

The Violence of Competing Masculinities in Emilia Pardo Bazán's *Los pazos de Ulloa* Zachary Erwin

Emilia Pardo Bazán's *Los pazos de Ulloa* (1886) takes place in rural Galicia against the backdrop of Spain's Revolution of 1868. Its plot is largely told through the eyes of Julián Álvarez, a young priest who travels from Santiago de Compostela to the once-grand and now-decaying Ulloa estate to become its new chaplain. There, he finds Pedro Moscoso, the *de facto* marquis of Ulloa, who is dominated by the estate's peasant majordomo, Primitivo, and who has fathered an illegitimate son with his maid, Sabel, Primitivo's daughter. Pedro marries his wealthy cousin, Nucha, in hopes of shoring up the Ulloa estate's finances and producing a legitimate male heir, but the young bride loses her inheritance and gives Pedro a daughter instead. Moreover, theirs is an unhappy and abusive marriage. Meanwhile, Pedro is put up as the area's reactionary Carlist candidate in the post-Revolution elections by Barbacana, one of the local *caciques*, but a betrayal by Primitivo throws the election to Pedro's liberal opponent instead, which, in turn, leads to the cold-blooded murder of Primitivo by el Tuerto, one of Barbacana's henchmen.

At the beginning of the novel, Julián, the young priest, winds his way on horseback through the Galician wilderness toward the Ulloa estate in order to take up his post as the estate's new chaplain. We learn in the first two paragraphs of the novel that Julián is a fearful and inept horseman, scarcely able to control his mount. He is also boyish and willowy. As the narrator says, "por ser joven y de miembros delicados, y por no tener pelos de barba," Julián "pareciera un niño" if not for his priestly attire (94).¹ The narrator also notes that the young man has a complexion common to "las personas linfáticas," which, according to nineteenth-century medical and psychological discourses, also marks him as feminine (Hemingway 33, Encinas 33). The narrator later reinforces this idea by describing the "endeblez de su temperamento linfático nervioso" as "puramente femenino" (115).

As he rides, Julián, who was raised in the city of Santiago de Compostela, frets over stories he has heard about "viajeros robados" and "gentes asesinadas" in the Galician countryside (97). Then, as if to confirm his fears about the violent nature of the area, two gunshots ring out nearby, spooking both the cleric and his horse. These gunshots serve as our introduction to a hunting party, which includes Pedro, Primitivo, and the boorish abbot of Ulloa. Julián's depiction as weak and effeminate contrasts starkly with descriptions of these other male

characters. Pedro's uncle, who lives in Santiago, has already warned Julián that he will likely find the marquis to be "bastante adocenado," adding that "la aldea, cuando se cría uno en ella y no sale de allí jamás, envilece, empobrece y embrutece" (113). While this characterization of Pedro as rough and vulgar is certainly borne out in the rest of the novel, in his initial encounter with Julián, the marquis is described by the narrator as "un cacho de buen mozo" (100). His robust physique, the perspiration on his skin, which indicates vigorous physical activity, and even the phallic rifle resting on his shoulder come together to give him a decidedly virile appearance in the eyes of Julián (98-99).

As for the much older Primitivo, the priest notices his facial expression, described by the narrator in racialized language as "de encubierta sagacidad, de astucia salvaje, más propia de un piel roja que de un europeo" (99). At the same time, however, we are told that Primitivo possesses "enérgicas facciones rectilíneas" which imply a sense of strength and vigor that are key hallmarks of post-Enlightenment masculinity (Encinas 23, Mosse 33). There is little physical description of the abbot in the first scene, but the narrator tells us a bit later that he is a hard-drinking, poorly groomed, musky type, who eschews the trappings of education and refinement. According to the abbot, "la última de las degradaciones en que podía caer un hombre era beber agua, lavarse con jabón de olor y cortarse las uñas" (*Los pazos* 145). He disdains Julián for his temperance and for what he sees as the new chaplain's excessively fastidious grooming habits, calling them "afeminaciones" and referring to Julián derisively as "mariquitas" (145). The abbot himself shows, as Nicholas Wolters has argued in his study of Clarín's *La Regenta*, that "clerical masculinity" is much more complex than "most appraisals of [. . .] fictional clergymen in nineteenth-century Spain," which have focused "on how gender expression of priests is coterminous with femininity" (331). The abbot's attitude toward Julián also exemplifies what Collin McKinney has called "the tension between refined and rough" masculinities, which he considers to be "the defining characteristic of the discourse of masculinity in nineteenth-century Spain" ("How" 148).

