish artists making their way in Paris, included establishing an identity based on their outsider status. Free by their foreignness from any link with the *grande manière*, they had a distinct heritage that they manipulated at will with great self-confidence.

As the discussion of Picasso's early career shows, Zuloaga was hardly alone in his attachment to a historically determinist nationalism. In tracing the reception of his work it can be shown that, far from being a negligible artist, he was centered at the heart of crucial debates as to the nature and significance of art. In the years before World War I, Zuloaga was not considered to be a traditionalist artist by his peers. The discursive nationalism of this early period was common to all the Spanish expatriates, including Picasso. It was not the *hispanoliste* subject matter that was important to Zuloaga's artist friends. It was his bold use of color, intensity of emotion, and anti-academic approach to making art that made him influential to artists from Denis to the Nabis to Bernard to Picasso.

## Chapter Two: Establishing a Brand

In 1898, the year of Zuloaga's great success in Barcelona with *Víspera de la Corrida*, the 28-year-old artist had laid the foundations for his highly recognizable style. His early years of experimentation in Paris had produced, along with his *hispanoliste* images, portraits, such as *Marqués de Villamarciel* (Fig. 2.1, ca. 1892) and *Woman of Alcalá de Guadaira* (Fig. 2.2, 1896) that reflected his increasing proficiency as a painter and especially his skilled, confident draftsmanship. Zuloaga's exposure to the work of painters such as Gauguin, Cézanne, and Degas as well as his friendship with Emile Bernard informed his developing sense of style. Zuloaga's characteristic brio in paint handling, forcefulness of depiction, and vivid palette, added up to a confident presentation of his themes.

Zuloaga made a conscious decision to organize his career around two broad genres: portraiture; a bread-and-butter endeavor, and Spanish-themed subjects. Zuloaga's growing success with portrait commissions provided a lucrative source of income that would continue throughout his long career. His vast number of portraits of male and female sitters of many different nationalities, in a variety of settings, garnered him both international recognition as well as great financial rewards. Constant portrait commissions by wealthy sitters, a steady international exhibition history, and innumerable glowing reviews attest to his popularity as a portraitist.<sup>115</sup> He exhibited his

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<sup>115</sup> Among the American women whose portraits he painted were Mrs. Randolph Hearst, now in the collection of the Hispanic Society of America, and Mrs. George Rockefeller, now in the Biltmore house museum, Asheville.

work across Europe, but it not until 1926 was he given a major exhibition in Spain.<sup>116</sup> His primary audience was non-Spanish throughout his career until the end of the Spanish Civil War in 1939.

Zuloaga shaped his success through his business sense and charming personality, as well as by the deliberate embrace of his role as the “painter of Spain.” This identity, fundamentally nationalistic, was based on genuine self-identification with Spanish art, history, culture, and landscape. While European critics described him as the heir to El Greco, Velázquez and Goya, Zuloaga basked in an artistic persona founded in nostalgia. In his exploration and manipulation of nationalist nostalgia, Zuloaga was able to satisfy his own sense of artistic identity; at the same time he maintained an acute understanding of the art market and the expectations of his European and American audience.

What can we say about Zuloaga? He has the intelligence of a dramatic author...stage director...a Spaniard, a passionate nationalist, Parisian by education, even in his witches....What can Zuloaga not be? He has a feeling for modern life, but respects tradition; he surprises the cultivated traveler at the same time as he will evoke memories of museums. He always attracts with his choice of subject... You have invented a heavy and masterful calligraphy, this gloomy matter and skillful vitality of the touch, which would have frightened your Spanish ancestor [Goya], but that gives us weak men of the twentieth century the idea of strength.<sup>117</sup>

Between the years 1898-1913 Zuloaga produced a body of work that today forms the best and most distinctive group among his total *oeuvre*. While he never turned away from Andalusian/Orientalist Spanish imagery, during these years he began to explore the landscape and populace of Spain’s central province, Castilla.

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<sup>116</sup> Zuloaga did participate in April, 1907 in an international exhibition in Barcelona. He was given two rooms and showed some 40 canvases. Zuloaga invited Rodin to exhibit sculptures in the Zuloaga rooms and included his own three sculptures, gifts from Rodin, in this show. Plessier, *Ignacio Zuloaga et ses amis français*.

<sup>117</sup> Jacques Emile Blanche, *Grande Review*, 1908, as quoted in Lafuente Ferrari, *Ignacio Zuloaga*, 332.

## Castilla

Zuloaga's 1898 visit to his uncle Daniel in Segovia in the province of Castilla marks this turning point in his career. Daniel was a noted ceramicist who was known for his mastery of the *azulejo*, Spanish tiles used to ornament both exterior and interior architecture. Sharing a studio in the abandoned and de-sanctified medieval church, San Juan de lo Caballeros, that he bought with his uncle, Zuloaga shifted away from Orientalist depictions of Spain to paintings of figures and landscapes associated with Castilla, the high, dry tableland of central Spain. Zuloaga worked in Segovia every autumn between 1898 and 1914. The core group of his most successful works was produced at his Segovia studio in these years and forms the backbone of his brilliant career.

The distinction between Andalucía and Castilla was not important for Zuloaga's European and American audience; Spain was both exotic and backward, therefore paintings of peasants, gypsies and bullfighters in any provincial setting met received expectations. But for Zuloaga's small Spanish audience, reading reviews of exhibitions of the artist's work in foreign cities, the setting and subject matter carried much greater significance. Spanish provinces have always maintained distinct identities in terms of culture, architecture and language. The Castilian landscape was noted for its barrenness and dry, empty tablelands as well as dramatic mountain ranges such as the Guadarrama mountains outside Madrid. And except for the great city of Toledo, Castilian cities and towns such as Madrid, Avila and Segovia evinced less visible signs of the long Moorish occupation of Spain. In depicting Castilian landscapes and subjects, Zuloaga was invoking *España pura*, Castilla as the heartland of the nation of Spain.

A trio of factors explains the reasons for Zuloaga's shift to Castilian subjects and the positive European and American response to his work. First, his deft understanding of the continual appeal of Spain-as-exotic to foreign audiences, an attitude well entrenched in Europeans by the end of the nineteenth century. Second, Zuloaga was closely linked by friendship and shared interests to the 98ers, who advocated a form of Castilian nationalism as a means of national regeneration. Third, Zuloaga's style, while dependent on the naturalism and anti-classicism of his artistic heroes, El Greco, Velázquez and Goya, also employed modernist strategies in composition, color, and brushwork very different from the earlier Spanish artists. All three Spanish masters had found favor with both avant-garde and traditionalist artists and critics in the nineteenth century, especially in France, and by evoking and contemporizing the great triad Zuloaga was able to straddle a line between traditional painting and modernism that made his work acceptable – and highly popular - to both traditionalists and modernists.

### **Las Cosas de España**

The romanticization of Spain began in the first decades of the nineteenth century with the opening of Spain to Europe following the Napoleonic invasion (1808-1814). The appeal of Spain proved enduring throughout the century as Spanish culture, whether art, architecture, music, literature or theater inspired legions of hispanophile writers, artists, and travelers from greater Europe and the United States. Spain was a constant source of interest as a country identified with exotic Orientalism and pre-modern civilization, while remaining within the European community. As industrialization, market capitalism and Enlightenment-based educational, secular and civic structures took hold across Europe, Spain maintained an identity as rural, Catholic, exotic and primitive.

Europeans, and especially the French, were exposed to Spanish art via collections formed first by conquest and later for political purposes. Marshall Soult, the commander in chief of the Second Corps of the French army under Napoleon, assembled a large private collection of Spanish art (especially works by Murillo) that were brought back to Paris and available for private viewing. In 1838 Louis-Philippe opened the Galerie Espagnole in Paris, the outcome of political strategizing and recognition of the mania in France for *le goût d'Espagne*, in full swing in the 1830s. The citizen king may have harbored plans for the throne of Spain, either for himself or for one of his sons, as constant political upheaval and the Carlist wars of succession made Spain vulnerable to French imperialist interests. As Duc d'Orléans Louis-Philippe had served in Spain for three months during the Peninsular War, and later married a niece of Spain's Ferdinand VII. The Galerie Espagnole provided a way for him to demonstrate his overall interest in Spain as well as to prove himself au courant with *hispanisme*. The collection, formed by Baron Isidore Taylor, included works by hitherto little known artists such as Zurbarán, Velázquez, Murillo, and El Greco, among others.<sup>118</sup> The collection was dispersed in 1848 but the impact of the exposure to Spanish art continued.

Théophile Gautier's 1843 influential *Voyage en Espagne* was one of many travel books published in mid-century; other popular volumes were written by Richard Ford, Washington Irving, and Alexandre Dumas.<sup>119</sup> All stressed the romance and backwardness of Spain, especially the Moorish Spain of Andalusía, perceived as

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<sup>118</sup> Taylor had established his qualifications for this project by his success in obtaining the obelisk of Luxor from Egypt during Napoleon's reign. In addition to Jeannine Baticle's *La Galerie Espagnole de Louis-Phillipe au Louvre* see Ilse Hempel Lipschutz's *Spanish Painting and the French Romantics* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972). Both scholars also contributed essays on these same subjects to *Manet/Velázquez The French Taste for Spanish Painting*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2003.

<sup>119</sup> Richard Ford, *The handbook for travelers in Spain* (London: J. Murray, 9<sup>th</sup> ed., 1845/1898), Washington Irving, *Tales of the Alhambra* (Granada: Ed. Padre Suarez, 1851/1965), Alexandre Dumas, *Impressions du voyage* (Paris: Calmann Lévy, nouv. éd., 1854/1888).

fabulously Oriental and exotic. Spain was depicted as slightly dangerous, alien, bandit-ridden and under the spell of the past. As industrialization took hold in Europe and America, Spain was a tourist destination that allowed travelers to experience a pre-modern world without leaving the European continent.

The primary destinations for foreign travelers were Madrid, Toledo and the great cities of Andalusía; Sevilla, Córdoba and Granada. The typical itinerary, followed by innumerable travel writers and tourists, began at Irún on the western frontier with France. The first important destination was Burgos, with its majestic Gothic cathedral, before arriving in Madrid. From Madrid, whose nearby mountain range, the Guadarrama, was much admired, the typical nineteenth century traveler went south to Toledo, and then passed through Castilla La Mancha before arriving in ur-Spain, Andalusía, with its sunny, climate, Moorish architecture, whitewashed buildings and deep blue skies.

This circuit did not include any of the cities of the Castilian *meseta* (other than Toledo) that would become so significant for Spanish regenerationist writers and pedagogues by the end of the century. Gautier, Alexandre Dumas and Henri Regnault, in 1843, 1846 and 1868, respectively, bypassed Segovia, Sepúlveda, and Avila in the heart of Castilla, cities arguably as “picturesque” as any in Spain.

Art and architecture were very much part of the itinerary. Many travelers wrote with a sense of the discovery of previously unknown, or little known cathedrals, churches, and altarpieces by Spanish masters. And the common thread throughout nineteenth-century travel writing is the prevailing sense of the backward and the barbaric, not only in the roads, inns, villages, cities and their inhabitants, but in Spanish art as well. Religious subjects, with blood, gore, suffering, torture, sickness and death, were

perceived as typically Spanish themes, while the naturalism of their presentation in art was also emblematic of Spanish art. This view, one commonly held, was that of an anti-classical yet intriguingly dynamic national style based on brutal realism. For Gautier, “Le besoin de vrai, si repoussant qu’il soit, est un trait caractéristique de l’art espagnol: l’idéal et la convention ne sont pas dans le génie de ce people, dénué complètement d’esthétique.”<sup>120</sup> (The need for the real, no matter how repugnant, is a characteristic trait of Spanish art: idealism and conventionality are not part of their genius, which is completely devoid of esthetics.)

Gautier visited Toledo as part of his tour. Describing his entry into the city through one of the main gates, he wrote

Cette porte s’appelle *la puerta del Sol*; elle est rousse, cuite et confite de ton, comme une orange de Portugal, et se profile admirablement sur la limpidité d’un ciel de lapis-lazuli. Dans nos climats brumeux, l’on ne peut réellement pas se faire une idée de cette violence de couleur et de cette âpreté de contour, et les peintures qu’on en rapportera sembleront toujours exagérées.<sup>121</sup>

Gautier wrote of seeing two works by El Greco, whom he described as “...peintre extravagant et bizarre qui n’est guère connu hors de l’Espagne.” (“...extravagant and bizarre painter who is unknown outside of Spain.”) On El Greco’s *Baptism of Christ* he wrote

...il y a des abus de blanc et de noir, des oppositions violentes, des teintes singulières, des attitudes strapassées, des draperies cassées et chiffonnées à plaisir ; mais dans tout cela règnent une énergie dépravée, une puissance malade, qui trahissent le grand peintre et le fou de génie.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Gautier, *Voyage en Espagne* (Paris: G. Charpentier, 1843), 50.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid., 139 “That gate is called *la puerta del Sol*; it is red, baked and conserved like a Portuguese orange, the profile admirable against the limpidity of the dark blue sky. In our foggy climates, one cannot truly understand the violence of color and the sharpness of contour, and paintings that show those things always seem exaggerated.”

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., 172. “There are abuses of white and black, violent oppositions, unusual tones, strange poses, draperies every which way, but in all this exists a depraved energy, an evil power, that betrays the great painter and the madness of his genius.”



Interestingly, Gautier did not describe Toledo's most well known El Greco, the *Burial of Count Orgaz* in the church of Santo Tomé. For Zuloaga, who played such a significant role in the recuperation of El Greco as a great master, this kind of description might have seemed like a valediction for both his style and his subject matter. His strong outlines and use of vivid, sometimes arbitrary color, along with what was perceived by his contemporaries as a kind of brutal realism, match Gautier's impressions of Spain and Spanish art.

Zuloaga's painting *Mi Tío y mis Primas* (Fig. 1.7, 1898), a family portrait of Daniel and two of the artist's cousins, marks the earliest work reflecting his growing artistic maturity and the beginning of his exploration of Castilla. While the female figures wear the exotic mantillas of Spain, the grey, drab sky and barren landscape evoke a very different world from the bright clear light and colors of Andalucía. Flirting coquettishly, with fans and challenging postures, the female figures' dark skin and black eyebrows are harshly romantic, totally lacking in the soignée prettiness of European female portraits.

In the 1903 special edition of *le Figaro Illustré* dedicated to Zuloaga, Arsène Alexandre found *Mi Tío y Mis Primas* to be a breakthrough for the artist. The figures have a sculptural force and they exhibit a kind of "farouche joie."<sup>123</sup> ("wild joy.") The theme is authenticity: for Alexandre, this painting, especially its colors, is truly new.<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>123</sup>Re-printed in *5 Essays on the art of Ignacio Zuloaga*, 31.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, 31. "Cette harmonie en noir des costumes et bleu intense du ciel, par grands parties très simples, ne rappelaient rien de déjà vu. Les deux jeunes filles s'animaient d'une vie d'autant plus inédite pour nous qu'elle était d'une authenticité profonde..." "The black harmonys of the costumes and the intense blue sky, in large simple passages, are like something never seen before. The two young ladies live a life that is as unknown to us as it is profoundly authentic."

Zuloaga began an eager investigation of the cities and landscapes of the central *meseta*. With his uncle for a companion, Zuloaga traveled by car in the region around Segovia, looking for landscapes and “authentic” peasants as subjects for paintings.<sup>125</sup> These annual fall expeditions were a tool for the artist to depict a version of Spain that stressed the centrality of Castilla as the heart of Spain. This was in step with his identification with El Greco, Velázquez and Goya, painters who worked in Toledo and Madrid, and whose work consisted of religious subjects, portraiture, and images of quotidian Spanish life - not themes depicting Orientalist Spain.

In a letter to his uncle dated August, 1903 Zuloaga wrote to propose a tour by car covering the Castilian cities of Vitoria, Pancorbo, Burgos, and Valladolid, ending up in Segovia to paint the material he was able to gather. The artist asked his uncle to help to provide models and costumes for the upcoming paintings.

Pero sobre todo lo que te ruego es que tengas buscado el sitio para pintar, y que el señor Vicente hable ya con lo modelos, a gente que tenga capas, sombreros y zahones de campo, y que sean ya muy gastados de color, pues llevo ya una idea de lo que quisiera hacer.<sup>126</sup>

With works such as *El Alcade de Torquemada* (Fig. 1.21, 1905), *Gregorio el Botero* (Fig. 2.3, 1906), *Las Brujas de San Millán*, (Fig. 2.4, 1907), *Mujeres de Sepúlveda* (Fig. 2.5, 1909) and *La Hilandera* (Fig. 2.6, 1911) Zuloaga established himself as a master of Castilian themes.

### **Zuloaga and the 98ers**

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<sup>125</sup> Ownership of a car, an expensive possession, indicates Zuloaga’s financial success in the early years of his career. In a letter to Daniel of May, 1902, Ignacio wrote from France to propose a tour by car through Burgos and Valladolid, to Segovia. The artist brought a Kodak camera to record possible images for his paintings, and asked his uncle to let him know of potential festival days in those cities, in which the citizenry would be likely to be dressed in picturesque costumes. Gomez de Caso, *Correspondencia de Ignacio Zuloaga con su tío Daniel*, 28.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 40 “ But above all I ask that you will have found a place to paint, and that Mr. Vicente speaks with the models, to people who have capes, hats and rope-soled country shoes, and that the clothing be faded, because I have an idea of what I would like to do.”

The 98ers were preoccupied with issues of Spanish identity and were among the first to become part of the newly formed class of public intellectuals in turn-of-the-century Europe.<sup>127</sup> Their title was coined in 1913 by founding member José Martínez Ruíz, better known by his pen name, Azorín.<sup>128</sup> The label acts as a convenient marker, linking the group to Spain's defeat in the 1898 Spanish American War, an episode as disastrous to Spanish pride and sense of nationhood as the Dreyfus Affair in France. The loss of Cuba and the Phillipines, Spain's last colonies, aroused public outrage and calls for action that gave voice to the pervading sense that Spain as a nation was utterly prostrate and doomed.

Some scholars of this movement find problematic the concept of a "generation" as a limiting definition of the group and its aims; among them Nelson Orringer, who argues that the issues underlying the group's motivations were in place well before the convenient date of 1898.<sup>129</sup> Indeed, the significant regenerationist educational institution, the Institución Libre de Enseñanza, founded in 1876, was an important source for the exploration of national self-identity and liberal political solutions to Spain's cultural and governmental shortcomings. However, there is a general consensus that the 98ers were an important core group of intellectuals representing a movement and an ideology concerned

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<sup>127</sup> The bibliography on the Generation of 98 is vast and the preponderance of scholarship approaches the movement within literary rather than contextual analysis. This dissertation does not attempt a thoroughgoing review of the literature on this movement, but confines itself to those secondary sources, notably Donald Shaw, *La Generación del 98*, (Madrid: Catedra, 1982), Lily Litvak, *Transformación industrial y literatura en España*, (1895-1905), (Madrid: Taurus, 1980), Mainer, *La Doma de la Quimera* and *La Edad de Plata* and Balfour, *The End of the Spanish Empire*, that most cogently describe the group's activities and attitudes, and that address the issue of nationalism as it relates to landscape and the visual arts.

<sup>128</sup> Azorín, *ABC*, Madrid, 1913

<sup>129</sup> Nelson Orringer, "Redefining the Spanish Silver Age and '98 Within It" in *Anales de la literatura española contemporánea*, vol. 23, issue 1-2, 1998. Carlos Mainer and José Luís Abellán also take issue with the limitations of the "generation" label. Mainer, *La Edad de Plata*, Abellán, *Sociología del 98*, (Barcelona : Ediciones Península, 1973).

with a redefinition of *hispanidad* and the regeneration, reauthentication and rebirth of Spain as a liberal nation-state.

In the aftermath of Spain's final imperial adventure the Spanish government was perceived as failing to maintain territory important to the prestige of the nation and the army, as well as to foreign markets crucial to the mercantile classes.<sup>130</sup> The ties connecting regions to the larger nation-state were loosened, especially in Catalonia and the Basque country, the only industrialist Spanish regions. Separatist political movements further undermined the nation-state by calling for an array of political, economic and cultural reforms. The final collapse of Spain's once-enormous empire left the nation-state floundering with issues of national self-definition.<sup>131</sup> For the 98ers, a new definition of "true Spain" was needed to recuperate what could be saved from Spain's great past. Castilla, the central province, dry, and poor, was the designated locus for redemption and rebirth.

The membership, somewhat disputed, consists in the main of Miguel de Unamuno, Pío Baroja, Ázorín, Ramiro de Maeztu and Antonio Machado.<sup>132</sup> They were members of the liberal bourgeoisie, generally without official status, who attempted to sway public opinion by their writing and speaking. They wrote articles for journals and newspapers, organized conferences, and wrote novels and non-fiction works addressing

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<sup>130</sup> On the "Desastre" and its implications some pertinent sources are Martin Blinkhorn, "Spain: the Spanish Problem and the Imperial Myth" in *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol 15, 1980, 5-25, Leandro Prados de la Escosura, *De Imperio a Nación, Crecimiento y atraso económico en España* (Madrid: Alianza, 1988), Sebastian Balfour, "The Solitary Peak and the Dense Valley, Intellectuals and Masses in Fin de Siècle Spain," *Tesserae*, no. 1, Winter, (1994), Lily Litvak, *Transformación industrial y literatura en España, (1895-1905)* (Madrid: Taurus, 1980), Clare Mar-Molinero and Angel Smith, ed., *Nationalism and National Identity in the Iberian Peninsula: competing and conflicting identities* (Oxford: Berg, 1996).

<sup>131</sup> Balfour, *The End of the Spanish Empire*, 60.

<sup>132</sup> The exact membership of the group is the subject of scholarly debate. This dissertation claims only the writers named above, all of whom are generally considered core members, without addressing scholarship on the subject of the larger group's "true" members.

the need for a renewal and redefinition of Spain as a nation. While never in lockstep, they shared certain characteristics in their thinking about Spain. Redemption was to be found inside the self, rather than in specific political reforms. They opposed positivist and materialist views of history and politics and believed that art and literature were the best source of spiritual and national renewal.

The 98ers thinking about Spain as a nation falls into Anthony Smith's category of perennialist nationalism.<sup>133</sup> They viewed Spain as an ahistorical entity, an organic, timeless and ancestral nation-state whose former greatness was inherent to a true sense of *hispanidad*. Indeed only by honoring and embracing the past could Spain heal its wounds and emerge into modernity. Securing national identity in the age of modernity by extolling the pre-modern past inevitably leads to the creation of myths; for Smith, nostalgia and the celebration of the pre-industrial village life functions as a bridge between the agrarian past and the dislocations of modernity.<sup>134</sup>

Contemporary scholarship views the concept of a nation as contingent, created, and a by-product of industrialization.<sup>135</sup> In this model cultural nationalism is inevitably based on myths, an "imagined community" created by the intelligentsia, rather than being authentically rooted in the past, in order to give coherence to the upheavals of industrialization, the growth of cities at the expense of rural communities and the separation from traditional village life engendered by the modern age.

The cultural, rather than civic nationalism of the 98ers was certainly a by-product of the political and economic conditions in Spain during the years in question. Constructs

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<sup>133</sup> Smith, *Theories of Nationalism*.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

<sup>135</sup> Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*, and Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

such as a universal state language and mass public education were tools for the transmission of a national cultural identity in France and Britain, for example; Spain's relative lack of such organized structures left the 98ers to an imagined past as the state failed to generate a national transmission and acceptance of cultural norms.

The group's views were characterized by nostalgia for a past Spain that they romanticized as pure, *castizo*, exemplified by the Spanish landscape of Castilla and the Spanish peasant. Antonio Machado's poem, *A Orillas del Duero*, evokes the Castilian landscape in a way that clearly captures the nostalgia, pessimism, and romanticism of the 98ers.

O, tierra triste y noble  
La de los altos llanos y yermos y roquedas,  
Decrépitas ciudades, caminos sin mesones  
Y atónitos palurdos sin danzas ni canciones  
Que aún van, abandonando el mortecino hogar,  
Como tus largos ríos, Castilla, hacia la mar!

Castilla miserable ayer dominadora  
Envuelta en sus andrajos desprecia cuanto ignora.  
Espera, duerme o sueña? La sangre derramada  
Recuerda, cuando tuvo la fiebre de la espada?  
Todo se mueve, fluye, discurre, corre o gira;  
Cambian la mar y el monte y el ojo que los mira.  
Pasó? Sobre sus campos aún el fantasma yerra  
De un pueblo que ponía a Dios sobre la guerra.<sup>136</sup>

Zuloaga's *El Alcade de Torquemada* (Fig. 1-21, 1905), discussed in connection with Picasso's *Les Saltimbanques* in the previous chapter, can be analyzed here in the context of Castilian nationalism. The empty, barren landscape, the coarsely dressed

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<sup>136</sup> "O land apart, sad and noble high plains, wastelands and stone, land without plow or streams, the treeless zones, the crumbling cities, innless roads, and throngs of stupefied boors without dance or song, who from their dying hearths still escape free like your long rivers, Castilla to the sea! Miserable Castilla – a master yesterday – wrapped in her rags, disdaining the unknown way, does she hope, sleep or dream? Recall her blood spilled when she had the fever of the sword? Everything moves, flows, runs or races by; the sea and mountain change and the moist eye of judgment. Gone? Over fields the ghost still soars of a people placing God above their wars. : trans. Willis Barnstone.

figures wrapped in cloaks and blankets, convey the timelessness of peasant life, as well as its crudeness. For Zuloaga, the image of rural peasantry was linked to the concept of deep *hispanidad*, a profound authenticity of Spanish identity. In 1915 in a letter to Garrett, Zuloaga wrote:

Llego de un viaje muy interesante! Cuánto he pensado en usted! Qué bellas cosas! Qué país! España es única en el mundo....He encontrado unos paradores que eran iguales a los de los tiempos de Don Quijote. Pero, ¡qué bondad por todas partes! El egoísmo, la avaricia, no existen en mi país. Todo pertenece a todos.<sup>137</sup>

Along with this nostalgic celebration of the rural past as a foundational nationalism, a lament for Spain's current decadence is a constant theme in regenerationist writing about Spain. While true Spain can only be found in the rural world, among the poor peasantry – the “stupefied boors” of Machado - that same world is inevitably sad, wasted, and a shadow of its former strength. While both the regenerationists and Zuloaga were concerned with issues of cultural nationalism, Zuloaga's agenda was quite different. His audience, non-Spanish, was unconcerned with the reality of Spanish decadence. For Zuloaga nationalist imagery was based on esthetic, nostalgic and market issues. For him, it was sufficient to depict peasants as crude, rugged and strong, a celebration of Spanish peasants both as symbols of the past as well as living, breathing, contemporary Spain.

How did Castilla become such a prominent source for *hispanidad* for Zuloaga and the regenerationists? Castilla's geographic centrality, the presence of the capitol, Madrid, the province's identity as the core nation-state following the expulsion of the Muslims

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<sup>137</sup> Evergreen House Foundation, Baltimore, Zuloaga archives. Zuloaga was a life-long friend of American art patron Alice Garrett; his letters to her are preserved at the Evergreen Foundation. Chapter four makes extensive use of this archive, in which Zuloaga always wrote in French. The citation will subsequently be shortened to 'Evergreen.' "I've just returned from an very interesting trip! How I thought of you! What beauty! What a country! Spain is unique in the world....I found some inns just as they were in the days of Don Quixote. And what goodness everywhere! Egotism and greed don't exist in my country. Everything is share and share alike."

and the Jews in 1492, the political, economic and geographic realignment of the country following the marriage of the legendary Catholic monarchs, Isabella of Castilla and Ferdinand of Aragon and the establishment of Castilian as the official language of government were all factors that gave foundation to the concept of Castilla as *España pura*. For the 98ers, Spain's past greatness was located in the soil of Castilla. In re-establishing, or inventing a Spanish identity, the regenerationists wanted simultaneously to remember a great and imaginary past, and to use that imaginary past as the rootedness that would strengthen Spain and make it possible to join the greater European liberal, capitalist economies and cultures of Spain's neighbors.

Pío Baroja's 1901 novel *Camino de Perfección* contains direct and oblique references to Zuloaga. While the Basque artist had been exhibiting regularly in Paris and elsewhere throughout the 1890s and had received much positive press, he was still in the very early stages of his career. It is a testament to the strength of the links between regenerationist thinking and Zuloaga's style and subject matter that Baroja references him in the context of both of modernist freedom from stale academicism, as well as Zuloaga's role in the recuperation of El Greco. The visual power of Zuloaga's work had a strong influence on regenerationist writers. Baroja's novel is evidence of the mutual relationship between them in the building and depicting of mythical, heroic, and decadent Castilla.

*Camino de Perfección* relates the story of Fernando Ossorio, a sometime painter, and his travels throughout Castilla in a journey of self-discovery. As the novel opens Ossorio has had a painting accepted to the Exposición de Bellas Artes in Madrid entitled *Horas de Silencio* (Hours of Silence), a work that depicts an interior with black-garbed



figures. A window looks out onto an industrial scene with the sky filled with wires and cables, and smoke from numerous factory chimneys fills the air. The mood is one of suffering, anguish, a sad and afflicted soul.<sup>138</sup> Ossorio's painting is relegated to an unimportant corner in the exhibition. His art is not understood by the jury or visitors to the exhibition. As Ossorio states: "Esta gente no entiende nada de nada. No han comprendido a Rusiñol, ni a Zuloaga, ni a Regoyos; a mí, que no sé pintar como ellos, pero que tengo un ideal de arte más grande, me tienen que comprender menos."<sup>139</sup>

Frustrated, Ossorio leaves Madrid and travels to Toledo and Segovia. *Toledo, the imperial city.*<sup>140</sup> Ossorio visits Santo Tomé to see the *Burial of Count Orgaz*. The painting is described at length in the text and Ossorio, in regarding it, feels a sense of peace and rest in his soul.<sup>141</sup> As his stay in Toledo progresses he takes to visiting the painting and consulting the figures within when he feels disturbed. Later still, while Ossorio attends a dinner party, "Alguien contó que dos pintores impresionistas, uno catalán y el otro vascongado, habían ido a ver el entierro del conde de Orgaz de noche a la luz de los cirios."<sup>142</sup> The suggestion is made to do the same and the guests proceed to Santo Tomé to view the great symbol of Toledo by candlelight. Ossorio is undone by this event, seeing the painting so darkly and dimly, and has to sit down and close his eyes. This passage is clearly a reference to the nighttime pilgrimage to Santo Tomé made

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<sup>138</sup> Baroja, *Camino de perfección*, (Madrid: caro raggio, 1920), 11. "Por la ventana, abierta, se veían los tejados de un pueblo industrial, el cielo cruzado por alambres y cables gruesos y el humo de las chimeneas de cien fábricas que iba subiendo lentamente en el aire. El cuadro se llamaba Horas de Silencio. Estaba pintado con desigualdad; pero había en todo él una atmósfera de sufrimiento contenido, una angustia, algo tan vagamente doloroso, que afligía el alma."

<sup>139</sup> Baroja, *Camino de Perfección*, 12. "These people understand nothing. They haven't understood Rusiñol, Zuloaga, or Regoyos; I, who don't paint as well as they, but with higher ideals, am even more misunderstood."

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, 57. The ancient capital of Castilla still conceived of as the center of the Spanish empire.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, 64.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*, 74. "Someone said that two impressionist painters, one catalan and one basque, had been to see the *Burial of Count Orgaz* at night by candlelight."

by Zuloaga during his years in Paris. The romantic, impetuous gesture, the arguing with the sacristan, the opening of the dark chapel, the almost religious experience of El Greco's masterpiece – this episode attached itself to Zuloaga's reputation as a symbol of the linking of modernism and traditionalism.

In Ossorio's travels, he visits villages and towns that show no impact of modernity. In a typical encounter in a nameless tiny hamlet he sees "tipos clásicos," old women dressed in black, with voluminous green cloaks.

Eran tipos clásicos: viejas vestidas de negro, con mantones verdosos, tornasolados; las mantillas, con guarniciones de terciopelo roñoso, prendidas al moño. Las caras terrosas, las miradas de través, hoscas y pérfidas. Salieron todas las mujeres, viejas y jóvenes al atrio, y fueron bajando las cuestas del pueblo, hablando y murmurando entre ellas.<sup>143</sup>

This description closely matches Zuloaga's powerful painting *Las Brujas de San Millan* (Fig. 2-4, 1907) and is an excellent example of the synergy or link between the writings of the regenerationists and Zuloaga's work – the sense of tradition as both honorable and necessary, while at the same time a drag on the present, the opposition of tradition versus modernity.

The town of Sepúlveda, northeast of Segovia, is featured in two of Zuloaga's most significant paintings of this period. The notorious *Gregorio el Botero* (1908) (which will be discussed in Chapter 3) and *Mujeres de Sepúlveda* (Fig. 2-5, 1909) combine images of peasants seemingly from a distant, un-urban, pre-modern past with the distinctively picturesque town behind in stunning evocations of mythic time and place.

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<sup>143</sup> Baroja, *Camino de Perfección*, 37. "They were archetypes: old women dressed in black, with green-tinged, shiny shawls; their mantillas sticking to their bangs, fringed with soiled velvet. They had grimy faces and gave sidelong glances; both sullen and perfidious. All of the women, young and old, came out into the atrium, and started walking down the hills of the town, talking and murmuring among themselves."

*Mujeres de Sepúlveda*, like *Las Brujas de San Millán*, is a large, imposing canvas, almost 6' x 7'. It depicts three peasant women in the foreground, who frame a distant vista of the rugged, rocky hills approaching the village. The overall palette is acidic, mostly greens and greys, with a blue sky filled with billowing clouds. The women are composed in a manner reminiscent of a classical Three Fates, forming a circle; the seated figure on the left regards the viewer. Wrapped in heavy blankets and wearing full wool skirts, the figures engage in no activity. The lack of action, of narrative, contributes to the invocation of timelessness that is a hallmark of Zuloaga's images of country people. Many of Zuloaga's paintings share the compositional device of this painting; that of large figures at the front of the picture plane, placed before a distant landscape with a village in the background. As in *Mujeres de Sepúlveda*, there is often little transition between foreground and background, creating the sense of a stage set. The background can function as a kind of scrim or curtain for the shallow foreground in which the figures stand. This theatrical composition contributes to sense that the image is not "real" but rather a symbol of a larger truth. For Unamuno, this composition was particularly Spanish.

If you are in a town and there are any pictures there of the old traditional school of Castile, go to see them – for in the great days of its expansion this race created a school of realistic painting, of a rude, vigorous, simplified realism, very limited in range of tone, which has the effect of a violent douche upon the vision....Not infrequently the figures fail to form a single whole with the background, which is a mere accessory of insignificant decorative value. Velázquez, who of all Castilian painters possesses most of the racial character, was a painter of men, of whole men, men all of one piece, rude and emphatic, men who fill the whole canvas.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>144</sup> Anthony Kerrigan, trans., *The Private World: selections from the Diario Intimo and selected letters, 1890-1936/Miguel de Unamuno*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 36-37.

This same sense of dislocation and unreality in face of the brutal, unproductive and sleeping landscape pervades *Camino de Perfección*. Ossorio describes a mountain vista: “A mí, esos montes...no me dan idea de que sean verdad; me parece que están pintados, que eso es una decoración de teatro.”<sup>145</sup>

Ossorio’s search for himself and his identity as a Spaniard in *Camino de Perfección* is closely linked in description and mood to Zuloaga’s Castilian paintings. The theme of sorrow, sadness, silence runs through Baroja’s book as both an indictment and a celebration of contemporary Spain. The difference is that for Zuloaga, mythic, traditional Spain has an authenticity and a righteousness impossible to achieve in the modern world; a nationalism fundamentally at odds with modernity. He elides the split between tradition and modernity by choosing subjects, such as *Las Brujas de San Millán*, that are genuinely contemporary and also symbolic of Spain’s pre-modern past.

### **Institución Libre de Enseñanza**

The 1876 founding of the ILE played a crucial role for the proto nationalist and liberal sentiment developing in nineteenth century Spain. Led by Francisco Giner de los Ríos, (1834-1915) the ILE was a reformist primary and secondary school independent of the Catholic Church and the government. Pedagogically based on a Socratic method of teaching, the ILE stressed the importance of science and of free inquiry as an antidote to religious and rote formal instruction offered in church and state schools. The ILE advocated progressive pedagogical methods similar to those in greater Europe, stressing that acceptance of European trends in education were necessary to move Spain forward both socially and morally. Giner de los Ríos was indebted to the thinking of German

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<sup>145</sup> Baroja, *Camino de Perfección*, 44. “To me those mountains seem unreal, they seem as if they were painted, that they are a theater decoration.”

philosopher Karl Friedrich Krause. In historian Carolyn P. Boyd's summary, Krausism was an idealist philosophy, particularly useful for Spanish liberal intellectuals in its emphasis on social progress as a function of individual reasoning and moral conduct.<sup>146</sup>

As in so many arenas, Spanish education lagged far behind her European neighbors. The liberal concept of the importance of a well educated populace came late to Spain. At the turn of the twentieth century more than half the population was illiterate and the Church and State schools were not concerned with a free-thinking populace. The ILE stressed the importance of individual liberty, moral liberty, and the concept of the educated *citizen* rather than subject. Giner's views were part of Enlightenment liberal ideology which at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century provided an educational philosophy and curriculum that was in line with Spain's European neighbors.

Because the ILE philosophy was essentially regenerationist, the issue of Spain's identity and place in the world were important factors in the development of a curriculum. Cultural products such as literature and art were considered vital to liberal education, and the ILE stressed that an educated person was one who was familiar with history, literature and art as part of self-knowledge. "La búsqueda de la propia identidad debía ser el punto de partida del proceso de regeneración de la vida española que en el seno de la Institución adquirió un enfoque esencialmente cultural y educativo."<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>146</sup> Carolyn P. Boyd., *Historia Patria Politics, History and National Identity in Spain, 1875-1975* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 31. For more on Krausist philosophy see Juan López-Morillas, *The Krausist Movement and Ideological Change in Spain, 1854-1874* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981) and Elías Díaz, *La Filosofía Social del Krausismo Español* (Madrid: Editorial Cuadernos para el Diálogo, 1973).

<sup>147</sup> María Rosario Caballero, *Inicios de la historia del arte en España: La Institución Libre de Enseñanza*, (Madrid: consejo superior de investigaciones científicas), 15. "The search for a true identity should be the point of departure in the process of regeneration of Spanish life which in the bosom of the Institution acquired an essentially cultural and educational focus." For more on the ILE see Romero, Antonio Romero, *Literatura, educación y pedagogía en la crisis de fin de siglo: presencia de las ideas pedagógicas en la Institución Libre de Enseñanza* (Granada : Grupo Editorial Universitario, 1999).

The focus of instruction was strongly oriented towards independent and critical thinking. For this reason, textbooks were considered less important than seminar discussions. The immediacy of direct experience was the best teacher; the role of fieldtrips in and around Madrid is one of the ILE's most enduring legacies.<sup>148</sup>

A typical assignment for a day trip out of Madrid was to write an essay describing the mode of travel, the geographic situation of the city or town being visited, the appearance and nature of its picturesque qualities, the plants, animals, and climate, the physical appearance of the inhabitants, their customs, moral qualities and their local festivals, and a host of other descriptive details.<sup>149</sup> This careful scrutiny served to instill analytical habits of mind in ILE students, as well as giving importance to the quotidian details of contemporary Spanish life.

As a means of achieving an educated society of free thinkers, the ILE believed that it was important to stress Spanish cultural roots, to emphasize the value of a collective memory as a foundation. The sense of separation from a meaningful past, a loss of collective identity, was at the heart of ILE instruction and precisely what the regenerationists hoped to ameliorate by locating Spanish identity in Castilla, the heart of *España profunda*.<sup>150</sup>

The alumni of the ILE included many of Spain's leading intellectuals and progressive thinkers. A critical component of Giner's teaching was an emphasis on the exploration of the Spanish countryside around Madrid; in particular, the Guadarrama

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<sup>148</sup> Ibid., 61.

<sup>149</sup> Manuel B. Cossío, *De su jornada; fragmentos* (Madrid: Aguilar, 1966), 290-295.

<sup>150</sup> Inman Fox's *Invencción de España: nacionalismo liberal e identidad nacional*, (Madrid: Cátedra, 1997) is the most cogent and clearly argued text on the issue of regenerationist nationalism in late nineteenth-early twentieth century Spain. Fox confines his arguments to the literary output of the 98ers with a brief section on the recuperations by Spanish art historians of El Greco, Velázquez Zurbarán and Murillo. His book is foundational for the topic of Spanish nationalism and the 98ers but does not address contemporary artistic output.

mountain range to the northeast. Giner organized hiking trips to the mountains in order to study geology and botany, but also to impress a love for the Spanish landscape upon his students. For ILE students this was a discovery of Spain itself.<sup>151</sup> Azorín, author of books such as *Castilla* and *La Ruta de Don Quixote*, credited French travelers with a kind of “discovery” of the Guadarrama; it fell to Giner de los Rios to bring that discovery back to Spain.

...los románticos franceses que in 1847 vinieron a España (Gautier, Dumas, Boulanger...etc.) se extasiaron con el paisaje del Guadarrama; ellos puede decirse que nos hicieron ver esa magnífica montaña que Velázquez y Goya habían puesto en los lejos de sus cuadros; mas el descubrimiento permanecía ignorado de los propios españoles; don Francisco Giner, con sus reiteradas visitas dominicales al Guadarrama, había, muchos años después, de completar el descubrimiento de los románticos de allende el Pirineo.<sup>152</sup>

Giner’s excursions were not limited to mountain hikes. He also extolled the beauty and cultural significance of nearby Castilian cities such as Avila, Segovia and above all, Toledo. This ancient and former capitol of Castilla represented a kind of *ur-hispanidad*. Continuously inhabited since prehistoric times, Toledo had been an important center in Roman and Moorish Spain before sinking in prestige and significance following the establishment of Madrid as the political capitol in 1561. Rich in history, architecture and art, Toledo’s winding narrow streets, churches, mosques, and views of the *meseta* made it the perfect locus of regenerationist thinking about Spanish identity.

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<sup>151</sup> Rubén Landa, *Giner visto por Galdós, Unamuno, A. Machado, J. Ramón Jiménez, Alfonso Reyes, etc.*, (México: Instituto Luis Vives, 1969), 170.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid., 44. Azorín: “The French romantics who came to Spain in 1847 (Gautier, Dumas, Boulanger...etc) were enraptured with the landscape of the Guadarrama. It can be said that they made us truly see that magnificent mountain that Velázquez and Goya placed in the background of their paintings. But the mountain continued to be ignored by the Spanish themselves until, many years later, in the course of his frequent Sunday visits to the Guadarrama, don Francisco Giner completed the discovery of the romantics from beyond the Pyrenees.”

If the Guadarrama mountains were associated with Velázquez and Goya, Toledo was above all the city of El Greco. Giner's fellow instructor, art historian Manuel Bartolomé Cossío, the El Greco specialist, took the lead on day trips to Toledo and played a key role in the recuperation of the Cretan painter's reputation in Spain, as described in Chapter 1.<sup>153</sup> A gifted teacher, Cossío emphasized the significant role of the visual arts and architecture in providing a framework for moral beauty and for the exercise of discernment in esthetic matters. For Cossío,

Toledo es la ciudad que ofrece el conjunto más acabado y característico de todo lo que han sido la tierra y la civilización genuinamente españolas.....el viajero que disponga de un solo día en España, debe gustarlo sin vacilar en ver Toledo.<sup>154</sup>

This was because Toledo contained examples of art, architecture and culture from Spain's Muslim and Christian past, providing a continuity of Spanish history in its physical space, "...el cuadro real, casi vivo y casi intacto, en suma, de sus épocas de splendor y grandeza."<sup>155</sup> Geography also played an important role: "El paisaje de Toledo resume los accidentes geográficos más típicos de las altas mesetas castellanas: la vasta, despoblada y árida llanura, donde alterna le estepa con la roja tierra de labor....."<sup>156</sup>

Cossío's description of the *Burial of Count Orgaz* could easily stand for a description of Zuloaga's *Cristo de la Sangre* (Fig. 2-7, 1911). For Cossío El Greco's masterpiece is "...la página más sustancial y penetrante de la pintura española. Sorprende

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<sup>153</sup> Ibid., 170.

<sup>154</sup> Cossío, *De Su Jornada*, 296-297. "Toledo is the city which brings together that which was the civilization and land of true Spain. The traveler who has only one day in Spain should spend it in Toledo."

<sup>155</sup> Ibid., 298. "the royal portrait, almost intact and living, of (Spain's) grand and splendid eras."

<sup>156</sup> Ibid., 298. "The landscape of Toledo contains the most typical geographic features of the high Castilian tablelands. The vast, unpopulated and dry plain, where the barren land alternates with the red farmed fields."



por la conjunción de intimidad naturalista, exaltado idealismo, ambiente local, acento dinámico y sobriedad de frías entonaciones.”<sup>157</sup>

Zuloaga’s crucifixion scene is set with Ávila as a backdrop. The painting conflates the real with the unreal; the figure of Christ is depicted as a plaster painted statue or sculpture such as one would see on an altarpiece, surrounded by unidealized peasants and clerics. The overall palette is reminiscent of El Greco’s use of acid greens and greys and the figures are placed at the very front of the picture plane, almost in the same space as the viewer. In placing the scene of Christ’s death in contemporary Spain Zuloaga expresses the same sentiments that Giner describes: its regional mysticism, the Spain of daily life. Unamuno found this painting to have a kind of ur-reality; it represents a deeper authenticity because it is reality transfigured into symbol, gaining power in the process.

Se dirá que este cuadro así como lo ha pintado Zuloaga no se da en nuestra actual realidad visible española, que no es un trozo de ella que podría sorprender uno que se fuese con su maquinilla fotográfica a sacar instantáneas. Sin duda alguna, pero en esto precisamente estriba su excelencia y su verdad artística o representativa.....ese Cristo de la Sangre es de una estupenda verdad íntima, es profundamente revelador. No diré que de lo más común de nuestra España, pero acaso sí de lo más profundo de lo eterno de ella.<sup>158</sup>

Zuloaga’s *La Hilandera* (Fig. 2-6, 1911) depicts a peasant woman spinning wool from a hand-held distaff. This image, powerfully painted and well executed in its own right, references Velázquez while working within the context of the 98er’s focus on the

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<sup>157</sup> Cossio, *El Greco*, 9. “...the most substantial and significant example of Spanish painting. It takes one by surprise with its union of intimate naturalism, exalted idealism, localism, dynamism, and the soberness of its cold intonations.”

<sup>158</sup> Miguel de Unamuno, *Obras Completas*, VII, (New Cork: Las Ameritas Pub.), 737. “Some might say that this painting as Zuloaga has done it does not represent our daily Spanish life; that it is not a slice of life might surprise someone who wishes to take instamatic photographs. They might be right, but in precisely this lies its excellence and its artistic truthfulness...this Christ of the Blood is stupendously, intimately real, and is a profound revelation. One wouldn’t say that it is a common part of our Spain, but surely belongs to the deepest and most eternal Spain.”

peasant. The insistent physicality of the figure, so close to the front of the picture plane that her hand could almost be pressed against a glass pane, gives this image a kind of monumentality typical of Zuloaga's style. Velázquez's *The Spinners* (Fig. 2-8, 1657) also employs an array of peasant or humble women in the foreground of his great work. The figures' bare legs and rolled-up sleeves contribute to their humanness as a foil to the aristocratic women and goddess in the background. For Zuloaga, the use of intense black in the figure's jacket and head covering, along with the subject itself, is an assertion of his connection to the past, while interpreted through his own personal vision.

The reauthentication of the Castilian landscape and Spain's great cultural patrimony as a root source of national identity was fundamental to the regenerationist program. Unamuno's theory of intrahistoria placed a profound timelessness and unchanging tradition to an inchoate "people" who represented a permanent ahistorical identity that co-existed with the material world.<sup>159</sup> Intrahistoria existed on an inner, personal level as a kind of collective unconscious. "La tradición eterna es lo que deben buscar los videntes de todo pueblo, para llevarse a la luz, hacienda conciente en ellos lo que en el pueblo es inconciente, para guiarle así mejor."<sup>160</sup> For Unamuno the uncovering of this constant and unchanging history was inherently ameliorative, but not all the 98ers were satisfied with collective consciousness and argued for a more active response to nationalist revival.

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<sup>159</sup> On intrahistoria see Pedro Laín Entralgo, *La Generación del noventa y ocho* (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1979) and Gayana Jurkevich, "Unamuno's Intrahistoria and Jung's Collective Unconscious: parallels, convergences and common sources" in *Comparative Literature*, Vol. 43, no. 1, 43-59.

<sup>160</sup> Unamuno, OC, Vol. 1, 794. "Eternal tradition should be sought by seers of each village, to bring them to the light, making them conscious of what in the village is unconscious, to better guide them."

In Ramiro de Maeztu's *Hacia Otra España* Castilla's hidebound, anti-progressive spirit is blamed directly for Spain's ills.<sup>161</sup> The cities of the coasts, not merely Barcelona and Bilbao but Valencia, Vigo and more, have embraced modernity and industrialization. It is the dark heart of Spain, Castilla, which refuses to change. For Maeztu, the loss of the markets in Cuba and the Phillipines needed to be made up by Castilla, but that was impossible. "Y como va a ofrecerlo Castilla, despoblada por mil guerras, arruinada por la usura y por el fisco, atrasada porque en ella perviven las odiosas leyendas de los tiempos muertos?"<sup>162</sup> The Castilian laborer is blamed. One charge leveled by Maeztu is that farmers, rather than educating their sons in the newest and best farming methods, send them to school to become lawyers or doctors, professions that take them away from the land and its regeneration.<sup>163</sup>

While Zuloaga would eventually claim friendship with the 98ers, his work was by no means immediately accepted and admired by all the regenerationists. Azorín, Unamuno and Maeztu all published essays and reviews addressing the artist's focus on Spanish hardships, poverty, and anti-modern practices.. Zuloaga's first mention of Maeztu is in a 1903 letter to his uncle. Daniel had sent a copy of a review of an exhibition of works by Rusiñol, Regoyos and Zuloaga, generally highly favorable, but also in which Maeztu accused Zuloaga of inauthenticity in his portrayal of peasants,

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<sup>161</sup> Ramiro de Maeztu, *Hacia Otra España*, (Madrid: Ediciones Rialp, 1967), 174-177.

<sup>162</sup> "And what can Castilla offer, depopulated by a thousand wars, ruined by usury and backward, because ugly legends from a dead past still survive?"

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*, 177. "El labriego castellano, rico o pobre, necesita aprender a cultivar su hacienda, y en lugar de educar a sus hijos en las granjas agrícolas extranjeras o españolas, consume sus ahorros en hacer de ellos abogados, médicos o sacerdotes, gentes que carecen del amor a la tierra y cuya educación les impulsa a abandonarla, dejándola en manos de arrendatarios sin entusiasmos y sin ambición." "The Castilian peasant, rich or poor, needs to learn to care for his farm, but rather than educate his sons in foreign or Spanish farms he uses his savings to educate them as lawyers, doctors, or priests, {they are} people whose birthright is to care for the land, but whose education leads them to abandon it, leaving it in the hands of tenants without enthusiasm or ambition."

hiring models to pose rather than depicting actual country people. This the artist vigorously denied as a significant issue: “...no creo que eso sea un pecado mortal en arte pues no los filósofos de Rembrandt eran tales filósofos, ni Menfus ni Esopo de Velázquez eran tales pues probablemente eran algún barrendero o sacristán; ni la mitad de los cuadros que existen en el mundo han sido hechos con los tales modelos.”<sup>164</sup> For Unamuno, Zuloaga’s Basque ethnicity (which they shared, along with Maeztu and Baroja) gave him a pure authenticity even beyond *hispanidad*: Zuloaga as a Basque was a true Iberian, a link to, and a representative, of *España pura*. As such Zuloaga is a kind of rescuer: Unamuno approvingly quotes a poem written by Eduardo Marquina in homage to the artist.