From its beginning, *Los pazos de Ulloa* compares its male characters, shows them comparing themselves to one another, and invites the reader to compare the masculinities represented by each. Therefore, it is very much a novel about manliness. By juxtaposing the weak, lymphatic, and feminized Julián with the supposedly more virile, weapon-wielding hunters in the first chapter, the novel implicitly associates manliness with violence. *Los pazos* is also a novel about containment. Julián seeks, albeit unsuccessfully, to civilize Pedro, to reign in his baser instincts, and turn him into a more settled family man and a productive manager of his badly neglected estate—all as a means of strengthening his noble authority and containing the growing power and control of non-aristocrats, like Primitivo. At the same time, Primitivo and Pedro resist Julián's efforts, using the priest's citified upbringing and his effeminate qualities against him in order to contain his influence and bolster their own sense of power and manliness.

All these characters' competing interests represent a complex interplay between three distinct models of masculinity in the novel. One of these is the post-Enlightenment, Western model of manliness, which I have previously called "the modern masculine ideal" (Erwin 549). This ideal was based in part on a notion of gender difference, prevalent by the late nineteenth century, that ascribed rational thought to men and sentimentality to women.² But it also

incorporated predominantly middle-class ideas about manhood that emphasized individual action, political and financial self-determination, and the support of a wife and family through a man's own productive work. Another model of masculinity we see in *Los pazos* is a pre-Enlightenment model, based on aristocratic leisure, inherited wealth, and feudal hierarchies. Following R. W. Connell, I will refer to this model as “gentry masculinity” (190). The third model of masculinity at play in the novel is grounded in brutality and intimidation. Here, I will call this model *cacique* masculinity.

For Connell, hegemonic masculinity is “the masculinity that occupies the hegemonic position in a given pattern of gender relations” (76). According to Connell's theory, masculine control depends both on the submission of women, and on “dominance and subordination between groups of men” (78). The breakdown of the feudal order—and, therefore, the breakdown of hegemonic gentry masculinity—is depicted in *Los pazos de Ulloa* as a direct result of the failure of characters like Pedro Moscoso to embody certain aspects of the modern, bourgeois masculine ideal. Pedro cannot live up to his own idea of pre-Enlightenment, gentry masculinity precisely because it abhors, instead of embracing, post-Enlightenment principles. This failure contributes to the destabilization of feudal hierarchies in the novel, thus eroding the influence and power upon which hegemony of gentry masculinity rests. Political theorist Hannah Arendt has argued that violence appears, not as a sign of power, but rather “where power is in jeopardy” (56). Such is the case in *Los pazos de Ulloa*, in which the decline of hegemonic gentry masculinity leads to an atmosphere of brutality and violence in the novel and to the prevalence of *cacique* masculinity, which both contains and eclipses gentry masculinity.

According to historian Jaime García-Lomberero y Viñas, nineteenth-century Galicia did not remain wholly untouched by economic modernization, but its modernization process was a limited and uneven one (266-67). In his treatise, *Galicia: su mal y su remedio*, published in 1867, just a few years before *Los pazos*, Manuel García Quijano called the region “una de las más atrasadas de la península” (12). Like the nineteenth-century Galician economy, the world of Pardo Bazán's novel functions according to an *Ancien-Régime*, feudal model, and the aristocratic masculinity that Pedro Moscoso represents, is a product of this model. As such, it depends on the maintenance of the feudal order. For Pedro, his role as the lord of a landed estate is a marker of power and influence. When asked why he does not move from his rural manor house to the city of Santiago, he says, “Yo estoy muy acostumbrado a pisar tierra mía” (171). It is significant, however, that for all his claims about his land, he is not the real marquis of Ulloa. During the events of the novel, says the narrator, “el marqués [. . .] auténtico y legal” is a distant relative of Pedro's who lives, like many absentee Galician landlords of the nineteenth century, in Madrid (133-34).³ Pedro's claim to the title is based solely on long-standing custom. Thus, his gentry masculinity is tied explicitly to land ownership, yet because he is not the land's official, legal owner, his embodiment of gentry masculinity begins unavoidably from a position of weakness and illegitimacy.

While Pedro holds the title of marquis only “por derecho consuetudinario,” his right to the title goes unquestioned by the peasantry, who, according to the narrator, “no entendían de agnaciones” (134). For him, control (if not possession) of the land equates to control over the locals. For example, of the abbot of Ulloa, he says, “Ese es tan mío como los perros que

llevo a cazar... No le mando que ladre y porte porque no se me antoja” (233). When Juncal, the doctor, deems Pedro’s wife, Nucha, incapable of nursing her newborn baby, Pedro decides to conscript a local caretaker’s daughter to serve as wet nurse (262). The doctor raises the possibility that the woman’s parents might refuse to let her perform the task, but the marquis scoffs at such an idea. He calls the nameless woman a “[g]ran vaca,” in a nod to her physical strength and her capacity to provide milk, and retorts: “Si hace ascos la traigo arrastrando por la trenza...A mí no me levanta la voz un casero mío” (263). Here we can see an example of what Connell calls the often “brutal relationship with the agricultural workforce” that characterizes gentry masculinity (191).

Commenting on the forced conscription of the wet nurse, Juncal emphasizes the feudal ethos at work both in rural Galicia and in Spain as a whole. He also emphasizes the clash between that feudal ethos and the ideals of the Revolution of 1868, which serves as the historical backdrop of the novel. He asks rhetorically, “¿Cuándo se convencerán estos señores de que un casero no es un esclavo? Así andan las cosas en España: mucho de revolución, de libertad, de derechos individuales...¡Y al fin por todas partes la tiranía, el privilegio, el feudalismo!” (263-264). He also adds, “Supóngase que la muchacha se encuentra mejor avenida con su honrada pobreza” (264). In Juncal’s opinion, the Revolution’s rhetoric of freedom and human rights cannot overcome the tyranny of feudal control.

On an extended visit to his uncle Manuel’s house in Santiago de Compostela, Pedro feels that his status and authority are threatened because his stay in the city separates him from his landed estate. He bristles at what the narrator calls “la nivelación social que impone la vida urbana,” whereby he feels like little more than “un número par en un pueblo”—Pedro’s word for city—“habiendo estado de nones en su residencia feudal” (232). At home on his estate, he says, “es uno rey de la comarca” and “uno es alguien y supone algo” (171, 233). But in the city, his status depends not on his supposed title or his land holdings, but on his relationship to others: he is merely the nephew and son-in-law of Manuel Pardo or the husband of Nucha.

For all Pedro’s insistence on his connection to the land and the power and authority it confers upon him, he serves little useful purpose on his rural estate. In this way, he subscribes to the “strict sociocultural code that [forbids] aristocrats from working with their hands,” a code that is an important element of gentry masculinity (Genie 34). But Pedro refuses to work—with his hands or otherwise. Instead, he cedes control over the estate to Primitivo. When Julián finds Pedro strolling aimlessly through its dilapidated gardens, we are told that he does so “con las manos en los bolsillos, silbando distraídamente como quien no sabe qué hacer con el tiempo” (120). When the priest suggests that he and Pedro might work together to organize the estate’s archives, the marquis heartily agrees. But the next day, he goes hunting instead, leaving Julián, as the narrator says, “para siempre jamás amen [. . .] a bregar con los documentos” (123). Moreover, when Julián visits every part of the estate in an attempt to understand its inner workings and the cultivation and sale of its crops and livestock, he finds nothing but “abusos y desórdenes,” and, lacking the required “malicia y gramática parda,” that he presumably would need to effectively communicate with the estate hands, he is powerless to make positive changes (136). But the marquis is nowhere to be found on these visits, as the narrator tells us with no shortage of irony: “harto tenía que hacer con ferias,

cazas y visitas a gentes de Cebre o del señorío montañés” (136). In other words, Pedro, who has already been characterized as a man who does not know what to do with his own time, is suddenly too busy with trifling recreational and social activities to attend to the problems of his estate. The idea here is that there is real work to be done on the estate in order to take control of its records and assets, and to counteract the mismanagement that runs rampant there. Instead of walking aimlessly through the garden, making social calls, or hunting, Pedro should be there to do that work, or at least oversee it. But in *Los pazos*, he does neither.