Devotamente la canija Europa  
 Fué tuya en el estrépito que hacías  
 Cuando. Llamado a su festín,  
 servías el viejo vino en la moderna copa.  
 Besó tu mano y aclamó la tropa  
 De negras y doradas fantasías  
 Donde a tu España acatamiento hacías  
 De sangre y fuego en la pintada ropa.  
 Y fué, de nuevo, un fatigar los ecos  
 El recio nombre de la España fiera  
 Por toda Europa, en imperial arrastre,  
 Mientras al son de sus palillos huecos  
 Cantaba España su última habanera  
 En la gris madrugada del Desastre.<sup>165</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> Gómez de Caso, *Correspondencia*, 36. “I don’t believe that it is a mortal sin in art since Rembrandt’s philosophers were not philosophers, nor Velázquez’s Menfus or Esopo were either, they were probably some sweeper or sacristan; half the paintings in the world were not done with “real” models.” But in 1904, Ignacio wrote to his uncle mentioning that Maeztu and Regoyos had dined with him, very agreeably. *Ibid.*, 65.

<sup>165</sup> Unamuno, “Zuloaga, el Vasco” in OC VII, 725-730. “Devotedly, sickly Europe became yours in your thunderous noise. When called to its banquet you served the old wine in a modern cup. It kissed your hand and acclaimed your dark and golden visions. When you obeyed the Spain of blood and fire in colorful clothes. And it was again falling echoes. The renown of fierce Spain went throughout Europe, while its hollow drumsticks played a final habanera at the grey dawn of the Disaster.

Azorín's view of Zuloaga was less laudatory.

El público español no tiene idea exacta de quién es este pintor ni de lo que hace...¿ha recogido el Sr. Zuloaga en sus lienzos nuestro ambiente? ¿Ha retrato D. Ignacio Zuloaga la verdadera España ? A mi entender, el Sr. Zuloaga es un pintor de caracter literario; pues su *literatura* está inspirada más bien en la visión que los extranjeros han tenido de España que no es la propia visión que nosotros tenemos de nuestras cosas....no ha podido desprenderse de cierto prejuicios en la visión, de cierto *deseo* de ver ciertos aspectos de la vida española, aislados, excepcionales...¿Cuántos son los que ven la España, toda la España del siglo XVII, no en los reyes y en los bufones, sino en este pequeño cuadro de Velázquez que representa una vista de Aranjuez y en que un caballero se inclina ligeramente ante una dama, con un gracia, con un dignidad, con una elegancia insurperables, para ofrecerle una flor ?<sup>166</sup>

Despite this criticism, in the year following Zuloaga's stunning success with his three Salon offerings, the artist was honored at a dinner in Madrid hosted by Azorín, Pío and his brother Ricardo Baroja, Rusiñol, Maeztu, Sotomayor and others.<sup>167</sup>

The sense of longing for an authentic land and landscape, rooted in tradition and elevated by an ideology of progress and modernity, runs throughout regenerationist writing about Spain and Spanish art. Angel Guerra, in the publication *Alma Española* in 1904 wrote "...nuestros artistas no han sentido nunca, con intensidad de emoción, la naturaleza de la madre tierra....[B]usco, sobre todo, en el paisaje, la realidad viva, la naturaleza en accion, palpitantes; ..."<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>166</sup> *ABC*, Madrid, 1903. "The Spanish public doesn't understand who this painter is, or what he does. Has Zuloaga captured our essence in his canvases? Has he painted the portrait of true Spain? To my way of thinking, Mr. Zuloaga is a painter with a literary bent; his *literature* is inspired more by the vision that foreigners have of us, which is not the same vision as we have for our character....he hasn't been able to get rid of some prejudices, of a *desire* to see some aspects of Spanish life as isolated and strange. How many are there who see Spain, all of Spain of the XVII century, not in the kings and the jesters but in that small painting by Velázquez of a view of Aranjuez in which a gentleman leans gently towards a woman, with grace, with dignity, with great elegance, to offer her a flower?" A search through López-Rey's *Velázquez* (Cologne: Taschen, 1996) catalog raisonné did not uncover a work matching Azorín's description.

<sup>167</sup> José Tellechea Idígoras, *Zuloaga y Unamuno: glosas a unas cartas inéditas*, (Zumaya; Museo Ignacio Zuloaga, 1987).

<sup>168</sup> *Alma Española*, 1904, March 6, 8. "Our artists have never intensely felt nature in our motherland. In landscape I search, above all, for living reality, nature in action, throbbing."

Contemporary Spanish artists were criticized for a lack of spontaneity and passion in their academic works exhibited at the annual Academia de San Fernando, or for ignoring Spanish landscape altogether. In a review of works by Enrique Serra (1859-?), who exhibited internationally and had a successful career, Edmundo Abel lamented Serra's choice of Roman landscapes, rather than Spanish ones.

Yo, contemplando tantos incomparables paisajes de España – ayer caía sobre los arboles del Retiro una neblina gris con lejanías color de violeta, y entre las rama aun desnudas de las acacias negreaba el fantasma de los pinos, y el suelo se esponjaba y el agua se dormía -, pienso no pocas veces – ayer lo pensaba – que es triste que no pinte Enrique Serra estas hermosuras que están en la tierra donde nació.<sup>169</sup>

Zuloaga's 1917 *Landscape of Pancorbo* (Fig. 2-9) addresses this lack of a “national” landscape by a Spanish artist. This dramatic mountain gorge was an inspiration for Gustave Doré in his illustration of the Divine Comedy and was mentioned by Gautier in his *Voyage en Espagne*.<sup>170</sup>

The sense of drama – never absent in Zuloaga's work – is combined with a celebration of a picturesque, exotic landscape. The composition's low viewpoint places the evidence of human habitation as nothing more than flattened rooftops. The emphasis is on the dramatic, rough terrain and the drama is heightened by the dark, stormy sky.

This is a powerful composition and image that celebrates the Spanish landscape as

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<sup>169</sup> *Alma española*, March, 1904, 2-3. “Contemplating so many incomparable Spanish landscapes – yesterday a grey cloud with streaks of violet fell on the trees of the Retiro, and between the bare branches of the acacias was the black ghost of the pines, the ground glowed and the water was still – I think often – yesterday, I thought – that it's sad that Enrique Serra doesn't paint the beauty that exists in the land where he was born.”

<sup>170</sup> Gautier's reaction to the dramatic landscape echoes the theme of unreality already noted in Baroja's *Camino de Perfección*: “Jamais décorateurs de théâtre n'ont imaginé une toile plus pittoresque et mieux entendue; quand on est accoutumé aux plates perspectives des plaines, les effets surprenants que l'on rencontre a chaque pas dans les montagnes vous semblent impossibles et fabuleux.” *Voyage en Espagne*, 32. “Theatrical set designers couldn't imagine a more picturesque canvas; when one is accustomed to the flat perspectives of lowlands, the surprising effects one encounters at each step in the mountains seems fabulous and impossible.”

picturesque, dramatic and harsh. Zuloaga himself embraced an essentialist version of Spain at odds with those, such as Azorín, who objected to depictions of Spain as barbaric. “...este arte mío en el que hay sangre, voluptuosidad y muerte, las tres características de la España...lo nuestro, que es trágico y cruel...un sello místico que nos redime y nos absuelve. »<sup>171</sup>

### **Zuloaga, Modernist**

Zuloaga’s technique included compressed space, flattening of perspective, divided, visible brushstrokes and heightened or suppressed color. He employed deliberate distortions of perspective and verisimilitude, blending the anti-naturalism of earlier Spanish art with modernist innovations first seen in France. For critic Christian Brinton, it was not Zuloaga’s style alone that made him a modern artist; it was his nationalist persona as well.

Nothing could be more immature than the contention that art should aim to be cosmopolitan in its expression. As a matter of fact there never was a time when indiscriminate internationalism has not produced inferior results, or, conversely, when a wholesome nationalism has failed to give artistic achievement redoubled strength and significance. The most salutary influence in contemporary art is precisely the realization that his innate and fundamental racial endowment is the artist’s richest possession, - that it is, in short, his very reason for being....Europe today offers the invigorating spectacle of an almost complete decentralization in manners esthetic....Menzel ...Bocklin...Ilya Repin...Constantin Meunier...It is such men as these who are the veritable makers of modern art, and it is due to their invincible nationalism as much as to any other factor that their work owes its singular appeal.<sup>172</sup>

In describing Zuloaga, Brinton went on to write:

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<sup>171</sup> *El Adelantado de Segovia*, May 19, 1913. “My art has blood, voluptuousness and death, the three characteristics of Spain...it is ours, tragic and cruel...a mystic hallmark that redeems and absolves us.” This phrasing is undoubtedly a reference to Maurice Barrès travel book *Du sang, de la volupté et de la mort* of 1893 which includes writings on Spain.

<sup>172</sup> Christian Brinton, *Ignacio Zuloaga*, Catalogue of Paintings in the Hispanic Society of America, 1909.

There should be scant difficulty in accounting for the vogue of this art which is at once so individual and so traditional, so personal and yet so deeply anchored in the past. It was an ethnic as well as an esthetic thrill which the young painter gave a public long satiated with studio abstractions and academic conventions. It is to the lasting honor of Ignacio Zuloaga that he has dedicated his gifts to the delineation of episodes and incidents with which he is familiar, not to themes for which he has little sympathy and of which he possesses no first-hand knowledge. That quality which this work above all reflects is an abundant racial flavor. Always regional, always topical...there is no ill-digested cosmopolitanism here; this art not only speaks Spanish, as it were, but has mastered idiom and dialect as well.<sup>173</sup>

Zuloaga's modernist technique was not universally appreciated. "Zuloaga, truly modern, is naturally incomplete. His is a manner, a type of decorative simplification that can enthuse the rabid supporters of ostentatiously incomplete technicality, which is the glory of nearly all contemporary art."<sup>174</sup>

Zuloaga's passionate visual renditions of the vernacular nationalism of the 98ers, his appreciation for the classicism of Denis and Bernard, and his dramatic modern style gave his work a powerful presence in Europe and the Americas. As he matured as an artist he set a course that shifted away from the rich Oriental romanticism of Andalusian imagery to the austere romanticism of Castilian themes. In so doing he aligned himself with the 98ers while continuing to provide a version of Spain well-known to his non-Spanish audience.

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<sup>173</sup> Ibid.

<sup>174</sup> *La Stampa*, October, 1903 as quoted in Lafuente Ferrari, *Ignacio Zuloaga*, 328.



### Chapter Three: Riding the Wave

Chapter three explores the differing receptions afforded Zuloaga's work in the context of political nationalisms in France and in Spain up to the formation of the Spanish Second Republic in 1931. The first two chapters demonstrate that nationalism itself was not incompatible with modernism in the first part of the twentieth century. The growth of fascism, its association with nationalism, and its significance as a *modernist* regenerationist movement are examined in the context of Zuloaga's esthetic practice in the 1910s and 1920s. The discussion oscillates between France and Spain because the reception of Zuloaga's work pivots between differing nationalisms: French nationalist ideology that included a view of Spain as a more primitive, authentic other and Spanish nationalism that grappled with the problem of regeneration. One of the fundamental issues was whether Spain should seek to become more "European" (a position today seen as progressive) or to strengthen its nationhood through reliance on its (mythical) past (today seen as regressive nationalism). Because Zuloaga built his career in France his work reflects multiple identities: in France, he was the expatriate artist from a primitive land, in Spain, the visual interpreter of Castilla as the center of *hispanidad* as well as a panderer who falsely portrayed his country as primitive and barbaric.

Zuloaga's personal links to anti-Republican French writers Maurice Barrès and Georges Sorel, both of whom advocated for a modern art that contained classicism, are indicative of his willingness to participate in the *French* debate as to the nature of true art. Barrès's and Sorel's association with French nationalist and proto-fascist ideology was not anti-modern but rather anti-rationalist and anti-capitalist. In the 1910s and 1920s,

while fascism gradually co-opted nationalism as a foundational ideology, it was still possible, as Zuloaga's career shows, to be a nationalist and a modernist. Zuloaga's collaboration with Spanish nationalist composer Manuel de Falla, discussed in this chapter, is a case study for this stance.

After World War I the pan-European *rappel à l'ordre* tamed the avant-garde. The return to classicism momentarily defused warring modernisms. Annick Lantenois describes this history as “(Une) réaction confortée par un discours qui appelle artistes et intellectuels à renouer avec un art susceptible d’incarner, par l’èloge du classicisme, le « génie » des nations dont l’ordre et la hiérarchie furent bouleversés par la première guerre mondiale.”<sup>175</sup> (“A reaction comforted by a discourse that called upon artists and intellectuals to renew with an art that could, through classicism, incarnate the “genius” of nations for whom order and hierarchy had been overturned by the First World War.”) In the 1920s modern realist art – unlike cubism - could serve a benign function in providing reassuringly familiar imagery with narrative content. For Romy Golan, the *retour à l’homme* movement in the interwar period in France carried no politically charged freight, unlike in Italy and Germany.<sup>176</sup> In Golan’s reading, the revival of realist regionalism and focus on the rural in France was under the cover of pluralism and liberalism. This was in contrast to Italy and Germany, where the “glorification of the national soil and of racial purity became almost immediately integral to totalitarian rhetoric and to the art produced in the service of these regimes...”<sup>177</sup> For Kenneth Silver, however, this return to classicism in France is linked to right wing politics. “[T]he war

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<sup>175</sup> Annick Lantenois, “Analyse Critique d’une Formule “Retour à L’Ordre,” *Revue d’histoire*, 45 (Jan-Mar, 1995) : 40-53.

<sup>176</sup> Romy Golan, *Modernity and Nostalgia: art and politics in France between the Wars* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995).

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*, ix.

gave the conservative forces in France the ammunition they needed to go on the offensive [against cubism].”<sup>178</sup> The linking of right wing politics with the *rappel à l’ordre* as a regressive moment in art is given even greater vehemence by Benjamin Buchloh. “Does the brutal increase of restrictions in socioeconomic and political life unavoidably result in the bleak anonymity and passivity of the compulsively mimetic modes that we witness...in European painting of the mid-1920s and early 1930s?”<sup>179</sup> Post World War II art history, deeply influenced by Alfred Barr’s privileging of cubism and abstraction as progressive both politically and artistically,<sup>180</sup> applies a program that diminishes realism, and during the interwar period, realism’s association with nationalism. Lantenois takes issue with what, for her, are binary oppositions in how the interwar period is interpreted by art historians. Tradition is opposed to modernism; the *rappel à l’ordre* itself to the avant-garde. In this iteration modernism is progressive, tradition reactionary. For Lantenois this description ignores ambiguities and paradoxes in the historical artistic record.

“Si ...Kenneth E. Silver intègre à son analyse le discours critique modéré, il en met néanmoins en cause la spécificité et la complexité en mêlant des citations de ce discours à des citations du discours d’extrême droite. Ainsi, l’ordre dont il est question dans ces travaux apparaît comme une mass monolithique, dénuée d’ambiguïté et de paradoxes. La présence de cet “ordre” s’inscrit dans des limites qui seraient celles d’un bloc où se fondraient les diverses composantes de la droite française, soumise alors à un processus de satanisation d’autant plus efficace que la modernité artistique assimilée à la modernité politique est érigée en contre-exemple positif.”<sup>181</sup>

<sup>178</sup> Kenneth Silver, *Esprit de corps: the art of the Parisian avant-garde and the First World War, 1914-1925* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989) 11.

<sup>179</sup> Benjamin H.D. Buchloh, “Figures of Authority, Ciphers of Regression Notes on the Return of Representation in European Painting,” *October*, 16 (1981), 107.

<sup>180</sup> Susan Noyes Platt, “Modernism, formalism, and politics : the « Cubism and Abstract Art » exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art,” *Art Journal*, 47, (1988), 284-295.

<sup>181</sup> Lantenois, “Analyse Critique,” 43. “If Kenneth E. Silver integrates critical discourse into his analysis, nevertheless he harms the specificity and complexity of his argument by mixing neutral citations with citations by the far right wing. In doing so his argument presents itself as monolithic and lacks ambiguity and paradox within the historical record. The presence of “order” is found within the confines of a block

The possibility of being politically moderate, or apolitical, while making or appreciating humanist centered, representational painting is denied. Lantenois counters this view in describing the feminist journal *La Française*, dedicated to overturning patriarchal laws preventing women from voting or entering professions, such as teaching at the university level. In 1921 *La Française* published a negative review criticizing “l’art des Rouault, Van Dongen et autres fauves qui ne cherchent visiblement qu’à fourvoyer le bourgeois naïf.”<sup>182</sup> (“the art of Rouault, Van Dongen and other fauves who only want to confuse the naïve bourgeois.”) For Zuloaga, who hated cubism and believed in an art founded on tradition, the *rappel à l’ordre* must have seemed like a vindication for his evolving career in France.<sup>183</sup> In the interwar period his growing fame demonstrates the continuing power of realist art. Zuloaga maintained his successful formula as an artist spiritually allied to his Spanish masters, while continuing to express a determinist nationalism ever more relevant both in France and in Spain.

While virulent nationalism became a component in both Hitler’s and Mussolini’s fascist arsenals in the 1930s, as well as in the anti-Republican journal *Action Française*, not until the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in 1936 was the ideology of nationalism irrevocably tied to violent conflict that successfully overthrew a Republican, democratic government. But in 1931, with the formation of the Second Republic in Spain, whose

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where the diverse elements of the French right would meld, subject then to a process of demonization even more effective than that of artistic modernity assimilated into political modernity, which is held up as a positive counter example.”

<sup>182</sup> Lantenois, “Analyse critique,” 46.

<sup>183</sup> Evergreen. “Again yesterday I had 6 or 7 painters (called – fauves – ultramodern) in my studio who were full of self-doubt.” March 28, 1927. “I haven’t forgotten your Picasso but I want to find you something other than a cubist work (I hate them).” July 21, 1927.

agenda was deeply concerned with nationalist regeneration, nationalism had not yet become a tool exclusively of the right.

Art historical scholarship of the past two decades is greatly engaged with the subject of fascism.<sup>184</sup> The fall of the Berlin Wall was the crowning triumph of western democratically based governments and cultures. From the end of World War II to the current post-modern world modernism itself has been linked to the palm of victory. Defeated and discredited ideologies of monarchism, fascism, anarcho-syndicalism and Marxism have fallen into the dustbin of history along with one of their perceived cultural products: realist art. But as Mark Antliff shows, fascism was not necessarily or inherently opposed to modern art or to modernity.<sup>185</sup> Modernist art and architecture were part and parcel of both German and Italian fascist ideologies, because the theme of change and renewal as part of the reaction to bourgeois parliamentary democracies was a foundational belief for fascism. What bound fascist thinkers together was a belief in the necessity for revolutionary changes in government away from bourgeois republicanism towards a utopian new era that was regenerative, mythic, and humanist.

The notion that fascism represented a ‘third way’ with respect to capitalist and communist development was a key feature of the movement’s self-definition. In contrast to the democratic leveling and standardization of life attributed to capitalism and to the collectivism and materialism attributed to bolshevism, fascism claimed to be able to provide all of the advantages of accelerated modernization, without the disadvantage such as the loss of individuality and nationality, or of higher values such as the pursuit of heroism, art, tradition, and spiritual transcendence.<sup>186</sup>

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<sup>184</sup> In addition to Mark Antliff’s *Avant-Garde Fascism the mobilization of myth, art, and culture in France 1909-1939* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007) on which I draw for this chapter, see Emily Braun, “Expressionism as Fascist Aesthetic,” *Journal of Contemporary History* (April 1996): 273-292 and *Fascist visions: art and ideology in France and Italy*, ed. Matthew Affron and Mark Antliff (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997).

<sup>185</sup> Antliff, *Avant-garde fascism*, 17-62.

<sup>186</sup> Jeffrey T. Schnapp, “Fascinating Fascism,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 31 (1996): 240.

Democracy allied with capitalism was a decadent political formation because of its privileging of the individual at the expense of the community. The self interest of the capitalist in a republican state was against the revelation of the classically based community that bound individuals into a spiritual whole. The ideology of nationalism was one tool for building and expressing this community.

Thus fascism should be understood not as a single political ideology but rather as a cultural product that was among an array of anti-Enlightenment theories and movements of the early century. Monarchism and anarchism, both with strong adherence, were equally opposed to democratic forms of government. In this reading fascism is not a deviation or obstruction in the eventual triumph of post-nationalist modernism. Fascism is one program that combated the rationalism of the Enlightenment and the materialism of Marxist doctrine; modernist art was one of its fundamental tools. “Common denominators uniting modernist aesthetics and fascism include concepts of cultural, political, and biological regeneration; the avant-garde techniques such as montage; notions of “secular religion”; primitivism; and anticapitalist theories of space and time.”<sup>187</sup>

The history of fascism in France is highly controversial. Centered on the so-called Sternhell controversy, historians are divided on Sternhell’s basic theme that fascism was born in France.<sup>188</sup> Fascists in France were varied in their political and cultural stances, but

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<sup>187</sup> Antliff, *Avant-Garde Fascism*, 21.

<sup>188</sup> Zeez Sternhell is an influential scholar of fascism who has posited that French fascism derived from the initially revolutionary national socialism of Paul Déroulède, Maurice Barrès and Georges Sorel before 1914. In its later iteration in the alliance of Charles Maurras’s *Action Française* with Sorel’s early revolutionary syndicalism, it gave rise to the concept of integral nationalism as the vehicle for regeneration. Sternhell’s theories of left wing ideology as formative for fascism have been challenged by scholars who see his version as a representation of idealist ideology that cannot account for the history of right wing involvement in the movement before World War I in the form of capitalist and parliamentary supporters. The *Journal of Contemporary History* is a particularly rich source for the history of fascism. See Sternhell,

shared an anti-rationalist, anti-capitalist viewpoint that could derive from the left (anarchism and syndicalism) or from the right (royalism and/or nationalism as a *movement* to preserve the nation from destructive forces) (Gorski's trope).

Antliff relies on Roger Griffin's definition of fascism per se as, in his term, an example of "palingenetic" ultranationalism, which is inherently founded on mythic strategies of regeneration, rebirth, and renewal.<sup>189</sup> For Antliff the mythmaking inherent in fascist ideology was a determining factor in the estheticization of the movement and explains its attraction to artists such as Maurice Denis, Maillol, Vlaminck and Le Corbusier.

The power of myth for nationalist ideology has been discussed by scholars of modernist nationalism such as Gellner, Anderson and Hobsbawm. It is current post-nationalist ideology that links determinist nationalism – widespread throughout Europe in the first decades of the twentieth century - to fascism. As described in my introduction, modernist nationalist theories posit nationalism that is controlled by a democratic state as positive in providing cohesion and identity to a disparate citizenry. It is negative when based on mythic structures of national origin. Clearly the definition of a "myth" depends on who is doing the defining – the image of France as the true heir to the Greco-Roman tradition and the progenitor of ideals of equality and freedom can be deployed as a myth just as potent as that of Spain and the land of the Black Legend. This view dismisses the historical reality of the intense power of mythic ideologies, whether leftist, fascist or

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*Maurice Barrès et le nationalisme français*, (Paris: A. Colin, 1972), Sternhell, "National Socialism and anti-semitism: The case of Maurice Barrès," *Journal of Contemporary History* 8, (1973): 47-66, as well as the entire *Journal of Contemporary History*, 31 (1996) dedicated to the esthetics of fascism. Also see Robert Soucy, *Fascism in France the Case of Maurice Barrès* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972) and Robert O. Paxton, "The five stages of fascism," in *France in the Era of Fascism*, ed. Brian Jenkins (New York: Berghahn Books, 2005): 105-128.

<sup>189</sup> Roger Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991). This theory addresses the significance of the mythic nature of vernacular nationalism.

nationalist. Antliff uses the term “secular religion” to describe the role of the sublime – the profound sense of rebirth and redemption – offered by an ideology that attacks the perceived failures of capitalist democracies: the loss of soul and union with community and a higher spiritual power. Zuloaga was linked by shared sensibility to the nationalist and humanist aspects of proto-fascist ideology in France. He was not a political ideologue, but rather a painter who tried to express, in his art, the redemptive power of mythic nationalism.

### **Zuloaga and Barrès**

Barrès was an enormously influential figure for the anti-Republican movement in France. An ambitious polemicist and activist, he was viewed as an elegant, inspiring thinker and writer by his admirers and given the sobriquet “the prince of youth.” Such was his charisma that even Léon Blum, socialist, Jew, and anti-Dreyfusard wrote of Barrès “Quelle grâce, quelle magnificence! Il se joue et s’éploie au-dessus des sujets avec une fierté, une liberté inimitables....Peut-on plaindre, quand on l’a aimé, de le voir rester malgré lui, ce qu’il y a de plus rare et de plus grand : un poète ?”<sup>190</sup> (What grace, what magnificence ! He plays with subjects with an inimitable grandeur and liberty...can one regret, having loved him, seeing him remain, despite himself, that which is very rare and great: a poet?) Born in Lorraine, he experienced youthful struggles in school, the pain of which remained with him for life and helped to inform his persona as a dreamer-poet, a man of letters, defender of the dis-inherited, sophisticated, ambitious, dandyish and proud. Barrès was elected as Deputy for Nancy in 1889 on a socialist platform that contained the germs of his later views: *la patrie* could only be saved by a nationalist

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<sup>190</sup> Quoted in Henri Mondor, *Maurice Barrès avant Le Quartier Latin* (Paris: Editions Casterman, 1956), 19-20.



mobilization that joined all French citizens into a common sense of Frenchness that glorified France's cultural past, resisted capitalist depredations against the common man, defended the agrarian worker, and protected France's borders against foreigners without, and Jews within. Much like the 98ers in Spain, Barrès, despite his political appointments, was foremost a man of letters without a genuine systematic program of reform who advocated a romantic appeal to inchoate concepts of Frenchness that were deliberately mythical and based on concepts of a common cultural identity. Barrès published *Les Déracinés* in 1897, an extremely influential and popular novel that engaged the burning topic of revanche. His *Scènes et Doctrines du nationalisme* in 1902 established him as the leading voice in a nationalist ideology that was virulently opposed to a Republican form of government.

Barrès travelled extensively in Europe and the Middle East. He visited Spain in 1902 with the express wish, like so many others, to see Toledo and works by the great Spanish master, El Greco. For progressive Spanish artists, such as the Catalan modernistes and Zuloaga, El Greco was both a symbol of Spanish greatness in art and an exemplar of anti-academic naturalism and anti-classicism as discussed in chapter one. For Barrès, El Greco and Toledo carried a different meaning. Spain itself was a more primitive and therefore more authentic country. And in particular, its past association with Arab and Semitic cultures gave Spain a flavor of exoticism and primitivism very different from northern countries and climates such as Germany. In opposition to the evils of capitalism and modernity, Spain had a timeless quality, a rootedness in its past that was missing in modern-day France, so corrupted by the loss of community, God, and King.

In his 1911 book *Greco ou le secret de Tolède* Barrès wrote a lengthy polemic on the mystery of El Greco's genius and the soul of Spain. He re-worked some of the themes already associated with the Cretan artist – that it was his foreignness in Spain that gave him the ability to truly interpret his new homeland. "Devant ce modèle sublime qui l'émeut, devant l'âme castillane, Greco oublie ses habilités; il se fait un œil neuf, une main de petit enfant, une conscience de primitif."<sup>191</sup> (Facing that sublime model that moved him, the Castilian soul, Greco forgets his habits, gains new eyes, the hand of a small child, a primitive consciousness.)

For Barrès Spain's qualities – primitive, exotic, rugged, poor and mired in its past – had a value greater than that of Italian humanism and its emphasis on the individual. He viewed Spain, the Spanish, and Spanish art with a determinist nationalism that matched Zuloaga's. He was opposed to Renaissance humanist ideals, believing that the privileging of the individual was a decadent concept. While he revered Italian Renaissance art with its classicizing style, Italy lacked the primitiveness and the barbarism of Spain. Spain was unique among European countries in being both Catholic and Arab, its culture still rooted in the Middle Ages, less vulgar and less modern than decadent Europe. "Les raisons de Tolède ! c'est un superbe dialogue entre la culture chrétienne et l'arabe, qui s'assailent et puis se confondent."<sup>192</sup> ("Toledo's wisdom! It's a superb dialogue between Christian and Arab cultures, who fight at first and then come together.") It was El Greco's genius to meld his own Oriental origins to the dry, hard, primitivism of Castilla and Toledo.

Il y a vingt ans, tandis que mes camarades s'en allaient chez les Tolstois, les Nietzsche, les Ibsen et les Walt Whitman (sic) et prétendaient recevoir le Nord la lumière, je trouvais mes inspirations à Venise, à Tolède, à Cordoue ; et c'est dans le décor du Montserrat que je comprenais Wagner. Parsifal, qui ne m'avait pas

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<sup>191</sup> Maurice Barrès, *Greco ou le secret de Tolède* (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1931), 121.

<sup>192</sup> Barrès, *Secret de Tolède*, 58.

parlé dans une atmosphère de bière et de charcuterie sur la fameuse colline de Bayreuth, me fut révélé au Montserrat comme un épisode de la grande mission de l'Espagne du Moyen Age, comme un épisode essentiel de la Reconquista. Certes, je dois beaucoup à l'Italie où je me suis promené dès ma vingtième année, mais je dois davantage à l'Espagne....Souvent de Milan à Naples je me suis ennuyé quand je rencontrais l'idéal des humanistes, toute une culture pour laquelle je ne suis pas fait. En Espagne, on garde le contact avec les angoisses et les espérances du Moyen Age, en même temps qu'on s'irrite l'imagination aux promesses voilées de l'Orient.

Parfois je me dis : Est-ce le soir du monde ? Un nuage de vulgarité enveloppe ou moins assiege, assombrit l'Europe ; mais, dans cette Espagne fermée....brille secrètement une flamme spirituelle.<sup>193</sup>

Zuloaga's portrait of Barrès was a testimonial to his friendship with the French writer, and their shared devotion to Spain (Fig. 3.1, 1913). Barrès is posed in profile outside the city of Toledo as an elegant dandy. He stands on the hills above the city with a view of the river Tagus and one of its two spectacular bridges. The painting alludes to El Greco's famous Toledan views (Fig. 3.2) with dramatic clouds at the top of the composition. It is an homage to Barrès, Spain, El Greco and Toledo. For Barrès Zuloaga embodied the concept of *raciné* and therefore authenticity: the Spanish artist was rooted in his country of origin in away that gave his art great spiritual power. This view was echoed by critic Camille Mauclair:

La caractéristique la plus profonde de M. Zuloaga, c'est qu'il est un classique espagnol...mais nous vivons dans une époque de déracinement général, où il devient très extraordinaire qu'un artiste reste de son pays et en continue la

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<sup>193</sup> Maurice Barrès, *Œuvres Complètes*, Vol. VII (Paris : Librairie Plon, 1921-1922-1923/Club d'Honnête Homme, 1967), 412-413. "Twenty years ago, while my friends visited the Tolstoys, the Nietzsches, the Ibsens and the Walt Whitmans, and pretended to receive northern light, I was finding my inspiration in Venice, in Toledo, in Cordoba; the scenery of Montserrat taught me to understand Wagner. Parsifal, who had not spoken to me in an atmosphere of beer and coldcuts on the famous hill at Bayreuth, was revealed to me at Montserrat like an episode of Spain's great mission of the Middle Ages, like an essential episode of the Reconquista. Certainly, I owe a lot to Italy where I have toured since my 20s, but I owe Spain more....Often from Milan to Naples I become annoyed when I encounter humanist ideology, a culture not made for me. In Spain, one keeps contact with the anguishes and hopes of the Middle Ages, while one's imagination becomes irritated by the stolen promises of the Orient. Sometimes I ask myself: is it the nighttime of the world? A cloud of vulgarity surrounds or besieges, darkens Europe; but, in shut-off Spain, a spiritual flame burns secretly."

tradition...M. Zuloaga a tenu à garder la forte simplicité du classicisme national...il est le Goya et le Vélasquez de l'Espagne de son temps...il est sain, logique et fort.<sup>194</sup>

### **Zuloaga and Sorel**

Zuloaga's links to the anti-Republican movement, in France, included an encounter with philosopher and syndicalist Georges Sorel (1847-1922). Sorel's principal contributions to the anti-democratic movement were his calls for revolutionary violence and general strikes on the part of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie in a necessary class warfare that would sweep away Enlightenment rationalism. He allied himself with the royalist *Action Française* and together with monarchist Jean Variot founded the proto-fascist publication *L'Indépendance* in 1911. Like *Action Française*, it advocated a return to classicism and the regeneration of France through a return to Christianity.

*L'Indépendance*'s board members included Barrès, Elemir Bourges and Maurice Denis.

Zuloaga had been introduced to Symbolist writer Bourges by Emile Bernard in 1907. Both Bernard and Zuloaga painted his portrait (Fig. 3.3, 1907). Sorel saw Zuloaga's portrait and asked for an introduction to the Spanish painter. He was interested in reproducing art images in *L'Indépendance*. As recounted by his secretary, Jean Variot, Sorel paid a visit to Zuloaga's studio in 1911. As a deeply religious man, he admired a Calvary painting in the studio.<sup>195</sup> They discussed the true nature of art. As Antliff has shown, Sorel believed in Catholicism as a redemptive force for France and supported

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<sup>194</sup> Camille Mauclair, "Ignacio Zuloaga," *Atlantic Daily News*, March, 1910. "M. Zuloaga's deepest characteristic is his Spanish classicism...we live in an era of rootlessness, where it has become very rare for an artist keeps to his native traditions...M. Zuloaga has managed to keep the strong simplicity of national classicism...he is the Goya and the Velázquez of his time...he is healthy, logical, and strong."

<sup>195</sup> Antliff reports that this painting is lost; however Zuloaga's *Cristo de la Sangre* is analogous to it. (Fig. 2.7) Antliff, *Avant-Garde Fascism*, 87.

artists who allied themselves to traditionalism.<sup>196</sup> For Sorel the anecdotal work of art is decadent; art should be about execution that inspires emotion in the viewer. Religious imagery, by definition, is anti-rational and therefore the ideal subject matter for inspiring a recognition of the sublime. Zuloaga discussed El Greco's *Burial of Count Orgaz* as a painting that combined the anecdotal (the burial scene in the lower register) with pure invention (the heavenly host in the upper register) as an example of the perfect incorporation of the artist's genius of the real and the ideal. Sorel's *Illusions of Progress* dismisses the concept of progress in human affairs whether culturally or politically. As he told Zuloaga,

Rien ne me semble plus cocasse que l'idée du progrès en art, - comme en bien d'autre choses d'ailleurs. Le progrès, j'entends intellectuellement, n'est pas possible. Voyons...la sculpture grecque n'a pas été dépassée...L'Art, le vrai, est un maximum...L'illusion du progrès est à la base de tout désordre de la pensée.<sup>197</sup>

While Zuloaga moved in traditionalist and right wing political circles, before the onset of the Spanish Civil War his form of nationalism was more benign than that of Barrès. His conversation with Sorel makes clear that it was art - the references to Velázquez and El Greco - that concerned him. Zuloaga was rather a standard bearer for a kind of modern art that referenced Spanish art of the past while engaging in modernist practice. He embraced the concept of barbarous Spain so frequently written about by foreigners, leading to great controversy at home.

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<sup>196</sup> Mark Antliff, "Georges Sorel and the Anti-Enlightenment: Art Ideology, Politics," *Nationalism and French Visual Culture, 1870-1914*, ed. June Hargrove and Neil McWilliam (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 311.

<sup>197</sup> Jean Variot, *Propos de Georges Sorel* (Paris: Gallimard, 1935), 230-231. "Nothing strikes me as more absurd than the idea of progress in art....as is the case for a lot of other things too. Progress, as I understand it intellectually, is impossible. Let's see....Greek sculpture has never been surpassed....Art, the true, is a maximum....the illusion of progress is the foundation for all disordered thought."

## Zuloaga and Spain

During the nineteenth century Spain was first an absolute monarchy under Ferdinand VII and subsequently a parliamentary monarchy (except for the short-lived First Republic in 1873-74).<sup>198</sup> Despite the first constitution of 1812, in the wake of the Spanish victory over the French invasion, liberalism was confined in the first decades of the nineteenth century to a tiny minority of elitists, under suspicion from the mass of peasantry, Church and aristocracy as *afrancesados*, or those Spaniards who favored the liberalism of the bywords of the French Revolution: liberty, fraternity, equality.

Traditionalist and monarchical absolutists formed the Carlist party, with the aim of establishing Ferdinand's (who was succeeded by an infant daughter) younger brother Carlos to the throne of Spain. The Carlist Wars lasted, episodically, throughout the nineteenth century. This traditionalist monarchist party, strongly allied with the Catholic Church, whose stronghold was the Basque north, was the logical home for anti-Republican sentiment into the twentieth century. Before the 1923 Primo de Rivera dictatorship, the constitutional monarchy was weak, but maintained power despite condemnation from right, center, and left. The period 1874-1923 is known as the Bourbon Restoration, an era of relative liberalism, under the monarchies of Alfonso XII, Ferdinand VII's grandson, and his successor, Alfonso XIII.

During World War I Spain was neutral and enjoyed economic growth as a supplier of goods and armaments to the warring nations. At the war's end, however, Spain fell back into economic stresses and political unrest. In 1921 Spain was defeated by

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<sup>198</sup> See Leandros Prados de la Escosura, *De imperio a nación: crecimiento y atraso económico en España (1780-1930)* (Madrid: Alianza, 1988), and *España entre dos siglos (1875-1931): continuidad y cambio*, ed. Manuel Muñón de Lara and José Luis García Delgado (Madrid: siglo veintiuno editores, 1991). Raymond Carr's *Spain 1808-1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966) is still an excellent source for Spanish history.

the tribal Rif forces of Spanish Morocco at the battle of Annual, yet another failure of both army and king. This event led directly to a coup d'état in 1923 as General Miguel Primo de Rivera (1870-1930) seized power and established himself as dictator, the first in Spanish history.<sup>199</sup> Primo de Rivera instituted public works projects that provided employment and improved infrastructure, such as railways, dams and road systems. However, his regime stifled Catalan and Basque autonomy and censored the press. Miguel de Unamuno opposed the dictatorship and was exiled. By 1929 opposition to Primo's leadership had spread to the army, as economic conditions worsened not only in Spain but worldwide at the dawn of the Great Depression. Having lost the support of the military, Primo resigned in 1930 and died shortly thereafter. After a year of political tumult, elections were held ushering in Spain's Second Republic.

Zuloaga's career flourished in the 1910s and 1920s. He exhibited internationally and continued to receive many portrait commissions. He exhibited in New York in 1925 to great acclaim, had a major retrospective in Madrid in 1926, which generated the controversy known as *la cuestión Zuloaga*, and collaborated with Manuel de Falla on a musical piece based on Cervantes's *Don Quixote* that same year. His realist style and Spanish artistic personality added up to a successful formula. Not openly political, his artistic choices and personal predilections made him a strong presence in developing issues of national identity both in France and in Spain.

### **La Cuestión Zuloaga**

Zuloaga's work was highly controversial in Spain throughout his lifetime. While he was defended by eminent writers such as Unamuno and Ortega and received favorable

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<sup>199</sup>See Payne, *Fascism in Spain*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1999 and Shlomo Ben-Ami, *Fascism from above: the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera 1923-1930* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983).

reviews, especially from friend and art critic Juan de la Encina,<sup>200</sup> he was also the subject of great hostility. The fundamental charge laid against him was that his paintings were false images of a tourist Spain that had been invented by (mainly) French nineteenth century writers, of whom Gautier was frequently cited.

To discuss the subjects that inspire a painter is artistically an impertinence, but practically a duty. In the case of Zuloaga's painting it is inevitable. Ignacio Zuloaga is the painter of picturesque Spain: bullfighters, gypsy women, hunchbacks, tramps etc, the Spain on which many Spaniards have declared war to the death. Among these Spaniards, the majority do not forgive the Basque painter for having put his palette at the disposal of our social blemishes. Why does he not choose other subjects whose glorification on canvas redounds to national prestige? The objections to Zuloaga come down to that particular question.<sup>201</sup>

At the 1908 Paris exhibition at the Société Nationale Zuloaga exhibited three works that contributed to this controversy. One was *Las Brujas de San Millán* (Fig. 2.4), the other his most notorious painting, *Gregorio el Botero* (Fig 2.3). Zuloaga's admirer, critic Luis Bonafoux, wrote of the response by Paris audiences. Bonafoux quoted a French writer called Sparklet.

La maravillosa incognita que nos acecha se manifiesta, esta vez, con el Enano y las Brujas, de Zuloaga. Los admiradores de Dagnau, Bouveret...etc., prorrumpirán en aullidos ante esos monstruos tan espléndidamente pintados...Esas viejas apergaminadas, que tienen perfil de urraca, destacándose en el fondo de un cielo sucio y lívido, os persiguen por doquiera, constituyendo una obsesión del espíritu.<sup>202</sup>

Emile Bernard described the works as classic.

Les trois tableaux (Mlle Lucienne Breval dans le second acte de Carmen, Le Nain Gregorio el Botero et Las Brujas de San Millán) qu'expose Zuloaga sont établis

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<sup>200</sup> De la Encina was the pen name of Ricardo Gutiérrez Abascal (1888-1963). He wrote extensively on art, both books and reviews. De la Encina went into exile in 1939 to Mexico where he spent the remainder of his life.

<sup>201</sup> Ramiro de Maeztu in a 1910 article, quoted in Lafuente Ferrari, *Ignacio Zuloaga*, 313.

<sup>202</sup> Luis Bonafoux, *Los Españoles en París* (Paris : Sociedad de Ediciones Louis-Michaud, 1913), 128. "Unknown marvels that lay in wait for us are seen, this time, with the Dwarf and the Witches of Zuloaga. Those who admire Dagnau, Bouveret...etc., cry out in front of those monsters so wonderfully painted. He obsessively pursued those old women, with their magpie profiles, who show themselves at the base of a livid, dirty sky."



d'après les lois les plus strictes de ce qu'un jargon actuel nomme l'art ancien et qui est l'Art tout simplement...Ignacio Zuloaga n'a point jugé nécessaire de s'affirmer en niant ; mais au contraire a puisé une force inconnue de nos jours dans les *conventions* que veut détruire aujourd'hui une imbécile confusion de la nature avec l'art.....Ignacio Zuloaga porte naturellement les dons des peuples latins ; Espagnol, il est doué pour voir la réalité à travers une imagination significative ; catholique, il est armé de l'unité qui permet seule la grandeur de la vision, la noblesse de l'allure et la connaissance des lois de l'ordre. »<sup>203</sup>

The art critic for *Le Journal* wrote

Zuloaga progresa siempre. Los cuadros que expone en este salón tienen un vigor y una asperez incomparables, un color personal, suyo, una forma violenta y estudiada que puede parecer revolucionario, aunque pertenece á la más fuerte y sólida tradición...Son la fealdad, el crimen, la decrepitud. Su aliento exhala la muerte y el veneno. No pertenecen á un país, sino á todos los países. Se las ha visto en Shakespeare, danzando alrededor de la marmita, y en los cuentos de Perrault, hilando....Los pintores enamorados de modernismo que quieran renovar la factura del Arte...deben contemplar detenidamente los lienzos de Zuloaga, en los que hallarán provechosos aleccionamientos de tradición é independencia.<sup>204</sup>

Gautier himself, writing in 1843 described Castilla in a similar way.

La Castille vieille est, sans doute, ainsi nommée à cause du grand nombre de vieilles qu'on y rencontre: et quelles vieilles! Les sorcières de Macbeth traversant la bruyère de Dunsinane pour aller préparer leur infernale cuisine, sont de charmantes jeunes filles en comparaison ; les abominables mégères des caprices de Goya, que j'avais pris jusqu'à présent pour des cauchemars et des chimères monstrueuses, ne sont que des portraits j'une exactitude effrayante...<sup>205</sup>

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<sup>203</sup> Emile Bernard, *Propos sur l'art* (Paris : Séguier, 1994), 184-185. "The three paintings (Mlle. Lucienne Breal in the second act of *Carmen*, the dwarf Gregorio the wineskinmaker and the Witches of San Millán) that Zuloaga is exhibiting adhere to the strictest laws of what is called ancient art but which is simply Art...Ignacio Zuloaga has not thought it necessary to affirm himself by negating; on the contrary has pushed a force unknown in our day to the conventions that wish to destroy an imbecile confusion of nature with art...Ignacio Zuloaga carries naturally the gifts of the Latin people; Spanish, he is gifted with the ability to see reality through an alive imagination; Catholic, he is armed with a unity that alone permits grandeur of vision, the nobility of the allure and the knowledge of the laws of order."

<sup>204</sup> "Zuloaga continues to make progress. The works he shows in this year's Salon have incomparable bitter vigor, done with his own use of color, a violent and intentional quality that can seem revolutionary, although it belongs to the strongest and most solid tradition. Loyalty, crime, decrepitude. He exhales death and poison. These works belong not to one country, but to all countries. We have seen them in Shakespeare, dancing around the cauldron, and spinning in Perrault's tales...Painters who claim modernism can reclaim Art...should carefully study Zuloaga's canvases, in which can be found useful examples of tradition and independence."

<sup>205</sup> Gautier, *Voyage en Espagne*, 33. "Old Castile is, without a doubt, called that because of the large number of old women whom one sees there: and what old women! The witches of Macbeth crossing the fog of Dunsinane to prepare their infernal food are charming young ladies in comparison; the abominable hags of Goya's *Caprichos*, which I had taken until now as nightmares and monstrous chimeras, are frightening exact portraits."

Bonafoux positioned Zuloaga as a great and virile painter, opposed to the prettiness and superficiality of gypsy Spain. In line with the 98ers, true Spain is found in Castilla, and Zuloaga the preeminent artist of true Spain.

Esa España áspera, árida, de llanuras spantosas, de fisonomías secas y amarillentas; esa España viril, que parece amasada con arcilla de El Escorial, necesitaba un pintor macho, un Zuloaga, cuya complexion artistica es tan recia como su complexion física de férreo vasco en ambiente degenerados.<sup>206</sup>

The equation of Castilla with masculinity versus the trivial and playful gypsy world of Andalucía can be compared with the *rappel à l'ordre*'s turn against the hedonism of the south in France.<sup>207</sup> Wounded nations, as was France after World War I, and Spain after the Disaster, must look to their roots in order not only to rebuild but to reinvent themselves. The place to do so is in the soil, the deep heart of the nation. To herald a devastated landscape inhabited by a peasant was a redemptive act of patriotism. Yet Zuloaga never abandoned his gypsy imagery and indeed the gypsy was a symbol of Spain's link to its medieval past. What redeemed him for his Spanish apologists was his style: forceful and personal. For his supporters his Andalusian imagery could never sink to the level of a bullfight poster. But for the Catalan and Basque nationalist movements, the identification of Castilla with Spain was a moribund concept. Castilla as true Spain was linked to the Renaissance triumphs of the Reconquista and the imperial successes in South America.

The Castilian spirit has concluded its mission in Spain...it directed and personified the Renaissance...[then] came the nineteenth century which enhanced

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<sup>206</sup> Bonafoux, *Españoles en Paris*, 131. "That acrid, arid Spain, with astounding plains, dry and yellow, that virile Spain, seemingly mortared with clay from the Escorial, requires a manly painter, a Zuloaga, whose style is as robust as is his body made of Basque iron, in these degenerate times."

<sup>207</sup> Romy Golan explores hedonism as a function of southernness in *Modernity and Nostalgia: art and politics in France between the Wars*.

the reputation of parliamentarism. Its men prolonged the mission of shining, sonorous Castile in Spain. But all this is dying and Castile's mission is over. The new civilization is industrial and Castile is not industrial; the modern spirit is analytical and Castile is not analytical; material progress encourages cosmopolitanism and Castile, situated in the center of the African plain, with no view of the sea, is resistant to European cosmopolitanism... Castile has concluded its mission and must pass the scepter on to other hands.<sup>208</sup>

Spanish writer Ramón Pérez de Ayala (1880-1962) addressed the main complaint against Zuloaga: that he was a panderer, portraying Spain at its barbarous worst for foreign audiences who knew nothing of the country and were content with the Gautier/Merimée Black Spain cliché. Reviewing a novel titled *Los Leales* by Alvarez Quintero, Pérez de Ayala takes issue with the novel's hero, a young Spanish artist named Gustavo making his way in Paris. Gustavo has sold at the Salon a portrait of a Spanish Andalusian girl. He credits his success: "Creo que más que a su mérito propio se debe al contraste que ofrecía con las negras caricaturas que a título de cosas españolas se exhiben por esos mundos de Dios. Pintura que yo llamo de pandereta para entierros."<sup>209</sup> This is an obvious reference to Zuloaga. Gustavo goes on to say "Tampoco me quiero ir, como hacen tantos que se dicen artistas y se creen exquisitos, al pueblo más pobre y oscuro, a buscar en la casa más mísera la mujer más repugnante y más fea para ofrecerla como prototipo de las de mi raza."<sup>210</sup> For Pérez de Ayala, in ugliness Zuloaga has found truth and a higher and broader esthetic stance. To object to this is to trivialize art. "Les parece

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<sup>208</sup> Quoted in Eduardo Manzano Moreno and Juan Sisinio Pérez Garzón, "A Difficult Nation? History and nationalism in contemporary Spain," *History and Memory* 14 (2002): 259-284.

<sup>209</sup> Ramón Pérez de Ayala, "Zuloaga y el concepto de lo feo," *Hispania* 1-VI (1914) : 217-218. "I believe that beyond its own merit, it is important in offering a contrast with the black caricatures that claim to be 'Spanish' exhibited in this, God's world. I would call such painting [corny and insincere]."

<sup>210</sup> "Unlike those who call themselves artists and believe themselves to be exquisite, I don't want to go to the darkest, poorest village to search for the most miserable house with the most repellent and ugly woman in order to show such a thing as prototypical of my race/stock."

major exporter los cromos de cartels de corridas.”<sup>211</sup> European audiences found the portrayal of human deformation and ugliness in art to be typically Spanish. And the bullfight is no better symbol of Spanish barbarism. Yet Spanish audiences had no opportunity to see these – or any other – works because apart from his participation in a group exhibition in Barcelona in 1907 Zuloaga would not have a major exhibition in Spain until 1926.

Zuloaga described his first meeting with his model.