In *La madre naturaleza*, Pardo Bazán’s 1887 sequel to *Los pazos*, we do see an older Pedro taking a somewhat greater interest in the running of his estate. But as his nephew, Gabriel Pardo muses when he first encounters Pedro in the sequel: “¡Yo que le tenía por un castillo! [. . .] Pero también los castillos se desmoronan” (208). Much like the manor house in which he lives, the Pedro of *La madre* is a ruin of his former self. He is so overweight and gout-stricken that he can scarcely even hunt, as he so often does as a younger man in *Los pazos*. It is, perhaps, his inability to practice the leisure activities of his past that makes him take a greater interest in the workings of his estate. Even so, Pedro remains more an observer than a participant in *La madre*, leaving the real work to others, such as Perucho, the unacknowledged son he shares with his maid and Primitivo’s daughter, Sabel.

Perucho, a small child for most of *Los pazos* grows up to be a strong, vigorous, and well-proportioned young man. In the penultimate paragraph of the novel, the teenage Perucho is described as “el más guapo adolescente que puede soñar la fantasía” (404). Moreover, when we see him again in *La madre*, home on vacation from his schooling in Orense, Perucho seems to enjoy the physical work of the estate—“mostrando deleitarse en la actividad muscular” (214). Therefore, we might be tempted to see him as the noble-blooded embodiment of the modern masculine ideal and, thus, a sort of antidote to the laziness his father displays throughout *Los pazos*. But because the young man also comes from peasant stock, Pedro neglects to recognize him as his son. Perucho is thus unaware of his half-aristocratic heritage until he falls in love with—and sleeps with—Manolita, Pedro and Nucha’s daughter, who is, unbeknownst to Perucho, his own half-sister. In *La madre*’s tragic end, Perucho is sent away from the Ulloa estate to become a shop clerk in Madrid, which forestalls any possibility that he might bring modern masculine traits to bare as a means of shoring up gentry masculinity.

The continued reference to Pedro’s hunting in the *Los pazos* is important for two reasons. On the one hand, hunting, at least for aristocrats, like Pedro, is a key marker of gentry masculinity. On the other hand, as we have just seen, it serves as repeated reminder of Pedro’s neglect of his duties as the marquis of Ulloa. In Early Modern Spain, as Margaret Greer explains, the “theoretical justification for their privilege rested on the nobility’s function as the military ‘arms’ that defended the monarchy, and [. . .] hunting was considered the best training for that function” (203). Meanwhile, by the Restoration period, hunting was what Luis Benito García Álvarez has called a “paradigma del ocio aristocrático,” which “constituía toda una forma de entender el tiempo libre” (167). In *Los pazos*, Pedro spends so much time hunting because the hunt is a symbolic call-back to his martial heritage, as well as a sign of the leisure time that characterizes the aristocratic lifestyle. But the novel also questions this model because the implied author implicitly condemns the marquis’s hunting

escapades as an unproductive waste of time. In other words, while Pedro subscribes to an aristocratic model of masculinity, the implied author advocates instead for the productive work associated with the modern masculine ideal.

During Pedro and Nucha's visit to the once-grand Limioso manor, we see in the implied author a certain respect for the nobility and their chivalrous heritage. At the same time, however, the visit proves that dependence on unchanging aristocratic values and gentry masculinity are not enough to save a crumbling estate or, for that matter, an aristocracy in decline. The Limioso family's "*pazo, palacio*," as the locals respectfully call it, is the undisputed "casa más linajuda" and "más vieja" in the area (251, original emphasis). But it is now a prime example of what the narrator calls "esplendor pasado" (248). Shrouded in cobwebs and plagued by cracking, uneven floors, it has fallen into even greater ruin than Pedro's own manor house. At the Limioso estate, Pedro and Nucha are met by the living embodiment of the house's decline, a mastiff with trembling paws and yellow decaying teeth—so old, the narrator tells us, that he cannot even manage to bark (251). Similarly, when the two elderly Limioso sisters greet Nucha, she feels as though their hands are skeletal—"despojadas de carne, consuntas, amojamadas y momias"—almost like those of a decomposing corpse (254). Meanwhile, the lord of the manor himself, the brother of the old women, is so ancient and paralytic that he can no longer leave his bed, having become more like "un mito, una leyenda de la montaña" than an actual person.