Oh!, Gregorio, el enano alucinante y horrible, cons sus piernas torcidas, sus manos enormes, su ojo muerto, tan lívido y siniestro como el cielo de agonía que posa sobre las torres de Avila!...Durante cinco semanas de atroz pesadilla estuve solo cara a cara con este monstruo, que nunca quiso...mirar su imagen...Era un filósofo que aceptaba su destino....<sup>212</sup>

Unamuno added to the Gregorio controversy. Describing Zuloaga’s predilection for painting “monsters,” he wrote

Y sin embargo en ese poder de descubrir el alma de los monstruos, de los puros hijos de la tierra, de los gnomos, de los que nacen y viven fuera de historia hay una gran lección. Hablándole del Botero, de aquel monstruo enano de Segovia que con tanto amor, con tanta caridad, con tan honda humanidad ha eternizado Zuloaga, le dijo éste a un amigo : « Si vieras qué filósofo ! no dice nada !<sup>213</sup>

Both Unamuno and Zuloaga had great prestige with Ortega’s magazine *España Semanario de la Vida Nacional* which began publication in 1915. Following Ortega’s own predilections, *España* advocated an openness to europeanization for Spain. In an

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<sup>211</sup> “They think it better to export bullfight posters.”

<sup>212</sup> *Hermes Revista del País Vasco*, (Bilbao 1917): 546 “Oh! Gregorio, the horrible, dream-like dwarf, with his twisted legs, his enormous hands, his dead eye, as livid and sinister as the agonized sky that weighs upon the towers of Avila! For five weeks of terrible labor I was alone, face to face with that monster, who never wanted to see his image....he was a philosopher who accepted his destiny....”

<sup>213</sup> *Ibid.*, 507. “Nevertheless there is an important lesson in his power to uncover the souls of monsters, of pure sons of the earth, of dwarves, of those who are born and who live outside of history. Speaking of the wineskin maker, that monstrous Segovian dwarf who was made eternal by Zuloaga with so much love, affection and deep humanity, I said to a friend “You will see what a philosopher he is! He says nothing!”

editorial titled “Unamuno Y Zuloaga en Madrid” the anonymous author wrote

“¡Unamuno y Zuloaga! Estos dos hombres son acaso entre todos los artistas y escritores de la España actual los que mejor representan ese algo que es imposible definir con líneas bien determinadas y que llamamos espíritu español.”<sup>214</sup>

Of his own work Zuloaga said

He sido frecuentemente atacado por mis compatriotas. A mayor parte de las veces, porque pretenden que con mis cuadros ridiculizo a España ; otras, porque no copio la naturaleza fielmente, es decir, tal como es ; otras, porque no han visto ni verán nunca a España y pretenden que yo no a vea tampoco ; y otras, porque aseguran que la veo con ojos de extranjero !<sup>215</sup>

His choice of subjects was controversial for those who wanted Spain to move closer to Europe; to modernize, industrialize and lose Spain’s reputation for backwardness. Yet the study of Spain’s history, culture and quotidian life was a key element in the educational reforms propounded by the europeanizing ILE, as discussed in Chapter Two. Zuloaga recuperated El Greco and reminded the world of the greatness of Goya and Velázquez.

His sin, for some Spanish audiences, was to select subject matter that trivialized and sensationalized genuine national deficiencies. In 1910 Critic José Maria Salaverría wrote

We are adulating the sores of Spain, proclaiming at all hours that those sores have great character, immense strength. We are deceiving this country by considering worthy of praise something that is really reprehensible; it is as though we revel in these sores. We have lauded ruin and common dirt, and in books and on canvas we sign the praises of broken men, of tramps, of nuns, of desolate fields, of dead villages, of petrified people.<sup>216</sup>

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<sup>214</sup>*España* 44-5 (1915). “Unamuno and Zuloaga! Those two men are, amongst all the artists and writers of Spain today, perhaps those who demonstrate best that which is impossible to define with clarity and which we call the Spanish spirit.”

<sup>215</sup>*Hermes*, 529. “I have often been attacked by my countrymen. Usually, because they claim that my paintings make Spain look ridiculous, other times because I don’t slavishly copy nature, that is to say, exactly as she is; other times because they have not seen, and never will see Spain and they claim that I haven’t either, other times because they swear that I see Spain with foreign eyes!”

<sup>216</sup>Lafuente Ferrari, *Ignacio Zuloaga*, 316.

Ortega's 1911 article "La estética del enano Gregorio el Botero" (The esthetics of Gregorio the wineskin maker) takes the unusual subject as a symbol of Spain itself.

Zuloaga's greatness lies in the power of his line, his draftmanship, and in his ability to imbue the ordinary with a spiritual quality that rises above the material.

El dibujo de Zuloaga es pura fuerza viva: un caballero de quijotesca sensibilidad que acude allí donde las cosas padecen mayor violencia de los poderes inertes, defacedor de los entuertos que la materia origina, y sobre todo del más grave: la trivialidad, la inexpresión. Este lírico esfuerzo del dibujo consiste en desarticular las formas triviales, las formas materializadas y con un leve toque articularlas según el Espíritu.<sup>217</sup>

He agreed with Sorel that the anecdotal in art is inevitably trivial. True art must reach a higher, more spiritual reality. For Ortega, Gregorio was a symbol of Spain itself. He wrote « Gregorio el Botero es un símbolo ; si se quiere, un mito español. Y en esto consiste la fuerza de Zuloaga : en ser un creador de mitos. »<sup>218</sup>

For Ortega, a fundamental aspect of mythical Spain was a sense of tragedy. To paraphrase him, other modern European nations have advanced, have imposed new conditions of existence, demanded new virtues, and renounced customs of the past as vile and miserable. In so doing modern peoples have renounced their own selfhood, have accepted fundamental changes in character and have bought well being, power, morality and knowledge in exchange for this renunciation. Like Faust, they have sold their souls to improve their fortunes. But Spain is not a modern nation. "...la historia moderna de

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<sup>217</sup> José Ortega y Gasset, *Mocedades*, (Madrid: Espasa-calpe, 1964) 114. "Zuloaga's drawings are pure live force, [he is] a gentleman of quixotic sensibility who is present where life suffers great violence caused by torpid powers: the banality, the lack of expression. This lyricism of his drawings dismantles trivial forms and shapes with a light touch arising from the spiritual."

<sup>218</sup> *Ibid.*, 117. "Gregory the wineskin maker is a symbol, if you wish, a Spanish myth. And in that lies Zuloaga's strength: he is a creator of myths."

España se reduce, probablemente, a la historia de su resistencia a la cultura moderna.”<sup>219</sup>

And such a resistance is necessarily tragic ; “ ...esa lucha de una raza contra el Destino tiene grandeza y crueldad tales, que constituye un tema trágico, un tema eterno y necesario....Zuloaga es tan grande artista porque ha tenido el arte de sensibilizar el trágico tema español.”<sup>220</sup> Addressing Gregorio directly, Ortega intones “Tú representas la pervivencia de un pueblo más allá de la cultura; tú representas la voluntad de incultura.”<sup>221</sup>

In 1917 the Basque publication *Hermes* devoted an entire issue defending Zuloaga and his art. Unamuno’s essay “La Labor Patriótica de Zuloaga” finds Zuloaga’s imagery profoundly patriotic because it reveals Spain to itself, in contrast to nineteenth-century history painting lauding Spanish military victories and conquests.

De mí sé decir que la vision de los lienzos de Zuloaga me ha servido para fermentar las visions que de mi España he cobrado en mis muchas correrías por ella, y que contemplando esos lienzos he ahondado en mi sentimiento y mi concepto de la noble tragedia de nuestro pueblo, de su austere y fundamental gravedad, del poso intrahistórico de su alma. Contemplando esos cuadros he sentido lo mucho que tenemos de lo que queda y de lo que pasa.<sup>222</sup>

The sense of national decadence, in Spain, was linked with pessimism as to the character of the Spanish people and of Spain itself. If the French “soul” was agrarian, classical, and ordered, in Spain history’s burden was one of lost opportunities derived from the

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<sup>219</sup>Ibid., 118. “The history of modern Spain is reduced, in all likelihood, to the history of her resistance to modern culture.”

<sup>220</sup>Ibid., 118-119 “This fight, by our race/stock, against destiny, is both great and cruel, and is a tragic theme, necessary and eternal. Zuloaga is so great an artist because he has the ability to make us feel the tragedy of Spain.”

<sup>221</sup> Ibid., 119. “You represent the survival of a people outside of culture; you represent the will to barbarism.”

<sup>222</sup>*Hermes*, 504. “For myself I can say that looking at Zuloaga’s canvases has helped me to develop my vision of Spain in my many travels, and looking at those canvases has deepened my feelings and my ideas about the noble tragedy of our land, her austere and fundamental graveness, the intrahistoric freight of her soul. Looking at those paintings, I have felt how much we have of that which remains and that which is gone.”

deficiencies of the Spanish character: proud, indolent, incurious. This essentialist version of Spain echoes Barrès's writings about Toledo, a city whose ancient history, poverty, and absence of modernity afforded it an authenticity absent in modern European cities. The belief that the "soul" of a people or of a nation could be defined is part of the discursive nationalism of pre-WWI Spain. Zuloaga, in describing his own efforts, said

No busco atmósfera, distancias, ni busco sol, ni luna. Busco carácter, penetración psicológica de una raza, emoción, demostración de una visión algo romántica. Busco el alma, a través de un realista soñador. Busco la línea, el arabesco, la armonía, la visión personal y la simplificación. Busco la fuerza del atrevimiento, la franqueza de las ideas, el gritar fuerte y profundo, el sintetizar el alma castellana, el sacrificar muchas cosas para hacer valer una esencial.<sup>223</sup>

De la Encina, in *Hermes*, wrote

Pero se nos antoja que Zuloaga va más hondo en su nacionalismo artístico de lo que precisamente se imaginan esos críticos. Porque no se ha conformado en modo alguno con esa especie de sapientísima tutela, - que en tal caso no hubiera pasado de ser un epígono, -sino que desde el primer momento supo colocarse, - por don inefable de gracia estética-, en el misterioso y recóndito lugar por donde corren las aguas profundas del sentimiento estético nacional.<sup>224</sup>

Ortega's *Dehumanization of Art* (1925) is a lengthy polemic on modernism in which he calls for a recognition that elitism must be the foundation of a strong social and political program, a stance similar to that of Maurras, although Ortega was no monarchist.

A time must come in which society, from politics to art, reorganizes itself into two orders or ranks: the illustrious and the vulgar. That chaotic, shapeless, and undifferentiated state without discipline and social structure in which Europe has lived these hundred and fifty years cannot go on. Behind all contemporary life

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<sup>223</sup>Lafuente Ferrari, *Ignacio Zuloaga*, 530. "I don't search for atmosphere or depth of field, nor do I search for the sun or the moon. I search for character, the psychological penetration of a race/stock, emotion, the demonstration of a somewhat romantic vision. I search for soul by way of a call for realism. I search for line, the arabesque, harmony, a personal vision and simplicity. I search for strength and daring, honest ideas, the strong and deep cry, in order to synthesize the Castilian soul, the sacrifice of many things in order to value the essential."

<sup>224</sup>*Hermes*, 536. "But we note that Zuloaga goes deeper in his artistic nationalism than what those critics imagine. Because he has not conformed to any style advocated by that type of critical wisdom – and had he done so he would have been no more than an epigone – but rather from the beginning knew how to attach himself, through the ineffable gift of esthetic grace – in the mysterious and recondite place where the deep waters of national esthetic feelings run."



lurks the provoking and profound injustice of the assumption that men are actually equal. Each move among men so obviously reveals the opposite that each move results in a painful clash.<sup>225</sup>

Ortega believes that the loss of narrative in modern art (without defining “modern” but apparently he refers to cubism, surrealism and dada) makes it inherently “inhuman” and therefore only available to the same elite that must exist in every strong society. He sets up a binary opposition for modern artists.

Either the artist is in conformity with the past and regards it as his heritage which he feels called upon to perfect; or he discovers that he has a spontaneous indefinable aversion against established and generally acclaimed art. And as in the first case he will be pleased to settled down in the customary forms and repeat some of their sacred patterns, thus he will, in the second, not only deviate from established tradition but be equally pleased to give to his work an explicit note of protest against the time-honored norms.<sup>226</sup>

Zuloaga bridged this (arbitrary) divide to great effect. He honored his heritage as a Spanish artist, yet had no interest in the established academic styles of either France or Spain. In Ortega’s view, Zuloaga bypassed the divide between traditional and modern through his ability to render a spiritual truth about an entire nation through the redemptive binding of mythic nationalism.

### **Zuloaga, Picasso and Manuel de Falla**

The career of Spanish composer Manuel de Falla (1876-1946), a life long friend of Zuloaga, provides further context for the issue of Spanish nationalism both in France and in Spain.<sup>227</sup> In describing his collaborations both with Zuloaga and with Picasso, I

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<sup>225</sup> José Ortega y Gasset, *The Dehumanization of Art and other writings on art and culture* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1956), 7.

<sup>226</sup> *Ibid.*, 40.

<sup>227</sup> This dissertation makes no claim to expertise in musicology. The section on Falla is intended to demonstrate Zuloaga’s ongoing connection to modernism and Spanish nationalism in art. I rely on Carol Hess’s cogent *Manuel de Falla and Modernism in Spain* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), for basic information on Falla and nationalism in music while tracing Zuloaga’s (and Picasso’s) connections with the composer.

show that both artists contributed Spanish determinist, but modern, set designs for a composer whose musicology was preoccupied with issues of Spanish national identity.

Born in Cádiz, six years younger than Zuloaga, Falla is known as a significant contributor to twentieth century music and is celebrated for his best known works, all of which are musically and thematically tied to issues of Spanish character: *El Amor Brujo* of 1915 (*Spellbound Love*, usually translated as *Love, the Sorcerer*), *El Sombrero de Tres Picos*, of 1919 (*The Three Cornered Hat*, later called *Le Tricorne*) and *El Retablo del Maese Pedro* of 1923 (*Master Peter's Puppet Theater*). Falla invited Zuloaga to design the sets and costumes for *El Amor Brujo*, an offer Zuloaga declined because of other obligations. *Le Tricorne* had sets and costumes designed by Picasso, and an anniversary performance of *El Retablo del Maese Pedro*, in 1926, included costumes and set design by Zuloaga. In examining the history of these theatrical pieces, along with the Picasso sets and costumes for Erik Satie's *Parade* of 1917, it is clear that both Zuloaga and Picasso continued to be linked to modernist practice while expressing a (modern) essentialist version of Spain.

In Falla's early career in Madrid he composed musical pieces called *zarzuelas*. These are often one-act plays incorporating orchestral music, sung music, dance, and spoken words. According to Hess, *zarzuela* is the musical manifestation of *costumbrismo*, a mostly literary movement of the mid-nineteenth century that sought to counteract the influence of France, after the Napoleonic invasion, by celebrating native Spanish customs and quotidian life.<sup>228</sup> Thus *zarzuela* is a musical form of vernacular nationalism and was embraced by Madrid audiences eager to find value in the culture of *hispanidad*. Zarzuela is often composed in *andalucista* style, incorporating *cante jondo* and flamenco dance,

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<sup>228</sup>Hess, *Manuel de Falla*, 22.

associated with gypsy musical culture. In 1905 Falla won a contest sponsored by the Academia de Bellas Artes for *La Vida Breve*. This is an *andalucista* piece telling the story of a gypsy girl and her star-crossed love affair. The portrayal of gypsies in this musical piece offers parallels to Zuloaga's Andalusian works, such as *Baile Gitana* (Fig. 1.3), that depict a pre-modern, Orientalist, exotic version of Spain. Despite having won the contest, Falla continued to have difficulty in getting his works performed in Madrid, supporting himself and his family by giving private lessons and the occasional performance. He went to Paris in 1907 for a series of chamber music engagements and remained in the French capital for seven years. Zuloaga's friend, composer Isaac Albéniz, befriended Falla upon his arrival, and introduced the artist to the composer.<sup>229</sup>

Falla returned to Madrid at the outbreak of World War I. In 1915 he composed the music for the ballet *El Amor Brujo*. He invited Zuloaga to collaborate on the project by designing the sets and costumes. In a letter he asked his friend to

dirijir todo lo concerniente á decorados, trajes, escena, etc. en dos cuadros líricos que, para ser estrenados por Pastora Imperio, estoy hacienda con Gregorio Martínez Sierra. Se titularán El Amor Brujo y se trata de una cosa absolutamente gitana – *gitana verdad* – con hechizos, magia, danzas, canciones, etc.etc.<sup>230</sup>

Falla's emphasis – that the work would be genuinely gypsy – danced by legendary gypsy performer Pastora Imperio, was intended to reassure (and excite) Zuloaga that Falla was offering not a postcard version of gypsy Spain but rather an

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<sup>229</sup> European infatuation with *las cosas de España* was evident in musical compositions from Bizet's foundational *Carmen* to Liszt's *Spanish Rhapsody* to Rimsky Korsakoff's *Capriccio Espagnol* to Debussy's *Iberia* to Ravel's *Rhapsodie Espagnole*.

<sup>230</sup> *Correspondencia entre Falla y Zuloaga, 1915-1942* (Granada: EXCmo. Ayuntamiento de Granada, 1982.) letter dated January, 1915. "Take charge all the decorations, costumes, sets, etc. in two lyrical pieces, staged by Pastora Imperio, a piece I am doing with Gregorio Martínez Sierra. It will be called Love, the Sorcerer and is a completely gypsy thing – truly gypsy – with hechizos, magic, dances, songs, etc etc."

authentic and important part of Spanish national culture. The advertising poster, with its sharp black and white graphics and angularity, is far from the bullfight postcard imagery so disdained by those who resented European versions of Spain as a barbarous nation.

(Fig. 3.4)

The issue of nationalism was as relevant for music as for the visual arts. While Madrid audiences enjoyed the *hispanidad* of zarzuela, in Catalonia audiences tended to be dismissive of the form, as part of Catalonian nationalist aspirations opposed to Madrid and the concept of Castilla as “true Spain.” In Catalonia operas by Wagner were deeply popular, a symbol of a more universalizing art and one connected to the world outside of Spain. After World War I, in France, profound anti-German sentiment led to a reassessment of the definition of French music in opposition to nineteenth-century German romanticism. “In spurning romanticism and advocating aesthetic values widely perceived as French – clarity, logic, naturalness, wit, concision, transparency, simplicity, purity – these composers found they could be modernists and defenders of French tradition at the same time.”<sup>231</sup> For Falla, the challenge was to be modern without being too deeply influenced by French musical idioms and to offer new music true to his *raza* or Spanish essence.

*Le Tricorne* (1919) was staged and danced by Sergei Diaghilev’s (1872-1929) legendary Ballets Russes. Picasso, who designed the sets and costumes for *Le Tricorne*, had worked with Diaghilev two years earlier on Erik Satie’s *Parade*.

In 1916 Falla and Diaghilev traveled together to Sevilla, and in 1917 in Castilla, Andalucía and Aragon searching for “authentic” Spanish folk music and for local flamenco dancers. Diaghilev and other Russian members of his circle found Spain an

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<sup>231</sup> Hess, *Manuel de Falla*, 41. She cites Debussy and Saint-Saens.

entrancing land, inherently non-European, with a large peasant population, strong regional folkloric traditions, and a heightened emotionalism evident in customs such as the bullfight and flamenco music and dance.<sup>232</sup> *Le Tricorne* was adapted by Spanish librettist Gregorio Martínez Sierra from a nineteenth-century novel called *El Sombrero de Tres Picos* (The three-cornered hat) which in turn had been based on a folktale entitled *El Corregidor y la molinera* (The magistrate and the miller's wife). *Le Tricorne* was first performed in London in 1919. The Ballet Russes's lead dancer, Leonide Massine had the role of the miller. He studied gypsy flamenco dancing during his time in Spain, to him an entirely new dance form. *Le Tricorne* tells the simple story of a lecherous magistrate who plots to seduce the miller's wife, includes humorous mistaken identities, and the eventual triumph of the miller and his wife who, at the end of the ballet, toss the magistrate up and down in a blanket, an obvious reference to Goya's *El Pelele* (1791, Fig. 3.5). Picasso's sets and costumes, in strong contrast to his work on *Parade* of 1917, evoke a timeless Castilian village with costumes loosely based on eighteenth century garments (Figs. 3.6, 3.7, 3.8).

*Parade*, inspired by a command from Diaghilev to Jean Cocteau: "astonish me!" was the first avant garde ballet, a total break with the lyrical folklorism of earlier productions of the Ballets Russes.<sup>233</sup> With music by Erik Satie, ballet by Jean Cocteau, choreography by Massine and set and costume designs by Picasso, it could claim to be musically French while at the same time an international avant-garde challenge to traditional ballet. The plot is set in a contemporary Paris street. Vaudeville characters emerge including a Chinese magician, a little American girl, and two acrobats (Figs. 3.9,

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<sup>232</sup> Lynn Garafola, "The Making of Ballet Modernism", *Dance Research Journal* 20/2 (1988): 23-32.

<sup>233</sup> Deborah Rothschild *Picasso's Parade from Street to Stage*, published in association with the Drawing Center, New York, museum for the study and exhibition of drawings, Sotheby's Publications, 1991.

3.10, 3.11). Two managers exhort passersby to enter the theater, in vain. The lack of traditional narrative, and cubist sets and costumes all proclaimed *Parade* to be a challenge to traditional ballets and the performance was met with hostility; the production was not a popular success. Guillaume Apollinaire's program notes for *Parade* contains the first use of the word "surrealism."

Cubist painter Picasso and the most daring of today's choreographers, Leonide Massine, have here consummately achieved, for the first time, that alliance between painting and the dance, between the plastic and mimetic arts, that is the herald of a more comprehensive art to come. This new alliance has given rise...to a kind of surrealism, which I consider to be the point of departure for a whole series of manifestations of the New Spirit that is making itself felt today and that will certainly appeal to our best minds...

If *Parade*, written and performed during World War I, was aggressively avant-garde, *Le Tricorne* of 1919 retained a plot line; eschewed modernist musical sounds not associated with traditional instrumentation, and relied on traditional Spanish dance and music associated with Spanish folklore. In this collaboration between the Ballet Russes, Falla, and Picasso, the artist's designs reflect both a return to a more classical artistic idiom, as well as simple evocations of *hispanidad* in, for example, the bullfight arena scene for the opening curtain and the dry Castilian landscape. (Figs. 3.12, 3.13) In arena drawing, Picasso's casual perspectival anomalies are evident in the size and placement of the horse that is dragging away a vanquished bull. The female figures are dressed in mantillas and one figure holds a fan. They are timeless villagers whose depiction evokes *hispanidad*. *Le Tricorne* combined a modernist esthetic with a nostalgic version of Spain, relying on nineteenth-century folklore and Spanish musical traditions, while employing the most artistically daring and innovative dance company in Europe: the Ballets Russes.

Well-received in France, it was controversial among Spanish critics, many of whom found it to be an insulting depiction of stereotypically barbarous Spain.

If it is merely a matter of “doing something new,” of shock value, then this goal has been achieved, ever overachieved. However we simply cannot look favorably upon an art that...deliberately makes us look ridiculous...Clearly, when one can write in Spain that *españolismo* – in a Spanish work of art – has become a contemptible cliché...it will be obvious that we will not dignify this futuristic claptrap even by considering it a chapter out of the Black Legend.”<sup>234</sup>

Thus Picasso and Falla came under the same criticisms that were leveled at Zuloaga. *Le Tricorne* pandered to the same tourist image of Spain that Spanish critics found so objectionable in Zuloaga’s work, while at the same time it was received as authentically Spanish by French audiences.

Falla’s next major project, *El Retablo del Maese Pedro*, was received by foreign critics as a triumph. “El Retablo del Maese Pedro...is not a pastiche but a creation, an innovation in the ancient style, and like a bold master artist of old [Falla] develops it by introducing new harmonic and melodic elements that do not distort it.”<sup>235</sup>

First performed in 1923, *El Retablo del Maese Pedro* recounts a story from Don Quixote contained in the second part of the book. In this episode, Quixote and Sancho Panza visit Maese Pedro’s puppet theater (retablo). The heroine, Melisandra, is imprisoned in a tower by a moor. She is rescued by her husband on horseback and flees north. Quixote becomes confused during the performance, identifying the puppets as real human beings, and charges the stage to defend Christian civilization. In this complicated scenario human beings (Quixote, Sancho Panza and Maese Pedro) are the spectators for

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<sup>234</sup> Espinós, “Los Baile Rusos,” quoted in Hess, *Manuel de Falla*, 136.

<sup>235</sup> Boris de Schoeae “Igor Stravinsky,” *La Revue Musicale* 3, 2 (1923): 97-141 quoted in Hess, *Manuel de Falla*, 201.

the puppet characters, while all characters perform for the audience for the chamber piece itself.

Falla's chamber piece was commissioned by Winnaretta Singer (of the Singer sewing machine fortune) who was a major patron of the arts, especially music.<sup>236</sup> The original performance had puppets designed by Hermenegildo Lanz and sets by Manuel Angeles Ortiz. It is considered one of Falla's best works and enjoyed immediate success. The premier was attended by Stravinsky, Picasso and Paul Valéry, among many others. In 1926 the Opera Comique in Paris performed the *Retablo* in homage to Falla's fiftieth birthday and that production had sets designed by Zuloaga and puppets carved by his brother-in-law, Maxime Dethomas. Figure 3.14 is a drawing for the set. It depicts a typical Spanish inn with roofed courtyard and contains the structure in which the puppet show will be performed at the right; the human actors take the space to the left. A wineskin maker, in the style of *Gregorio el Botero*, stands at the lower right of the composition. The background of the puppet theater contains a barren landscape with a medieval castle. These Spanish tropes - peasants, figures wrapped in mantles, and castles - are similar to those of Picasso's for *Le Tricorne*. Both artists employ an essentialist *hispanidad* while working within a modernist idiom, Falla's musical modernism. Zuloaga's exaggerated outlines and heavy stroke marks emphasize the materiality of his technique; the strong contrasts in darks and lights, with little modulation or shading, create a pattern of flatness within the shallow composition. Zuloaga wrote of his work for the production "Creo haber hecho algo absolutamente nuevo, que, naturalmente, todavía no está de punto, pero va a crear una visión nueva del teatro heroico. No es solamente la

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<sup>236</sup> See Sylvia Kahan, *Music's Modern Muse: a life of Winnaretta Singer* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2003.)



naturaleza. Es la naturaleza en cartón exagerada.”<sup>237</sup> Both Falla and Zuloaga performed in non-singing roles, with Falla playing the innkeeper and Zuloaga that of Sancho Panza.

Musically and dramatically, the work was associated with Castilla (unlike *Le Tricorne*, with flamenco from Andalucía at its heart). The subject of Quixote, especially for Spanish nationals, is rich, complex, and enduring. For the 98ers, Quixote was a symbol of Spain itself. The knight’s quest to restore chivalry to Spain was a metaphor for regeneration. Quixote represented Golden Age Spain, the age of empire, a period during which Spain was the greatest imperial power in the world.<sup>238</sup> The mad Quixote, idealistic and heroic, accompanied by the prosaic, realistic and sane Sancho Panza, was capable of a moral greatness that signified the best and worst of Spain. Zuloaga’s participation in *El Retablo del Maese Pedro* linked him, once again, to the concept of a unified Spain represented by Castilla.

For both Zuloaga’s French and Spanish audiences, the artist embodied the concept of *raciné*. His admirers Barrès and Sorel, so preoccupied with that issue, also appreciated Zuloaga’s anti-naturalism and perceived a deep spirituality in his work. In Spain, however, the need for self-definition as a nation could not be fully met by Zuloaga’s version of *hispanidad* as barbaric and unmodern. At the inception of the Second Republic in 1931, the issue of national unity was still elusive.

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<sup>237</sup> Evergreen, March 12, 1926. “I believe I have made something absolutely new, which, naturally, is not quite perfect yet, but will create a new vision of heroic [Spanish classical] theater. It’s not just nature. It’s nature as an exaggerated cartoon.”

<sup>238</sup> Christopher Britt Arredondo, *Quixotism the Imaginative denial of Spain’s loss of empire*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005).

## Chapter Four: Blood and War

Chapter Four addresses Zuloaga's career during the years 1931-1945, beginning with the formation of the Second Republic in Spain and ending with the artist's death. It was a period of political upheaval and war. The republic was continuously under attack from both the left and the right despite having been formed in a peaceful nation-wide election. Spanish democracy was overthrown by the insurgent uprising led by Francisco Franco in 1936. At the end of the Spanish Civil War in 1939, Europe was at the brink of total war following Hitler's invasion of Poland. Zuloaga spent these years mostly in Spain. He participated in the Venice Biennale in 1938 and had a retrospective in London that same year. But the exigencies of war meant that Zuloaga was unable to exhibit widely; it was a time of relative isolation from the larger world of art and one in which his political choices affected his reputation and his artistic legacy.

The Second Republic grappled with ongoing issues of Spanish national identity in which the arts played a fundamental role. Nationalism's complex appeal is demonstrated in the work of avant-garde playwright Federico García Lorca (1898-1936), who participated in nation-building through theatrical productions and would become a martyr to the Republican side. The shifting nature of nationalist ideology from vernacular determinism to a fundamental instrument of fascism during this period is evinced by the career of Ernesto Giménez Caballero, a literary critic, artist, author, and publisher of the influential *Gaceta Literaria*. Zuloaga and Picasso, who had shared concepts of *hispanidad*, would find themselves on opposite sides of the bitter divide of war, of which, in terms of art, Picasso's *Guernica* is the most famous legacy. Zuloaga, in his full support

for Franco, contributed his own commemorative painting, the *Siege of the Alcázar* in 1936. In his last years Zuloaga became a symbol of Franco's Spain. He was the most prominent artist in a nation fully wedded to *hispanidad* as an expression of Spain's imperial, traditionalist past.

### **Nature and goals of the Second Republic**

The formation of the Second Republic in 1931 heralded a new era of political liberalism that brought social and economic reform to Spain. A national election in April of that year led to a bloodless transfer of power from a weak parliamentary monarchy to a republic committed to fundamental liberal reforms.<sup>239</sup> The republic received broad public support from all levels of society from the proletariat, the middle classes, and even some of the upper classes.<sup>240</sup> Zuloaga voiced no opposition to the republic. "La République Espagnole a l'air de se consolider. Nous aurons naturellement quelques trouble plus ou moins grandes mais je crois qu tout cela finiere bien. Le monde entier subit une secousse jamais connue."<sup>241</sup> Never overtly political prior to the Spanish Civil War, his focus was always on his career. Later that same year he wrote

Ici la situation n'est pas encore très claire. Nous vivons un peu dans l'enigme. Enfin, espérons que tout cela finira par se normaliser un jour. L'art subi aussi une secousse formidable. L'art vanguardiste et autres istes, et ismes, ont finit leur période de mode. Il y a un revirement complet ver l'art sérieuse et fort. Malheur de ceux qui n'ayant aucune personnalité ont voulu changer leur vision.<sup>242</sup>

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<sup>239</sup> See Stanley Payne, *Spain's first democracy: the Second Republic 1931-1936* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1993) and his *The Collapse of the Spanish Republic, 1933-1936*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006).

<sup>240</sup> See Paul Preston, *Revolution and War in Spain, 1931-1939*, (New York: Methuen, 1984).

<sup>241</sup> Evergreen, Zuloaga archive, letter dated July 15, 1931. "The Spanish Republic seems to be consolidating itself. Naturally we will have some troubles, large or small, but I think everything will end well. The entire world has sustained an unheard of shock."

<sup>242</sup> *Ibid.*, Dec 20, 1931. "The situation here isn't yet clear. We are living in a bit of an enigma. Anyway, let's hope that everything will be normal someday. Art has undergone a great shock. The avant-garde, and all the other ists an isms have had their day. There is a full return to serious, strong art. Too bad for those who having no personality thought to change their style."

The lack of violence and national celebrations greeting the new democracy were contrary to anti-democratic greater European trends in the 1930s. Under the leadership of Manuel Azaña, the Second Republic stood for progress, decentralization, and fundamental reforms. The coalition government consisted of representatives from the republican left, republican center-right and the socialists.<sup>243</sup>

As Stanley Payne writes, “Broadly speaking, republicanism within the Spanish context stood for direct parliamentary democracy and completion of all the reforms identified with classic middle class liberalism including separation of church and state, expansion of education facilities and basic administrative and institutional reform”<sup>244</sup> The new Republic was faced with the ongoing necessity to unify Spain at the same time that it allowed greater political and economic autonomy to the industrialized provinces of Catalonia and the Basque region. This unity, historically, had always been elusive. As discussed in the introduction, Spanish national union was at odds with the historical regionalism of the peninsula, always rather a federation than a single state.<sup>245</sup> The cultural agenda of the 98ers, to redefine Spain as a single, determinist entity based on the myth of Castilian imperialism, was embraced by moderates within the new Republican government. At the same time, while attempting to forge a sense of unity through Spain’s mythic past, the Republican agenda heavily favored broad educational reforms as a means to modernize Spain’s economy and culture. Many members of the *Cortes* had been educated at the liberal Institución Libre de Enseñanza, discussed in Chapter Two, and

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<sup>243</sup> Payne, *Collapse of the Spanish Republic*, 11.

<sup>244</sup> Payne, *Spain’s First Democracy*, 18.

<sup>245</sup> Stanley Payne, *Fascism in Spain 1923-1997*.

shared that institution's goals of progress through education.<sup>246</sup> Between 1931 and the Franco-led uprising in 1936, the Second Republic's ambitious goals were no less than to bring Spain to levels equal with its European neighbors politically, economically, and culturally. It was a gargantuan task that seemed possible, in the beginning, because of the peaceful and popular electoral results.

### **Opposition to the Republic**

Despite such broad support, the republic faced significant opposition from Carlists, monarchists, conservatives, the Church and the small but vocal fascist Falange party on the right, as well as from anarchosyndicalists of the CNT (Confederación Nacional de Trabajadores) on the left. In 1931 the monarchist party began publication of *Acción Española*, modeled on *Action Française*, edited by former 98er Ramiro de Maeztu. The Carlists began to train their own militias in Navarra, a conservative stronghold in northern Spain. In 1932 an authoritarian Catholic party, CEDA, (Confederación Española de Derechas Autónomas) was formed, led by José Gil Robles (1898-1935), and quickly became a large political party. CEDA's goal was to change the Spanish regime to a Catholic, corporative republic within a non-parliamentary format.<sup>247</sup> Between 1931-1933 the CNT fomented three revolutionary insurrections that were put down with brutal repression by the Azaña government. The Spanish fascist party, the Falange, led by José Antonio Primo de Rivera, son of the dictator, was formed in 1933. The Falange was always a small faction whose political power was rhetorical rather than organized. It modeled itself on Italian fascism and advocated a form of corporatist

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<sup>246</sup> Sandie Holguín, *Creating Spaniards Culture and National Identity in Republican Spain* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2002), 47.

<sup>247</sup> Payne, *Collapse of the Spanish Republic*, 25.

nationalism. By 1933 the two largest parties were the socialists on left and CEDA on the right. Neither was committed to republican democracy as an ultimate goal.

In Spain, while anarchosyndicalists and Marxists believed that the republic did not go far enough in its political goals, anti-bourgeois sentiment on the right was always inextricably linked to Catholicism and rejected europeanization associated with modern industry. Redemption, both political and cultural, was to be found in a fervent celebration of Spain's imperial past. The role of the Catholic Church was fundamental to right wing and falangist ideology. For conservative Catholics, Republican anti-clericalism was a symbol of the barbarian nature of the new government, one that denied a core aspect of *hispanidad*.<sup>248</sup> One of the most troubling reforms, for monarchists and conservatives, was the liberalization and greater autonomy given to historically separatist regions of Spain, most notably Catalonia and the Basque regions, in opposition to dictator Primo de Rivera's centralizing agenda.

In the 1930s Spain still maintained a large rural population, poor and illiterate. Land reform would prove to be an intractable problem for the young republic. Wealthy landowners generally opposed any reforms that would diminish their holdings; the rural proletariat constituted the largest and most serious social problem in the country.<sup>249</sup> Despite these myriad and complicated problems, the Second Republic's ambitious agenda included educational reforms that would also serve to build a sense of national unity.

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<sup>248</sup> Preston, *Revolution and War in Spain*, 22.

<sup>249</sup> Payne, *Spain's first democracy*, 9.

## The Misiones Pedagógicas and García Lorca

The creation of a program called *Misiones Pedagógicas* was one of the most significant attempts at unity through culture by the Second Republic. Headed by ILE professor Manuel Cossío, whose book on El Greco had proved so significant for the Cretan artist's re-discovery both in Spain and in France, the purpose of the *Misiones* was to deliver Spanish culture to rural Spain.<sup>250</sup> In a similar way to the hands-on approach of ILE instruction, teachers, university students, and artists traveled throughout Spain bringing theatrical performances, concerts, films, and lending libraries to the rural proletariat. While the educational aims were strictly secular, the word "misiones" evoked Spain's imperial past in which true religion was brought to the indigenous people of the New World; the missionary spirit was embedded in Spain's Golden Age. Spanish culture, for the Republic, was equally grounded in Spain's past. Minister of Public Instruction Fernando de los Ríos said

We were trying to revive in the mind of the peasant the cultural values of which his ancestors had been the creators. We were attempting to make him conscious of his history, awakening in him a feeling for true 'Spanishness' . . . . . This we are endeavoring to do . . . by putting the peasant in contact with the great creative works of Spanish collective consciousness.<sup>251</sup>

This collective consciousness was heavily Castilian. Peasants were taught the story of El Cid, shown copies of works in the Prado by El Greco, Velázquez and Goya, and heard poems by Santa Teresa of Avila, St. John of the Cross, and 98er poet Antonio Machado. According to Holguín, the purpose of the *Misiones Pedagógicas* was not only educational, but also an attempt to create a single, unified nation based on a shared –

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<sup>250</sup> Holguín, *Creating Spaniards*, 48.

<sup>251</sup> *Ibid.*, 48.

Castilian - cultural past, despite the decentralizing stance of the Republic.<sup>252</sup> In this way liberal progressives, essentialists, conservatives, fascists, and the avant-garde shared a common definition of Spain. Only the communist international found nationalism a discredited ideology in the 1930s.

Federico García Lorca contributed to the renovation of Spanish theater under the Second Republic with his traveling troupe *La Barraca* (the hut).<sup>253</sup> The actors were university students who performed the Golden Age plays of Lope de Vega and Calderón de la Barca; they also acted as set designers and stage hands. The aim was the same as the *Misiones Pedagógicas*; to bring the best of Spanish culture to the illiterate and untutored masses. While Lorca wrote his own contemporary plays, these were not staged as part of *La Barraca*.

People have asked why we don't represent modern works. For the simple reason that in Spain there exists practically no modern theater; the things that are represented are usually propaganda pieces and bad at that...Our modern theater – modern and ancient – that is to say, eternal, like the sea – is that of Calderón and Cervantes...that of Lope...<sup>254</sup>

Lorca included music in his stagings. He, like Manuel de Falla, was from Granada and deeply interested in the revival of Andalusía folk music and *cante jondo*. Falla and Lorca had collaborated on organizing a *cante jondo* competition in Granada in 1922, part of both artists' interest in authentic Spanish musical traditions.<sup>255</sup> Lorca sometimes used

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<sup>252</sup> Ibid., 68.

<sup>253</sup> Lorca was an avant-garde artist, poet and playwright whose work, nevertheless, is deeply embedded in traditionalist tropes of *hispanidad*. His assassination by the insurgency at the beginning of the civil war made him a martyr for Spanish and international republicans and anti-fascists. See Ian Gibson, *Federico García Lorca: a life*, (New York: Pantheon, 1989), Gwynne Edwards, *Lorca: living in the theatre*, (London: Peter Owens, 2003) and C. Christopher Soufas, *Audience and Authority in the modernist theater of Federico García Lorca*, (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1996).

<sup>254</sup> Holguín, *Creating Spaniards*, 100.

<sup>255</sup> Zuloaga attended this festival.



music from the Golden Age as well. He began his village performances by giving a speech to the audience.

The students of the University of Madrid, helped by the Government of the Republic...are creating for the first time in Spain a theater with the creative heat of a nucleus of young artists now standing out with a luminous profile in today's life of the nation...[we do this with] absolute impartiality and for the joy of being able to collaborate to the extent of our power with this beautiful hour of the new Spain.<sup>256</sup>

The idealism of the Second Republic is reflected in the ambitious aim to educate and bind the rural proletariat into a commonly recognized *hispanidad* organized around Castilian literature and music. The nationalist matrix was formed of progressive political leaders and avant-garde artists to deploy a determinist, Golden Age sense of spanishness. The same tropes were in the hands of the right wing. The right perceived the republic's anti-catholic and europeanizing stance as a threat to true Spain; the nationalist ideology, however, was shared by both. The career of Ernesto Giménez Caballero (1898-1988) illustrates the shift from what could be called "avant-garde nationalism" to nationalism in the service of a fascist agenda.

### **Ernesto Giménez Caballero**

Giménez Caballero's career exemplifies the power of fascist ideology to promise rebirth and regeneration for decadent societies.<sup>257</sup> His pen name, Gecé, is a play on the initials of his dual last names. His first publication, in 1922, *Notas marruecas de un soldado*, recounted his experience as a soldier serving in colonial Spanish Morocco and reflected his early concerns with definitions of *hispanidad* and the Spanish imperium. He then began to contribute essays to various Madrid publications, before founding the

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<sup>256</sup> Holguín, *Creating Spaniards*, 109.

<sup>257</sup> Douglas Foard, *The Revolt of the Aesthetes Ernesto Giménez Caballero and the origins of Spanish Fascism*, (New York: Peter Lang, 1989).

influential *Gaceta Literaria* in 1927. Gecé considered himself to be a member of the literary avant-garde, championing experimentation and freedom in all art forms.<sup>258</sup> He published poems, essays and reviews by such notables as García Lorca, Pío Baroja, Azorín, Juan Ramón Jiménez, Rafael Alberti, Antonio Machado, and Salvador Dalí.<sup>259</sup> Surrealist cinematographer Luis Buñuel was a member of the board at the time of the publication's debut. Gecé was a proponent of surrealism in literature and in 1928 had an exhibition of *Carteles* (Posters) in Barcelona.<sup>260</sup> These posters were intended to point the way to a new kind of literary criticism, incorporating images with text and addressed to an individual or a literary concept. Gecé created such a poster for García Lorca. (Fig. 4.1) It includes stereotypical Spanish imagery such as a fan and a mantilla-clad woman, and its scattered composition and use of collaged elements was intended to be provocative and modern. In 1928 he published *Yo, inspector de alcantarillas*, (I, sewer inspector) a collection of scatological short stories. The narrator visits underground levels where other avant-garde writers had gone before. "En la zona abisal tropecé amigos que buscaban sus naufragios como yo los míos, con andaduras fantasmales de medusas de plomo (Joyce, Eluard, Ernst, Unamuno, Ray, Gracián, Kafka, Joan Miró)."<sup>261</sup>

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<sup>258</sup> Foard, *Revolt of the Aesthetes*, 58.

<sup>259</sup> Douglas Foard, "The Forgotten Falangist: Ernesto Giménez Caballero," *Journal of Contemporary History* 10, (1975): 5.

<sup>260</sup> Jordana Mendelson, "Joan Miró's Drawing-Collage, August 8, 1933: The 'Intellectual Obscenities' of Postcards", *Art Journal*, 63 (2004): 33.

<sup>261</sup> Robert Havard, "Rafael Alberti, Maruja Mallo, and Giménez Caballero: Materialist Imagery in 'Sermons y Moradas' and the Issue of Surrealism", *The Modern Language Review*, 93 (1998): 1011. "In the region of the abyss I stumbled upon friends who searched for their shipwrecks as did I, with ghostly gaits of leaden jellyfish..."

Gecé also founded the Cineclub Español in 1928, dedicated to contemporary and avant-garde films such as Fritz Lang's *Metropolis*, which was reviewed by Buñuel in *La Gaceta Literaria* in 1927.<sup>262</sup>

Gecé was inspired by Ortega's *España Invertebrada* when he launched *Gaceta Literaria*, advocating:

...del aceptar una hermandad de lenguas, una libertad absoluta de consciencia, un mito a ultranza de la Cultura por la Cultura y del Arte por el arte; una creencia central de que la salvación de España estaba en lo minoritario, sobre todo si esto de lo minoritario tenía un fundamento 'rubio', 'vital', y 'franco.'<sup>263</sup>

A founding principle of *Gaceta Literaria* was a belief in the power of education as an ameliorative for Spain's ills. Culture, in the form of novels, plays, poems, visual arts, films and essays – especially those produced by young artists - was a necessary component for a new, regenerated Spain. But despite this fundamentally rationalist, Enlightenment-based ideology, *Gaceta Literaria* also incorporated an anti-democratic, anti-bourgeois stance, while at the same time denying a necessary link between politics and art.<sup>264</sup> At the publication's inception, Gecé believed in an elitist artistic individuality and the primacy of the personal creative act. And his preoccupation with *hispanidad*, the universal concern for *el problema de España*, was part of *Gaceta Literaria*'s mission from the beginning.

...I set about building up and giving reality to many of the advance-guard postulates...As it happened I was a university man, which means a man with some intellectual discipline behind him, one actively conscious of the forces of

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<sup>262</sup> Ibid., 1013.

<sup>263</sup> Ernesto Caballero Giménez, *Genio de España, exaltaciones a una resurrección nacional* (Zaragoza: Ediciones Jerarquía, 1938) 77-78. "...regionalist brotherhood, a free conscience, the deep myth of culture for culture's sake and art for art's sake and the belief in an elite minority, fair, vital and frank."

<sup>264</sup> Carmen Bassolas, *La ideología de los escritores Literatura y política en La Gaceta Literaria (1927-1932)* (Barcelona: Editorial Fontamara, 1975), 197-225.

nationalism. And so it was that the *Gaceta Literaria* was able, in addition to the postulates of the advance-guard, to realize certain others, purely national and organic.<sup>265</sup>

In the debut edition, Gecé interviewed Ramiro de Maeztu, former member of the 98ers and ambassador to Argentina under the Primo de Rivera dictatorship.<sup>266</sup> Maeztu, who embraced fascism before the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, would be executed by Republican soldiers in Madrid in 1936. In 1927 he told Gecé

El liberalismo ha desaparecido, y quien lo ostenta es sin darse cuenta que no ostenta nada. El socialismo, derrotado, es un bolchevismo ignorante de sí mismo. No hay más que esto: de un lado los salvadores de los principios de la civilización. De otro, los bolcheviques.<sup>267</sup>

Even before the formation of the Second Republic Gecé had begun moving towards fascism, inspired by a visit to Italy in 1928 where he was welcomed by state officials and introduced to Mussolini.<sup>268</sup> He had previously hosted Italian futurist Filippo Marinetti on a visit to Spain in 1927.<sup>269</sup> He gained an appreciation for Italian fascist corporatism for artists, a shift away from his earlier views. Gecé published a letter by Italian author Ettore de Zuani in *Gaceta Literaria* upon his return to Spain. Explaining the appeal of fascism, Zuani wrote “...el fascismo para nosotros, intelectuales, italianos, no es tanto político, como sobre todo fe, entusiasmo, pasión; y eso no lo podemos olvidar ni siquiera cuando hacemos literatura...los literatos italianos no hacen política

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<sup>265</sup> Foard, *The Forgotten Falangist*, 8.

<sup>266</sup> Maeztu's *Hacia Otra España* of 1899 was part of the 98er response to the Disaster with an inchoate call for regeneration; his *La Defensa de la Hispanidad* of 1934 was a full throated polemic on behalf of monarchism, Catholicism, and authoritarianism.

<sup>267</sup> Caballero Giménez, *Genio de España*, 58. “Liberalism has disappeared and whoever displays it doesn't realize they display nothing. Socialism, broken, is bolshevism without understanding itself. There is only this: on one side, the saviors of the principles of civilization; on the other, the bolshevists.”

<sup>268</sup> Foard, *The Forgotten Falangist*, 10.

<sup>269</sup> Bassolas, *Ideología de los escritores*, 125. Gecé asked Mrs. Marinetti what she wished to see during her visit to Spain. She replied “Oh! Above all, El Greco.”

cuando afirman ser fascistas....”<sup>270</sup> In the same letter Zuani recounted a conversation in which he was asked by an unnamed Spanish writer as to how Marinetti, with his love of liberty, could be fascist? Zuani replied “Porque solo donde hay disciplina política puede darse la libertad artística.”<sup>271</sup> Gecé himself said

Italian fascism is profoundly a movement of ‘new values’ It is authentically revolutionary; therefore, much younger than the old, European liberals believe – those who think that fascism and reaction are identical. Only since the advent of Italian fascism is it seen that unequivocal reaction is liberalism; at least for the Latin. Now the Latin sees that liberalism involves something *against nature*, against his national character.<sup>272</sup>

In 1929 Gecé published an open letter in *Gaceta Literaria* calling for “Hispanic Fascism.”<sup>273</sup> With this many of his collaborators and contributors resigned from the publication, which dwindled in readership before folding in 1932.

In 1931 at the advent of the Second Republic he broke decisively with his former mentors, Ortega and Unamuno, both of whom supported the new government. For Gecé modernity itself had become the problem. Modernity consists of the antinomy of the medieval, catholic, transcendent world with the materialist, heretical, individualized world, a world that rejects Caesar and God.<sup>274</sup> Contemporary art was in a crisis. “...no podemos soportar la tiranía de un arte de masas absolutas que quiere imponernos el

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<sup>270</sup> Ibid., 136. “Fascism for us, intellectuals, Italians, is not so much about politics as much as about faith, enthusiasm, passion, things we can’t forget when we are writing [creating]...Italian writers are not political when they say they are fascists.”

<sup>271</sup> Ibid., 138. “Artistic freedom can only exist where there is political discipline.”

<sup>272</sup> Foard, *The Forgotten Falangist*, 10-11.

<sup>273</sup> Ibid., 11

<sup>274</sup> Giménez Caballero, *Genio de España*, 131.

comunismo ruso, el oriente. Y que es el momento de un arte universo, integrador, fecundo, ecumínico, catolizal.”<sup>275</sup>

For Gecé, cubism was a rigid, empty formula whose meaningless goal is to interpret the artist’s consciousness. It is based on materialist rationalism, an empty reality. True art must be classical and must be catholic; include faith in divinity and express universalizing principles of Christianity and western culture.<sup>276</sup> In this Gecé was close to the arguments of Ortega in the *Dehumanization of Art*. Abstract and surrealist art is inaccessible to all but a small elite, rendering art itself meaningless.

In his book *Arte y Estado* of 1935 Gecé described an encounter with Picasso. Picasso was in San Sebastian, dining in a restaurant, when he was seen by Gecé and his group of friends, which included Falange leader José Antonio Primo de Rivera. Gecé reported that Picasso said he had intended to stay just twenty-four hours, but had prolonged his visit [because it was so pleasurable]. Despite his negative views on cubism, Gecé described Picasso positively as a son of Spain. “...su mirar, su modo de vestir, de sentarse, su bromear, revelaban un fondo bárbaro, nuestro, genuino, pasional, tormentoso, conceptuoso: barroco.”<sup>277</sup>

Gecé’s book, *Genio de España* (1938), is a lengthy polemic that embraces the insurgent cause. For the author the fascist uprising had no link to Italy or Germany. “Para España el fascismo no puede significar una especie de dependencia mediterranea de

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<sup>275</sup> Enrique Giménez Caballero, *Arte y Estado*, (Madrid: *Acción Española* 1935), 29. “We cannot support the tyranny of an art of the masses that Russian communism and the East wished to impose upon us. Now is the time for a universal art, integrated, fecund, ecumenical, catholic.

<sup>276</sup> *Ibid.*, 38.