For his part, Ramón Limioso, the lord's son, is only about twenty-six years old, but even he seems much older. "Sus cejas, su cabello y sus facciones todas" give him an air of "gravedad melancólica" (251). Just like his home, he is depicted as a leftover from a bygone era, albeit one whose aristocratic honor and dignity the narrator seems to respect. Using distinctly positive terms to talk about Ramón's noble lineage, the narrator asks rhetorically: "¿Quién no conoce en la montaña al directo descendiente de los paladines y ricohombres gallegos, al infatigable cazador, al acérrimo tradicionalista?" The use of the word "paladines" implies that Ramón is a direct descendent of strong, brave knights. In spite of Ramón's impoverished surroundings and his shabby clothes, he still exudes the innate nobility of "un verdadero señor desde sus principios—así decían los aldeanos—y no hecho a puñetazos, como otros" (252, original emphasis). We might read "hecho a puñetazos" here as a swipe at Pedro's less-than-authentic claim to the marquisate of Ulloa. But we might also interpret it as a reference to the *cacique*, or local political boss, who usurps the power of the noble lord without having a noble title of his own—based on violent intimidation rather than past martial glory. In other words, he is the man who gains power and influence with the brute force of his bare hands, rather than with the skillful maneuvering of the sword or the bow, thus setting the *cacique* apart from the aristocratic "paladines" of Limioso clan.

In spite of Ramón Limioso's noble character and supposedly glorious heritage, Ramón's is nonetheless a "dignidad algún tanto burlesca para quien por primera vez lo veía" (251-52). Thus, aristocratic dignity, when set against Ramón's threadbare finery and run-down "palace," makes him seem, even for a seemingly admiring narrator, both anachronistic and a bit ridiculous. His poverty shows that neither a noble heritage, nor a purely aristocratic model of manliness is sufficient to maintain wealth and power in nineteenth-century Spain. As Pedro and Nucha leave the ruined Limioso estate to return to their own decaying home,

the narrator says, “callaron todo el camino porque les oprimía la tristeza inexplicable de las cosas que se van” (254). Pedro and Nucha feel a strong sense of sorrow at the decline of the Limioso family and its estate. The implied author shares this sorrow, and the reader is meant to do so as well. At the same time, this episode can also be read as a cautionary tale, to show Pedro the depths to which the Ulloa estate could fall if he fails to take action, thereby eroding his gentry masculinity even further. It is a warning, however, that, at least for the duration of *Los pazos*, goes unheeded.

In the Ulloa manor house’s archive, we see an important illustration of the past and present neglect of the estate by its owners, as well as the resulting economic consequences. The archive serves as a microcosm for the whole estate, described by the narrator, from Julián’s perspective, as “una ruina vasta y amenazadora, que representaba algo grande en lo pasado, pero [que] se desmoronaba a toda prisa” (129). As the chaplain walks into the archive for the first time, the floor is strewn with papers. To his horror, Julián inadvertently steps on an *ejecutoria de nobleza*, a centuries-old letter that granted Pedro’s family their noble title (122-23). Left on the dirty floor to be trodden on by the chaplain—a product of the servant class—the document is a symbol of the wealth and control that Pedro has let peasants, like Primitivo, take from him. Thus, it is a physical sign of the breakdown of the both the feudal order and the aristocratic model of masculinity that is built upon it.

Later, while cleaning the archive, Julián is equally horrified to discover books there by the likes of Voltaire and Rousseau (125-26). Voltaire’s works were prohibited by the Church in 1762 and were still on a list of expurgated books published in Madrid in 1844, a mere quarter century before the action of the novel (Pardo Bazán, *Los pazos* 126 n. 63). While the narrator specifies that the young chaplain “no era en extremo intolerante,” we are told that, “lo que es Voltaire, de buena gana le haría [Julián] lo que a las cucarachas” (126). Here we see both a healthy respect for feudal authority, which is closely linked in the novel to church authority, and a strong distaste for Enlightenment ideas that might disturb that authority. But the fact that Julián finds the books caked in dust and riddled with wormholes and insect bites also shows that, if the old order is under threat at the Ulloa manor, the new order (and a more modern model of masculinity), ushered in by the Enlightenment, have yet to take hold in its place.