<sup>277</sup> *Ibid.*, 47-48. “His look, his clothes, the way he sat, his jokes, revealed a barbarian foundation, ours, genuine, passionate, tormented, baroque.”

Mussolini. Tampoco un nidal de espías hitlerianos en Iberia. ...el fascismo para España no es fascismo, sino catolicidad.”<sup>278</sup>

In 1938 he wrote “¡Combatientes de la Falange y de la Tradición de España ! ¡Arriba los muertos ! Ellos nos protegen y ellos nos vigilarán. Ellos – que son ya vidas eternas – y sólo ellos, harán que España suba a su cielo de Gloria y de historia. A un Arriba divino. A que España alcance, victoriosamente, su genio.”<sup>279</sup>

Throughout Europe in the 1920s and 1930s, both left and right wing movements decried liberal democracy as outdated and unable to provide the radical transformation of society needed to counteract the ills – and blessings - of industrial capitalism and modernity.<sup>280</sup> Fascism’s myth-making power, central to its ideology of nationalism, allowed the creation of seemingly contradictory tropes: that regeneration and salvation could be found in historically mythic nationalist identities; that modernity was forged in a mythical past; that the rejection of materialism in favor of a spiritual sensibility went hand-in-hand with industrial development; that anti-intellectualism would bring enlightenment; that violence was necessary for peace.<sup>281</sup>

In the 1920s in Spain avant-garde artists evinced little opposition to fascism; its association with modernism protected it from its political consequences.<sup>282</sup> Its anti-Enlightenment stance and focus on mythical matrices of history and culture gave it

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<sup>278</sup> Giménez Caballero, *Genio de España*, 267. “Fascism for Spain cannot be a kind of Mediterranean dependence on Mussolini. Nor a nest of Hitler’s spies in Iberia...fascism for Spain is not fascism, but Catholicism.”

<sup>279</sup> Ibid., 13. “Fighters for the Falange and Spanish Tradition ! Up with the dead ! They protect us and watch over us. They – already having eternal life – and only they – make it possible for Spain to rise to her heaven of Glory and history. A divine rising. To which Spain arrives, victoriously to her spirit.”

<sup>280</sup> Emilio Gentile, *The Struggle for Modernity Nationalism, Futurism and Fascism* (Westport: Praeger, 2003), 6.

<sup>281</sup> Ibid., 45-46.

<sup>282</sup> Estrella de Diego and Jaime Brihuega, “Art and Politics in Spain 1928-1936”, *Art Journal* 52(1993): 55-60.

enormous power for those disaffected by modern industrial practice and the leveling and erasure of social hierarchies tied to the pre-Enlightenment past.

But in Spain the determinist nationalism in privileging Castilla and the epic imperial deeds of the Golden Age as true Spain, an ideological stance promoted by the 98ers after the 1898 Disaster, and for whom Zuloaga was such a potent contributor, became a political dividing line that would be finally settled by Franco's victory in the Civil War.

### **Civil War**

The Second Republic was constantly threatened by both left and right. Unrest took the form of political assassinations, violent demonstrations and labor strikes. The 1936 elections brought the Popular Front to power, a left wing coalition.<sup>283</sup> The lopsided government denied power to the right, leading to a climate of chaos. In the early months of 1936 a coup to restore order seemed inevitable.<sup>284</sup> Zuloaga wrote "La situation politique en Espagne est bien mauvaise car nous sommes a la veille des élections, et je crois qu'il va a avoir du grabuge. Il y a deux clans – gauches et droits – si la gauche triomphe, c'est le sovietisme, si s'est la droite, c'est la royauté. Maudite politique!"<sup>285</sup>

General Francisco Franco had been sent to Morocco by the leadership of the Popular Front. From there he and other generals plotted to overthrow the government. When he struck, in July 1936, the conspirators believed that a few days or weeks would subdue opposition and restore order to Spain. Instead what followed were three years of

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<sup>283</sup> Francisco J. Romero Salvadó, *The Spanish Civil War* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 53-59

<sup>284</sup> Hugh Thomas, *The Spanish Civil War* (New York: the Modern Library, 1961/2001), 147-148.

<sup>285</sup> Evergreen, Jan. 17, 1936 "The political situation in Spain is very bad because we are on the eve of elections, and I think there will be a ruckus. There are two sides – left and right – if the left wins, it's sovietism, if the right wins, it's monarchy. Cursed politics!"



fighting and a loss of some 600,000 lives in a bitterly divisive civil war.<sup>286</sup> The insurgents were called Nationalists; the republicans, Loyalists.<sup>287</sup> A constant theme of the insurgency was the restoration of Spain to its own nationhood, and, above all, not a country in the service of international communism.

Spanish fascism was a weak relative of its German and Italian cousins. Typical fascist ideology with its emphasis on violence, the concept of the “strong man” and mythic national identity all played a part in right-wing rhetoric in the 1930s in Spain. But Franco had no imperial agenda. Unlike in Germany and Italy, where the Nazi and Fascist parties took control of the military, in Spain Franco’s military insurrection co-opted the Falange as its political wing, later fusing it with the Carlists. After taking complete power at the end of the war he imposed an authoritarian regime backed by the military that eliminated dissent and privileged conservative, traditional social values.

For Stanley Payne, Franco represented not so much the divide between dictatorial, one-rule government versus democracy, but rather traditionalism versus modernity.<sup>288</sup> As Michael Richards and Chris Ealham point out, these terms carry a normative nature that simplifies the debate into a binary opposition that cannot contain all the complexities of the historical record.<sup>289</sup> But for the purposes of art, especially as applied to Zuloaga, tradition and modernism were recognized tropes that were at the service of both the Nationalists and the left. The ongoing debate as to how to save Spain from decadence, whether by embracing a mythic past or the larger modern European world, argued by the

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<sup>286</sup> Thomas, *The Spanish Civil War*.

<sup>287</sup> Rafael Cruz, “Old symbols, new meanings; mobilizing the rebellion in the summer of 1936” in *The Splintering of Spain Cultural History and the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939*, ed. Chris Ealham and Michael Richards (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 159

<sup>288</sup> Payne, *Fascism in Spain*.

<sup>289</sup> Chris Ealham and Michael Richards, “History, memory and the Spanish Civil War: recent perspectives,” *The Splintering of Spain*, 1.

98ers and Ortega, among others, was finally settled on the side of tradition. For the victorious Franco, *hispanidad* became, officially, the inheritor of Golden Age Castilla. Zuloaga shared this sentiment. “Mais c’est aussi la renaissance de la jeune nouvelle Espagne qui sûrement va redevenir ce qu’elle fut au XVI et XVII siècles. L’Espagne forte, héroïque et noble. J’espère aussi que très bientôt nous serons tous unis par un seul idéal, celui d’être Espagnols *cent pour cent*.”<sup>290</sup>

The regenerationist thinking of the 98ers was fundamentally liberal at the turn of the twentieth century. Its essentialist core, however, can be seen as pre-fascist.<sup>291</sup> It influenced Francoist ideology with the concept that Spain was a determinist entity that could be “saved” through the application of mythic nationalist structures. While both the left and the right during the conflict employed nationalist ideology, they had very different goals in mind. The republic used liberal educational outreach to build national identity and fits Gorski’s trope of *parties* that capture or influence the state in the name of the nation. The insurgency developed into the author’s trope of a *regime* that controls the state apparatus and uses violence against enemies of the nation.

During the Spanish Civil War both sides seized upon nationalist rhetoric as a fundamental rallying cry. The Republicans were battling against foreign invaders (Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy) as well as Spanish traitors opposed to the legitimately elected Republic; the insurgents against foreign invaders (Russian communists) and irreligious

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<sup>290</sup> Evergreen, July 5, 1937. “But it’s also the renaissance of a new young Spain which surely will become what she was in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Strong, heroic, noble Spain. I hope too that very soon we will all be united by a single ideal, that of being *one hundred percent* Spanish.”

<sup>291</sup> Michael Richards, “Constructing the Nationalist State: Self-Sufficiency and Regeneration in the Early Franco Years,” in *Nationalism and the Nation in the Iberian Peninsula*, ed. Clare Mar-Molinero and Angel Smith (Oxford: Berg, 1996), 153.

traitors to Spain's true identity.<sup>292</sup> Echoing a common thread expressed both by the right and the left, Zuloaga believed that it was foreign forces that brought the war to Spain.

Que l'Espagne a été choisie comme victime de l'Europe qui se bat pour le bolchevisme, ou le Nationalisme. Et que nous finirons tous ruines détruites, tandis que les autres pays n'auront a peine soufferte. Les Espagnols ne sont pas bolcheviques, qu'on nous laisse donc, nous arrange nous-mêmes.<sup>293</sup>

Both sides of the conflict invoked events in Spanish history to bolster their claims of legitimacy. For the insurgents, the *Reconquista*, purifying Spain from the foreign incursions of Jews and Moors, was symbolic of Nationalist efforts to rid Spain of communists.<sup>294</sup> The 1808 War of Independence was the victory of Catholic Spanish traditions against foreign French invaders. On the Republican side, Moorish soldiers from Spanish Morocco in Franco's army were depicted as barbarians who once again were attempting to conquer true Spain.<sup>295</sup> The Napoleonic invasion was defeated by guerilla warfare, represented by the Spanish *people*, the essence of true Spain.

While both sides invoked nationalist discourse to further their cause, the Republicans also employed other appeals, including class solidarity and revolutionary goals.<sup>296</sup> The insurgency emphasized Catholicism as a necessary component to the principles of civilization.<sup>297</sup> For the Nationalists, allegiance to God must accompany patriotism to a state; the Christian nation is a supreme entity providing a supranational identity for individual Spanish souls. Modern materialist nationalism of the Republic,

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<sup>292</sup> See Xosé Manoel Núñez Seixas, "Nations in arms against the invader: on nationalist discourses during the Spanish Civil War," *The Splintering of Spain*.

<sup>293</sup> Evergreen, Dec. 10, 1936. "Spain has been chosen as the victim of a Europe fighting for either bolshevism or nationalism. We will all wind up ruined, destroyed, while the other countries will barely suffer. The Spanish are not Bolsheviks, so leave us alone, let us take care of ourselves."

<sup>294</sup> Ealham and Richards, *The Splintering of Spain*, 5.

<sup>295</sup> Núñez Seixas, *The Splintering of Spain*, 54.

<sup>296</sup> *Ibid.*, 64

<sup>297</sup> *Ibid.*, 55

which also focused on networks of education and economic/industrial practices, is false; true nationalism is a spiritual bond achieved by a common obedience to a Catholic leader as a representative of the Supreme Being.

Prior to the uprising, Zuloaga was never overtly political, always positioning himself as an artist above all else. His frequent protestations to this effect are backed up by his refusal, in 1931, to accept the post of Director of the Escuela de Bellas Artes in Madrid offered by the new Republic. He wrote

J'arrive d'Espagne, ou je suis allé refuser le poste de la Direction de Beaux Arts que l'on m'avait donné, car je ne puis pas abandonner ma peinture; ni que mêler de choses qui commenceraient une série de complications ennuyeuses. Je veux vivre le plus en paix et le plus ignoré possible. Voilà la seule vraie philosophie de nos temp.<sup>298</sup>

This stance changed with the outbreak of the war and the publication of his *Aviso al Mundo* (Advice/Warning to the World). It is a pro-Franco, anti-communist polemic. Its main tenet is the destruction of Spanish art during the war, caused, for Zuloaga, exclusively by the Republicans. For Zuloaga, the loyalist forces are “Red” and in the service of Moscow.

A conservative policy – that of the New Spain, that of Franco. A destructive policy – the Red policy, the Bolshevik policy...this truth...shines forth...in the irreparable damage which the Red war has wreaked on our art treasures. This...art of Spain – the age-old treasure inherited from the long ago – the treasure built up, jewel by jewel, by the faith and patriotism of the real Spaniards. In Spain, Moscow and her Spanish slaves give vent to their devilish desire to annihilate us because our Spain stands as a rock against their world which is leaving, never to return. For this reason they destroy our art treasures, they profane, they ceaselessly burn with the blindness of an eruption or an earthquake.... The entire world, if it still believes itself to be civilized, should urgently associate itself with

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<sup>298</sup> Evergreen, June 25, 1931. “I’ve just come from Spain, where I refused to accept the position of director of the School of Fine Art they wanted me to take, because I can’t abandon my painting, nor mix in things that will wind up being nothing but a series of annoying complications. I want to live in peace, as ignored as possible. That is the only true philosophy of our times.”

the great task of saving threatened art works. My entire life, dedicated to Art, trembles before the ruins...and I make my demand in my strongest voice, although my work for Spain has always been done with the brush and not with the pen.<sup>299</sup>

The Republicans were accused, in particular, of damages to churches and cathedrals as part of their anti-Catholic stance. A report in 1939 detailed destruction to areas of Spain at that point under control of the Nationalists. The great cathedrals of Leon and Segovia were spared significant damage, but cathedrals of Oviedo and Toledo were badly damaged; many churches in Toledo in particular were partially or completely destroyed during the fighting. Neither the Alhambra, in Granada, nor major monuments in Sevilla suffered damage, as a result of being the first cities taken by the Nationalists at the beginning of the uprising.<sup>300</sup>

Rumors were rife as to the destruction of works of art, especially works by El Greco, by 1936 firmly associated with Toledo by anyone interested in modern art. A report in the *Art Digest* of 1936 quotes unnamed sources:

According to Catholic refugees from Seville, fanatical peasants have burned scores of Murillo's religious pictures; and most calamitous of all, El Greco's masterpiece, The Burial of Count Orgaz, has disappeared from its home in the Church of St. Thomas in Toledo...

In fact El Greco's great painting remained in Toledo throughout the duration of the war.

The source goes on to lament innate Spanish qualities that permit such pointless destruction.

In their present destruction of masterpieces they are exhibiting in milder form that old ferocity of spirit which prompted them in the past to take such gruesome liberties with the body – to burn heretics, practice flagellation, create invalids,

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<sup>299</sup> *Noticias de España*, September, 1937.

<sup>300</sup> Michael Stewart, "The Destruction and Preservation of Works of Art in Nationalist Spain," *Burlington Magazine* 74 (1939): 72-76

idiots and deformities, and to spatter the walls of churches with the blood of penitents.<sup>301</sup>

In 1938, with the war ongoing, Christian Zervos wrote a column detailing the efforts of the Republican government to safeguard Spain's enormous treasure in artworks. In fact gathering and moving the artworks had a benefit; some previously unidentified El Grecos were discovered and several important works were cleaned and restored.<sup>302</sup>

Zuloaga's polemic is a testament to the insurgency's propagandistic stance that portrayed the Republicans as nothing more than barbarian foreigners, enemies of true Spain and her great cultural patrimony.

### **Toledo**

In 1936 a garrison of insurgent soldiers held the Alcázar (fortress) in Republican Toledo. The Nationalists were deeply outnumbered and the Republicans believed that the siege would be quickly victorious. Franco, who was marching on Madrid, diverted his army to come to the aid of the besieged, recognizing the profound propaganda victory of "saving" Toledo. The city was a mythic site. From the 98er writings on Castilla in general and Toledo in particular, to the ILE excursions in a bid to confirm "spanishness," to the crowning of its most famous artist, El Greco, as modernist hero or keeper of the Spanish soul (or both); to the countless foreign visitors from Barrès to Rilke to Rodin, Toledo was imbued with timeless and meaningful *hispanidad*. To control it would be to control one of the most potent symbols of Spain.

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<sup>301</sup> *Art Digest*, October, 1936

<sup>302</sup> Christian Zervos, *Cahiers d'Art*, 1-10 (1938) : 212. Zervos specifically mentioned Sts Andrew and Francis of Assisi, taken from the convent of the Incarnation in Madrid and without its frame, evidence that perhaps someone wished to sell it abroad; an Annunciation, Virgin of Charity, and a Nativity, taken from a charity hospital in the town of Illescas were temporarily stored in a damp basement in a bank in Madrid but were cleaned and restored after being removed.

Zuloaga's painting, *Siege of the Alcázar* (Fig. 4.2, 1936), commemorates the siege and the insurgent victory.<sup>303</sup> As an image of violence and war, it is very different from either his *Barrès in Toledo* or *Toledo in Pale Colors*, (Fig. 4.3, 1932). The first two incorporate the picturesque bridge of San Martín and depict the massive church San Juan de los Reyes directly across the bridge with the cathedral behind and to the right. Neither includes a depiction of the Alcázar which is to the west (the right in both compositions) of the cathedral.

Zuloaga's painting shows the violent events at a distance, with the Alcázar itself at the upper right of the composition, which is taken up by a large foreground area of rocky formations. Zuloaga chose to depict the destruction as almost peripheral to his beloved Castilian landscape, with the two donkeys at the lower center as a quotidian element emphasizing the distinction between the ordinary and the extraordinary. The black, swirling sky, lightened with white smoke, is more akin to El Greco's treatment of clouds than the much more serene skies of Zuloaga's early views of Toledo. It is a curiously detached depiction of an event that surely horrified the artist.

Enrique Lafuente Ferrari, Zuloaga's biographer, reported that Zuloaga planned to paint a series of images of Toledo.<sup>304</sup> Zuloaga made notes referencing a painting to be titled "The diabolical red procession." According to Lafuente Ferrari, it was to depict a revolutionary orgy, with dead bodies and blood, and was intended by Zuloaga to follow the spirit of Goya's *Third of May 1808*.

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<sup>303</sup> Zuloaga wrote to Alice Garrett on November 26, 1936: "J'ai l'intention de peindre quelque chose au sujet de la défense archi-héroïque de l'Alcazar de Toledo." "I intend to paint something on the arch-heroic defense of the Alcazar in Toledo." In January 1937, describing the siege, he wrote "Quel beau cris, au milieu de cette plaine castillane." Evergreen. "What beautiful screams, in the middle of the castilian plain."

<sup>304</sup> Angel Llorente, *Arte e ideología en el franquismo (1936-1951)* (Madrid : Visor, 1995), footnote 7, 194.

Zuloaga welcomed the Nationalist rebellion. His traditionalist views led him naturally and inexorably to a political ideology that lauded God, King, and country. His early triumphant career in France, where his work was acclaimed as new, bold, modern – while honoring Spanish traditionalism – was far behind him. Traditionalist nationalism had become fixed as the ideology of the right and Zuloaga was no longer an important contributor to the dialogue of modernism.

Ici, l'art subit un véritable chambardement (en ce moment) [in Paris]. L'on revient à la peinture forte, et saine. A la vraie peinture. Toutes les tendances malades et impuissantes tombent a grands pas... On s'est rendu compte que l'art n'est pas de l'algèbre, de mathématiques, ou de scientisme. L'art dépend de la nature, c'est-à-dire de Dieu ; et tout ce qui voudra être autre, devra mourir forcément. Il faut suivre la grande ligne tracé par tous les temps ; en ajoutant chaque un la personnalité.<sup>305</sup>

## **Guernica**

The bombing of the Basque city of Guernica in April 26, 1937 is one of the first aerial bombardments of a civilian population. In fact Zuloaga's birthplace, the smaller Basque village of Eibar, had been bombed the day before, and cities all over Spain including Madrid would be hit by aerial bombs, but Guernica stands as a symbol of a new and horrific kind of warfare.<sup>306</sup> Franco's alliance with Hitler, who offered to provide troop and materiel support in exchange for access to the rich shipping and minerals of Bilbao, led to German intervention in the war in Spain. For Hitler it was an opportunity to test his pilots, planes, and bombs in a kind of training run for the looked-for war in

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<sup>305</sup> Evergreen, March 12, 1932. "Here, right now art is really going through something [in Paris]. It's returning to painting that is strong and healthy. True painting. All the weak and bad tendencies are failing...one realizes that art is not algebra, mathematics, or scientific. Art depends on nature, which is to say, God; and any that would differ from that will die. One should follow the great line traced by history, then add one's personality."

<sup>306</sup> Zuloaga wrote to Alice Garret in May, 1937: "Notre vieille maison d'Eibar est complètement brûlé ainsi que tout le village. C'est horrible la misère, la famine part tout. " "Our old house in Eibar is completely burned along with the whole village. The misery, the famine everywhere, is horrible." Evergreen.



Europe. The bombing of civilians was a deliberate strategy. German General von Theysen said

Si nous réussissons à lancer, disons 300 tonnes de bombes incendiaires et asphyxiantes sur les villes et les centres industriels de l'ennemi nous pouvons en finir de la guerre en un mois. En effet la destruction de ces centres vitaux ne manquera pas d'ébranler totalement les bases sociales de résistance de l'adversaire.<sup>307</sup>

The entire central part of the city was destroyed by repeated bombing by numerous warplanes lasting over three hours. When news of the destruction and death rained down upon a civilian population reached Europe and the United States, republican sympathizers were outraged and horrified.

The differences between Zuloaga's depiction of the siege of the Alcázar and Picasso's famous painting *Guernica* bring to an end the commonality of the two Spanish artists. As we have seen, in Picasso's early years he was capable of a determinist nationalism and painted Spanish scenes not so very different from his compatriot. His collaboration with Manuel de Falla, another experience shared with Zuloaga, was again a modern, not avant-garde, production emphasizing timeless Spain. But with the outbreak of the Civil War, they finally and irrevocably found themselves on opposite sides.

Picasso's *Guernica* (Fig. 4.4) was commissioned by the Spanish committee for the 1937 World's Fair in Paris. For Luis Araquistáin, Spain's ambassador to France, it was of utmost importance that the legitimate Republican government be represented. Picasso was approached by the Catalan architect Josep Lluís Sert, a personal friend, along

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<sup>307</sup> "Bombardements et Agressions en Espagne Juillet 1936-Juillet 1937," Southworth Collection holdings of the Mandeville Department of Special Collections, University of Southern California, San Diego. "If we succeed in dropping, say 300 tonnes of firebombs and asphyxiates on the enemy's towns and industrial centers we can end the war in one month. Destroying the vital centers will totally erase the resistance of our adversary."

with other Spanish members of the committee. Araquistáin's goal was to showcase to the world the legitimately elected government of Spain's liberal progress.<sup>308</sup> Other artists willing to participate included Joan Miró, sculptor Julio González, and García Lorca's *La Barraca* troupe.<sup>309</sup> Sert asked for a large mural, with the subject matter to be chosen by Picasso. Initially, Picasso was non-committal, in keeping with his general aversion to officialdom. He made no public statement at the outbreak of the war in July, 1936 and indeed left Paris for a vacation in the south of France in August of that year. In September, he was invited by the President of the Republic, Miguel Azaña, to be named honorary director of the Prado. According to Chipp, Picasso was deeply pleased by this offer in part because it made him "feel so Spanish."<sup>310</sup> Madrid was attacked by artillery and aerial bombs; the Prado was severely damaged at the roof and upper stories, leading to the removal of its treasures. All the most significant works were moved to Valencia, which had become the new seat of the Republican government following its evacuation from Madrid.

Picasso supported the Republic, but had never taken an overtly political stance on any side of the conflict. However, in January, 1937, he wrote a poem entitled *Sueño y Mentira de Franco* (The Dream and the Lie of Franco). Just as García Lorca had referenced Spanish Golden Age poets and dramatists for his traveling players, Picasso's title is reminiscent of Calderón de la Barca's seventeenth century *La Vida es sueño* (Life is a dream) as well as *En esta vida todo es verdad y todo mentira* (In this life all is truth and all lies). Picasso also created a suite of etchings with the same title as his surrealist prose poem which are savage caricatures of the Caudillo (Fig. 4.5). Franco is depicted in

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<sup>308</sup> Herschel B. Chipp, *Picasso's Guernica* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 4.

<sup>309</sup> *La Barraca* continued to perform despite Lorca's death.

<sup>310</sup> Chipp, *Picasso's Guernica*, 7.

a variety of grim and ridiculous forms, including as a female figure wearing a mantilla and carrying a fan and a sword; as a monstrous form disemboweling a horse (a reference to the bullfight); and being gored by a bull. These highly personal and small prints were his only artistic reference to the Civil War prior to *Guernica*. Between the January visit from Sert and the bombing of Guernica in April, Picasso mulled the problem of the large mural for the Spanish pavilion. When the news of the cruel destruction of the city and deliberate murders of its civilian population reached France, Picasso found his subject.

*Guernica* is perhaps the most famous modern image in art of the horrors of war. Yet it is not propagandistic; on the contrary, Picasso's fractured, jumbled composition refers to destruction and death in a non-narrative way that initially was more puzzling than satisfying to its viewers. While Zuloaga's canvas depicts the Alcázar in Toledo in flames, *Guernica* does not specifically refer to the bombing. Its lack of clear narrative gives it a universalizing power.

In 1938 *Guernica* was lent to a traveling exhibition organized by Paul Rosenberg that included works by Matisse, Braque, and Henri Laurens. The exhibition went to Norway, Denmark and Sweden, after which *Guernica* was returned to Picasso's studio.

In the spring of 1938 Zuloaga exhibited twenty-nine paintings at the Venice Biennale. This exhibition was organized by the newly appointed Nationalist Franco government under the direction of journalist and art impresario Eugenio d'Ors and was intended to showcase Nationalist Spain. The first planning meeting was in April.<sup>311</sup> It was difficult for d'Ors to put together a coherent exhibition, given the lack of time (the Biennale opened June 1, 1938), the relative lack of Franco-supporting artists, and the

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<sup>311</sup> Miriam Basilio, "Re-Inventing Spain: images of the nation in painting and propaganda, 1936-1943" (Ph.D diss., New York University, 2002), 205.

difficulties of transportation and logistics in wartime Spain. Zuloaga was most prominently featured among the Spanish artists and was awarded first prize for a portrait of the famous bullfighter, and friend of Zuloaga, Juan Belmonte. The exhibition was intended to promote the traditionalist values of Franco's Spain. Zuloaga described his aims in a letter to Garrett. "Je vais le faire pour patriotisme, pour montrer que (quoique la guerre) l'Espagne Nationale – celle de Franco – vie, et vivra avec une force et enthousiasme; et qu'elle s'occupe déjà de tout."<sup>312</sup> ("I will do it for patriotism, to show (despite the war) that Nationalist Spain – Franco's Spain – lives, and lives with power and enthusiasm; and is taking care of everything.") Of Zuloaga d'Ors wrote: "La pintura del maestro eibarrés podrá no estar de acuerdo con las últimas evoluciones del gusto...pero siempre se impondrá su carácter histórico y su fuerte sentido racial."<sup>313</sup> For his part, Zuloaga wrote to Garrett of his triumph: "Moi avec ma peinture sobre, classique et avec un métier poussé ; au milieu de tout le modernisme !"<sup>314</sup> ("Me with my sober, classic, strong painting; in the middle of all the modernism!")

The Spanish rebel press concurred with the Spanish essentializing of d'Ors curatorial strategy.

Todo el mundo artístico que ha concurrido a la bienal ha quedado admirado de las obras presentadas por los representantes del arte español, constituido, naturalmente, por verdaderos españoles. Esto es por los que representan la tradición gloriosa de España, que es la que encama y por la cual lucha el Generalísimo Franco.<sup>315</sup>

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<sup>312</sup> Evergreen, May 24, 1938.

<sup>313</sup> As quoted in Basilio, *Re-inventing Spain*, 212. "The work of the Master from Eibar may not coincide with contemporary standards of taste...but his historical and strongly racial character will always prevail."

<sup>314</sup> Evergreen, June 3, 1938.

<sup>315</sup> Basilio, *Re-inventing Spain*, 212-213. "All visitors to the Biennial have been impressed by the work presented by the representatives of Spanish art, constituted of course by true Spaniards. In other words, by those who represent Spain's glorious tradition, which is embodied in general Franco, who is fighting for this cause."

In a review of the exhibition critic Luis Felipe Vivanco addressed an imaginary artist, exhorting him to save contemporary art by a return to spirituality.

Rinde tú también al espíritu, pintor, la soberbia creciente de la mano artesana. Reconoce, mal que te pese, realidades humanas de un orden superior al que puede alcanzar...; Que tu visión tenga un contenido real en este mundo, y sea decididamente cristiana en la exaltación de las criaturas.<sup>316</sup>

In September, 1938, *Guernica* was exhibited, along with many of its preparatory drawings, at the New Burlington Galleries in London. *Guernica* was then sent to the United States as part of a fundraising war relief effort organized by the Artists Congress. Installed in the Valentine Gallery, New York, in May 1939, it was lauded by progressive critics such as Henry McBride and Jerome Klein, who marked its lack of overt anti-Franco propaganda and described it as a universalizing anti-war image, rather than a statement of propaganda.

It is full of war passion. It was begot out of the rage felt by the artist when he learned of the destruction...of Guernica...This sounds like propaganda and in fact the picture was intended to be such, but it ended in being something vastly more important – a work of art...People who see the picture in this country and who respond to its horror will see it simply as an argument against war in general. Picasso aimed it at one set of disputants but it puts the curse upon all disputants. Death is very similar on both sides of the battle line.”<sup>317</sup>

Its jumbled, black and white composition made it a challenge for viewers not yet accepting of cubism or the avant-garde in general.

According to both Richardson and Chipp, Zuloaga's *Siege of the Alcázar* was exhibited in an adjacent gallery to *Guernica* in London in January, 1939.<sup>318</sup> Zuloaga

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<sup>316</sup> Llorente, *Arte e Ideología*, 30. “Painter, surrender yourself as well to the spirit, not the arrogant sway of the artisan's hand [cubism]. Recognize, even though it pains you, human realities of a higher order to which you can aspire...That your vision have a real meaningfulness of this world, and be decidedly Christian in the exaltation of the figures.”

<sup>317</sup> “Picasso's *Guernica* Misses the Masses, but wins the Art Critics” *Art Digest* (May, 1939).

<sup>318</sup> Chipp, *Picasso's Guernica*, footnote 1, 219. “Ignacio Zuloaga's *Siege of the Alcázar* of 1936 honoring the Guardia Civil troops who successfully held out in the Toledo Alcázar against a siege by Republican troops in the first weeks of the war, was hung in an adjacent gallery in January 1939. According to Roland

described this exhibition, his first ever solo show in London, to Garrett. Zuloaga had been approached by members of the organizers of the British pavilion at the Venice Biennale who offered him an opportunity to exhibit in London later that year.<sup>319</sup> Shortly before the opening of this exhibition, which was shown at New Burlington Galleries December 10, 1938-January 5, 1939 Zuloaga wrote of his expectations for the show.

Je ne crois pas que ma peinture plaise ici, par conséquent, je m'attend a un fiasco. Et puis, il y a, en plus, le côté politique - qui m'est contraire, car l'on sait que je suis de côté de Franco ; et la plus grande partie de la presse Anglaise est du côté des rouges. Enfin ! Je m'en fiche.<sup>320</sup>

His fears were born out, as he wrote to Garret at the closing of the exhibition.

Mon exposition ferme après demain et voici le résultat. Grand succès entre les artistes. Beau succès de presse et mauvais succès de vente. Mon exposition est devenue une question absolument politique, car étant le 80% de la population Anglaise partisane du côté rouge Espagnole ; c'est-à-dire – anti-Franco – l'on m'a fait une guerre acharnée. Je dois vous dire que je m'en fiche car d'une autre côté j'ai fait une énorme propagande pour notre Espagne, pour l'Espagne de Franco – et cela me fait plus de plaisir que tout.<sup>321</sup>

Despite Chipp's and Richardson's descriptions of the interplay between *Guernica* and *The Siege of the Alcázar*, the historical record shows that *Guernica* left the New

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Penrose, in conversation, it attracted little attention." Richardson, *Life of Picasso*, 430. "When London's New Burlington Gallery exhibited *Guernica* in 1938, it also exhibited Zuloaga's riposte to it – a melodramatic commemoration of the *Defenders of the Alcázar of Toledo*. The *Guernica* room was always full; the Toledo one always empty."

<sup>319</sup> Evergreen, June 3, 1938. "Les Anglais me donneront la galerie que je voudrais, et même la Royale Académie." "the English will give me the gallery I wanted, and even the Royal Academy." In a letter dated August 10, 1938 he wrote "Je commence à préparer (sous les hospices et la direction de Lady Chamberlain) mon exposition de Londres, à Burlington Galleries. L'inauguration sera le 4 Décembre. " "I'm starting to prepare (under the hospices and direction of Lady Chamberlain) my London exhibition at the Burlington Galleries. The opening will be December 4."

<sup>320</sup> Ibid., December 3, 1938. "I don't think my work is popular here, so I expect a fiasco. And then there's the politics – which go against me, because everyone knows I'm on the side of Franco; and most of the English press is on the side of the reds. Oh well! I don't care."

<sup>321</sup> Ibid., January 4, 1939. "My show closes after tomorrow and here's the result. Great success among artists. Good success with the press and terrible success in sales. My show has become an issue of politics, because, since 80% of the English are on the side of the reds in Spain; that is to say – anti-Franco, they've burned me. I should tell you that I don't care because on the other hand I've made an enormous propaganda for our Spain, the Spain of Franco – and that makes me happier than anything."

Burlington Galleries at the beginning of October, and that Zuloaga's exhibition did not open until December of that year. The *Daily Telegraph* published two articles on the exhibition. The first included a photograph of Zuloaga and stated that the exhibition consisted of a retrospective of works by Zuloaga, along with the *Apocalyptic Vision* by El Greco. This painting, so significant for Zuloaga's entrée into modernist Paris in the first decade of the twentieth century, accompanied his own work as a validation of his traditionalist *hispanidad*. In a conversation with the reporter, Zuloaga was quoted as saying that the El Greco (called in the article *Profane Love*) was "the Bible of painting, embodying the past and present and foreshadowing the future of art."<sup>322</sup> But by 1938, with the Spanish Civil War raging and a pan-European war on the horizon, the links between nationalism, cultural traditionalism, and realist art were firmly in place. This is borne out in a subsequent review of Zuloaga's exhibition in the politically conservative *Daily Telegraph*.

An exhibition of paintings by the famous Spanish artist, Ignacio Zuloaga, opens today at the New Burlington Galleries....In aid of distressed women and children in Spain, it will continue until January 6.

The 45 pictures are deeply national in spirit. Directly continuing the tradition of the Spanish masters, they present the essential picturesque of the country's people and landscape. It is a romantic panorama, but true to the native idea and to experience...The many-colored aspect of popular life is concentrated in the mantilla-clad beauties of 'On the Balcony', or the Goyaesque 'Peasant' and 'Oterito'. A timeless ruggedness of stone is conveyed in 'Navarre', 'Old Houses', and 'Pancorbo'.<sup>323</sup>

The reviewer describes the works in the show with no political commentary of any kind, other than the curious mention of aid to distressed Spaniards.<sup>324</sup> Indeed, it is

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<sup>322</sup> *Daily Telegraph*, London, December 8, 1938.

<sup>323</sup> *Ibid.*, T.W Earp, "Romantic Art of Spain Zuloaga Exhibition." December 9, 1938.

<sup>324</sup> Perhaps an entrance fee, if there was such a fee, was to be donated. Certainly Zuloaga's letter to Garrett indicates a dearth of sales. His charity, however, to war orphans is attested to by his fundraising for French orphans of World War I.

plausible to assume that if the *Siege of the Alcázar* were included in the exhibition, some mention might have been made of it, if only for the picturesque qualities of Toledo and the Castilian plain, if not for the gallantry, for supporters of the Nationalist rebellion, of the Franco victory in Toledo. In the absence of a catalog for the show, and without critical mention of the painting, I think it is possible that the short period of time between the exhibition of *Guernica* and Zuloaga's exhibition led to a mythical critical comparison of the two paintings on the part of Chipp and Richardson.

The Franco victory in April, 1939, was the occasion of joy for Zuloaga.

Chère Alice, Enfin...!!!grâce a Dieu, et a Franco, voila la guerre gagnée; finie!!!! Et finie, malgré la bonne volonté des pays soit disant – démocratiques – qu'elle farce, et qu'elle honte, lorsque ces pays connaîtront la vérité de ce drame !...Nous allons tous, a présent travailler de toutes nos forces, pour reconstruire une nouvelle Espagne (libre, grande et unie) Espagnoliser l'Espagne, et fuir de toutes les influences du dehors, a fin que nous conservions notre grande personnalité. Voila mon rêve en art. Je déteste les modes (destructives de tout ce qui a de la race) Il faut (bon ou mauvais) être soi, et non pas a la manière de quelqu'un d'autre. Je vais dédier les années que puissent me rester de vie, à cette fin. Qu'elle honte ça sera dans l'avenir, pour les pays qui ont appuies le crime, le vandalisme la sauvagerie qui a régné dans le clan soviétique en Espagne ! Nous sommes tous (plus ou moins) touchés mais Dieu nous aidera, et nous nous referons.<sup>325</sup>

The outbreak of World War II had the effect of further isolating Zuloaga, just as the Franco government isolated itself from the larger conflict. Then 69 years old, Zuloaga would have no more opportunities to exhibit outside of Spain before his death in 1945.

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<sup>325</sup> Evergreen, April 4, 1939. "Dear Alice, At Last...!!!Thanks to God, and to Franco, at last the war is won and over! And over, despite the goodwill of those so-called democratic countries – what a farce, what shame, when those countries learn the truth of this drama! We all will work with all our strength to rebuild a new Spain (free, great and unified) to Spanishize Spain, and get rid of all outside influences, so that we can keep our great nature. That's my dream in art. I hate fads (which are destructive to racial characteristics) One must (for good or bad) be oneself, and not ape the style of anyone else. I will dedicate the years that are left to me to that end. What shame there will be in the future, for those countries who inflicted crime, savage vandalism, which reigned within the soviet clan in Spain! We are all affected (more or less) but God will help us."



While the Loyalist forces were executed, jailed, or exiled, Zuloaga reaped the benefits of his support for the Nationalists. Under Franco art considered avant-garde was blamed for Spain's loss of national identity in art; acceptable art that would bring Spain back to herself needed to be figurative and representational.<sup>326</sup> Making art "Spanish" again was an important concern. On this subject Zuloaga said "Yo no se decir cosas sobre el arte de hoy, y menudos del de mañana; lo único que sé es que en España hay mucho talento, y que si sabemos 'españolizarnos', el arte español sera el primero."<sup>327</sup>

Zuloaga's work was admired by Franco, who commissioned a portrait from the Basque artist in 1939 or 1940. It depicts the dictator wearing the Nationalist's uniform of the red beret of the carlists, black shirt of the falangists, and military trousers (Fig. 4.6). A billowing Spanish flag is wrapped around his shoulder. Franco appropriated the traditional red and yellow flag of the Spanish monarchy at the time that he assumed power. Zuloaga's image has the dictator placed in a barren landscape, as in so many of the artist's Castilian paintings. The figure looms over the viewer and fills the composition; the sky above is black and cloudy, a reference to war.

At his induction as head of state in October, 1936 Franco said

Me entregáis en estos momentos una España. Recibísteis nada más que pedazos de España. Os alzásteis en las distintas guarniciones desplegando la verdadera bandera de España, la bandera de España encarnada en las tradiciones y la espiritualidad de un pueblo...de una raza que no quiere morir, que entrañaba igualmente la civilización occidental, atacada ahora, y en trance de desaparecer, por las hordas rojas de Moscú.<sup>328</sup>

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<sup>326</sup> Llorente, *Arte e Ideología*, 42.

<sup>327</sup> *Ibid.*, 229. "I don't know how to talk about contemporary art, much less art of the future, all I know is that there is a lot of talent in Spain, and if we can 'spanishcize' ourselves we will be the best."

<sup>328</sup> Quoted in Basilio, *Re-inventing Spain*, 299. "Today you place one Spain in my hands. You received nothing more than fragments of Spain. You rose up in diverse military camps by unfurling the true Spanish flag, which is the incarnation of the traditions and spirituality of a people...of a race that does not want to perish, that incorporates all of Western civilization – today under attack and in danger of disappearing, by the red hordes of Moscow."

The Royal Academy of San Fernando had the authority to organize national exhibitions, which were showcases for the New Spain under Franco.<sup>329</sup> A large exhibition in Bilbao in 1939 contained the works that Zuloaga had shown at the 1938 Venice Biennale. In 1941 Zuloaga was given a large retrospective at the Museo de Arte Moderno in Madrid, at which Franco presided. According to Lafuente Ferrari, this exhibition was the talk of the town; its official nature served to showcase Zuloaga's career as Spain's greatest living artist.<sup>330</sup> It included the portrait of Franco, which was hung next to the *Siege of the Alcázar*.<sup>331</sup> The portrait was lauded in a review by Azorín, praised for its symbolism.

Y sin embargo era preciso; lo imponían el pasado, el presente y el futuro. Todos esos tiempos se condensaban en a figura que hiba a ser retratada: up pasado de error, vencido heroicamente, un presente de trabajo afanoso y un futuro de esplendor. En la mente de Zuloaga flameo una bandera: la bandera tremolaba en la cima de una montaña...y esa bandera, inmensa bandera, bandera que pudiera cobijar a todo un pueblo, esa bandera bajo el cielo de España sobre la santa tierra de España, allá en lo alto, la mantenía el Caudillo, señero y noble...el salvador de la Patria.<sup>332</sup>

Franco had visited Zuloaga's studio at the artist's home in Zumaya in the Basque region in 1939. There he saw a wood sculpted crucifixion carved by Zuloaga's friend Julio Beobide and painted by Zuloaga. Franco commissioned just such an image for the altar of the church at the Valle de los Caídos (Valley of the Fallen, Fig. 4.7). The Valle de los Caídos is Franco's monument to the victims of the war. This enormous pantheon was

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<sup>329</sup> See Llorente, *Arte e Ideología*, Chapter 3.

<sup>330</sup> Lafuente Ferrari, *Ignacio Zuloaga*, 144-145, and Llorente, *ibid.*, 225.

<sup>331</sup> Basilio, *Re-inventing Spain*, 301.

<sup>332</sup> *Ibid.*, 303. "And nonetheless, it was necessary. The past, present and future made it so. All three periods coalesced in the figure to be portrayed: a past filled with error defeated heroically, a present full of hard work and a splendid future. A flag burned in Zuloaga's mind, the flag waved atop a mountain...and this flag, this immense flag, a flag that could shield an entire people, that flag beneath the Spanish sky and in the sacred Spanish earth, held up high by Franco, commanding and noble...the savior of the Fatherland."

begun in 1940 and formally inaugurated in 1959.<sup>333</sup> Consisting of a large plaza in front of a rock face, a basilica was created within the mountain, which is topped by an enormous cross. Franco and José Antonio Primo de Rivera are buried behind the main altar. Some 40,000 dead are also buried there. A crucifixion, modeled on the one in Zuloaga's private chapel at his home in Zumaya, is placed at the main altar (Fig. 4.8). It was polychromed by Zuloaga.

Zuloaga's support for Franco, whose army was aided by what would become the Axis powers at the beginning of World War II, caused him to become defensive about his loyalties when France was invaded by Germany. He protested on two different occasions to Alice Garrett that he was loyal to France and the Allied powers, not Germany. In 1939 he wrote

Quant à la politique; je n'en jamais fait, je n'ai jamais voté. Je ne suis que – peintre – mais dans la guerre actuelle mes sympathies sont sûrement les mêmes que vous. Pensez que j'ai habité la France pendant 48 ans ; que ma femme est Française ; et que mes enfants son nés la bas. Quoi de plus ?<sup>334</sup>

Years later, shortly before his death he repeated the same theme.

Voici la guerre finie avec l'écrasement de l'Allemagne, ce qui va enfin (je l'espère) nous laisser en paix pour le restant de notre vie. Que de sang mon Dieu ! ...Que de choses à vous dire, (en français, en anglais, et en espagnol, et non pas en allemand comme vous me dites). Je n'ai rien à voir avec eux. J'ai vécu 52 ans à Paris, ma femme est Française, mes enfants sont nés à Paris et mes sentiments sont Francophile. L'ont ne peut plus.<sup>335</sup>

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<sup>333</sup> Payne, *Fascism in Spain*, 429.

<sup>334</sup> Evergreen, October 25, 1939. "As for politics, I have never participated, I have never voted. I am nothing but – a painter – but during this current war my sympathies are surely the same as yours. Think that I've lived in France for 48 years; my wife is French; my children were born there. What else is there?"

<sup>335</sup> Ibid., May, 1945. "Here is the war over with the destruction of Germany, who will (I hope) leave us in peace for the rest of our lives. Nothing but blood my God!...So many things to tell you (in French, in English, and in Spanish, but not in German as you say). I've got nothing to do with them. I've lived for 52 years in Paris, my wife is French, my children were born in Paris and my feelings are Francophile. One can do no more."

## Legacy

Zuloaga created a composition titled *My Friends* on which he worked, sporadically, during the years 1920-1936 without ever completing it (Fig. 4.9). It depicts the artist at his easel with a group of figures filling the composition; El Greco's *Apocalyptic Vision* is in the background. Ortega y Gasset is at the lower right; behind him stands 98er poet Valle Inclán wrapped in a cloak. The folded paper on the table is an origami bird and references Unamuno, who enjoyed origami. Azorín is at the left, leaning forward in front of a bullfighter. *Apocalyptic Vision* was a personal talisman that linked Zuloaga to Spain's glorious past as well as to cutting edge modernism in his early years in Paris. The 98ers, especially Unamuno and Ortega, were famous and honored intellectuals in Spain. Zuloaga intended to sum up his position as the artist-interpreter of the 98er version of Spain with this work. As we have seen, that stance, which served him so well throughout his brilliant career, ultimately put him in the rear-guard of artistic movements in the 1930s and 1940s. His painterly realism, nationalist determinism, and association with fascism all combined to make his work seem, to the larger world of art at the time of his death, *retardataire* and unimportant. But his career serves to illuminate the extent to which the politics of nationalism, both during his lifetime and today, have informed the reception of his work, as well as his subsequent fall into obscurity. The arc of his career follows that of nationalist ideology, from *discursive* to *regimented* (Gorski's tropes), as this dissertation has shown.

Zuloaga never changed his style, once having formed it. His vivid images expressed his personal interpretation of the Spanish soul. He used nationalist rhetoric in his work and allowed himself to be used for propaganda purposes without ever admitting

to any political consequence – or responsibility - for such a stance. By the time of his death, the same instincts that had given him so much success had become a trap from which his reputation has not escaped.

## Conclusion

In 1924 Zuloaga addressed a note to himself.

¿Que es arte? ¿Que es pintura? Esto me pregunto a los 54 anos. Después de haber pintado unos 500 cuadros. ¿Será debido a la época en que vivimos? ¿Es que el objetivo del arte es siempre hacer nuevo? ¿O es basarse en lo hecho, y sobre todo en lo que el natural nos enseña? ¿Que preocupaciones tuvieron los antiguos? ¿Que preocupaciones tenemos hoy? Muy diferentes seguramente.<sup>336</sup>

Zuloaga's career serves as a case study for the uneasy alliance between modernist art practice and nationalist ideology. His work exemplifies the power of early twentieth-century European nationalism to inform and direct both the making and the reception of art. An attempt to understand his work in depth within this frame has never been undertaken.

While the relationship between El Greco and Picasso has been extensively studied, Zuloaga's significant role in El Greco's recuperation has never previously been investigated and described. Through his highly influential advocacy of El Greco as both a symbol of Spain and of modernism, the Cretan artist entered the pantheon of art history. I have shown that although Picasso shared Zuloaga's nationalist project in the first years of the twentieth century, Zuloaga, not Picasso, was the standard bearer for Spanish art as it was received in France in those years. Zuloaga's important role in the debate on classicism in modernism is evinced in his rich array of friendships with French artists, critics, and intellectuals and the impact his art had on their thinking and their art. His role

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<sup>336</sup> Lafuente Ferrari, *Ignacio Zuloaga*, 152. "What is art? What is painting? I ask myself this at 54 years of age. After having painted some 500 canvases. Should it be based on the times we live in? Is art's objective always to be new? Or should it be based on the real, and above all everything that nature teaches us? What were the concerns of the ancients? What are our concerns? Surely very different."

as a leader for modernist classicism, as promoted in the writings of Denis and Bernard, has never been previously examined.

The relationship between Zuloaga and the Generation of 98 has never been studied in depth. My research reveals that his paintings gave fundamental visual expression to nationalist concepts that were a constant preoccupation for the Spanish intelligentsia from the Disaster of 1898 to the Franco regime. They were partners in a mythic invention, along with the Institución Libre de Enseñanza, who privileged art as an instrument of nation-building. I have demonstrated that Zuloaga's work exemplified, more than that of any other Spanish artist, the project to define the Spanish nation as Castilian.

Art historians have studied modernist pre-fascist and fascist art production and its myth-making nationalist underpinnings in France, Italy and Germany. This dissertation adds to that discussion in examining Zuloaga's career both in France and in Spain, in an investigation of the manner in which his own nationalist project linked him with French anti-republican intellectuals and their nationalist agenda. As a Spanish artist in France, he positioned himself as deeply *raciné* to his own advantage in a foreign market. At the same time, in Spain, he served as a symbol of a mythic Spanish identity whose controversial nature is demonstrated in the opposition to his work in his own country. *La cuestión Zuloaga* has not been examined since Enrique Lafuente Ferrari's monograph of 1975. Both Zuloaga and Picasso participated in a kind of benign Spanish determinism in their collaborations with Manuel de Falla, which has never been studied. Those projects serve as a case study for how nationalism and modernist art practice could work in tandem.

Art historians have focused on artistic and propagandistic artifacts of the Spanish Civil War, but have emphasized the activities of the loyalist side. In tracing the nationalist agendas of both the Second Republic and the Franco regime I show the similarities of their rhetoric and reveal the shift from benign to fascist nationalism in the little-known career of Ernesto Giménez Caballero. No comparison of the esthetics or the politics of Picasso's *Guernica* and Zuloaga's *The Siege of the Alcázar* has ever been undertaken. Eclipsed by Picasso's stature as the avant-garde interpreter of a profoundly evil event, Zuloaga's painting serves to underscore the increasing irrelevancy of nationalist rhetoric tied to realist art practice in the 1930s. I describe how Zuloaga's determinist nationalism, allied with an ever-increasing traditionalism, became a tool of the right when confronted by war.

My use of Philip Gorski's four tropes of nationalist mobilizations has served as a constant thread throughout this dissertation, grounding Zuloaga's career from his early, benign, determinist nationalism to the artist's embrace of the repressive authoritarian nationalism of the Franco regime. Without denying the powerful arguments of modernist nationalist theorists, for whom nationalist ideology is inherently associated with right-wing politics, I rely on scholars such as Smith and Seers, along with Gorski, because their work attempts to account for the evident and ongoing strength of nationalism within the historical record, rather than a discussion of the quality of nationalism as an ideology. This theoretical model, accompanied by the history of Zuloaga's reception and reputation, attempts to explain how an artist of his stature could rise to international fame and fortune, only to be almost completely unknown to art history outside of Spain after his death. Zuloaga's modernist practice placed him among the innovators in art in the



early years of the twentieth century. His affiliation with classicist modernism, especially in the interwar period, kept him in the forefront of successful exhibitions and sales. His rejection of cubism – and the avant-garde in general – did him no harm during his lifetime. It was the association of nationalism with right-wing ideology rising from Franco, Hitler and Mussolini, with art historical privileging of abstraction following World War II that proved a lethal combination for his reputation.

Through Zuloaga's career I have attempted to enlarge the discussion of the complex web of modernism, nationalism and fascism. The scope of my project and its focus on a single artist contains a narrative of Zuloaga's most significant activities within the context of these three issues. His career serves as an important model for the understanding of how early twentieth century art practice was informed by nationalism, and the consequences of that association.

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