So confusing and indecipherable are the records and so intricate are traditional Galician land rights going back to the medieval period, that Julián considers them an impenetrable labyrinth. For that reason, Julián tells Pedro that what the Ulloa estate really needs is “un abogado, una persona entendida” (128). Significantly, the narrator then tells us that, if not for the death of his father when Pedro was very young, the marquis “acaso hubiera tenido una carrera,” which might have given him the necessary tools to run his estate effectively (129).⁴ Instead, Pedro was raised by his lazy, anti-intellectual, violent, uncle Gabriel. The implication is that, if the estate had been actively managed by a hardworking, educated marquis, rather than being ignored by the lazy rube, Pedro, the foundations of its landed fortune might still be intact. There would be other problems to address, but at least an educated, professional lord of the manor might be better equipped to address them.

It is important to understand, however, that the Ulloa estate's decline is not solely attributable to neglect, mismanagement, laziness, or lack of education on the part of Pedro and his family. Treachery and deceit have also been major contributors to its financial difficulties. The peasantry is seen, not as a group of loyal vassals who do the hard work of the estate, but rather as a constant threat to Pedro's wealth and control. The best example of this threat is Primitivo. To be sure, Pedro is the nominal lord of the manor. But the real power—what the narrator calls the “real omnipotencia”—lies in the peasant majordomo (136). While the laborers treat Pedro with a certain respect by virtue of his social rank, their attitude toward Primitivo is one of “sumisión absoluta” (136-37). As Pedro frustratedly tells Julián, Primitivo “manda en todos, incluso manda en mí” (170). When Julián asks the marquis why he does not dispatch with Primitivo and hire someone else to take his place, Pedro says that a new majordomo would either be “hechura de Primitivo y entonces estábamos en lo mismo,” or that “Primitivo le largaría un tiro en la barriga” (170). Thus, Primitivo is able to maintain control of the estate's daily operations, in part because Pedro is too helpless and ignorant to do it himself, but also because the marquis is afraid that any attempt to challenge him would ultimately be pointless or lead to a violent outcome.

With no oversight or check on his power over the Ulloa estate, Primitivo cunningly pilfers resources from the estate's holdings, then loans them back to the estate and to poor renters in the region at exorbitant rates of interest, thus gaining economic power as a usurer (343-44). But he is not the only peasant stealing from Pedro. Specifically, the marquis repeatedly accuses others of absconding with produce and failing to pay land rents. At various points in the novel, peasants are clearly victimized by Pedro, as when he forces the local girl to serve as wet nurse for Nucha, or when he brutally beats Sabel, his maid and mistress, for her supposed infidelity to him. While the reader is not meant to approve of these actions, they are consonant with Pedro's role as lord of the manor and with the model of gentry masculinity which he strives to embody. At the same time, however, as peasants like Primitivo and others also usurp his authority and his wealth, the social order is up-ended. This situation has important consequences for Pedro's manliness, as well. As we have already seen, his laziness precludes him from embodying the modern masculine ideal. At the same time, he lacks any real control over his land and its inhabitants, so he fails to meet even the most basic requirements of gentry masculinity. As a result, he is neither a modern man, nor a real man according to the *Ancien-Regime*, aristocratic scheme.

The weakness of gentry masculinity and its failure to adopt modern, masculine principles in *Los pazos* gives purchase to *cacique* masculinity—exemplified by, but not limited to “el señor hecho a puñetazos,” the *cacique*, himself. In a 1901 essay, Joaquín Costa (following Gumersindo de Azcárate) defined *caciquismo* as “feudalismo de un nuevo género, cien veces más repugnante que el feudalismo guerrero de la Edad Media, y por virtud del cual se esconde bajo el ropaje del Gobierno representativo una oligarquía mezquina, hipócrita y bastarda” (24, original emphasis). As Julio Prada and Rogelio López Blanco note, Spanish *caciquismo* is most closely associated with the Restoration period, though it began much earlier (349).⁵ For their part, Ramón Villares et al. even quote a long passage from *Los pazos* as a primary source document to illustrate “[o] caciquismo da época da Restauración” in their *Textos e materiais para a historia de Galicia*, even though the novel clearly depicts pre-Restoration *caciquismo* (199). Prada and López Blanco write that *caciquismo* is far from “un

fenómeno exclusivamente gallego, sino extendible a la totalidad del Estado, como corresponde a un país donde la gran mayoría de su población continúa viviendo en el campo” (349). At the same time, however, they add that, because Galicia remained even more rural than other parts of Spain throughout the nineteenth century, it was particularly susceptible to the influence of *caciques* (349). Moreover, according to historian Sharif Gemie, all rural Galician elections between 1876 and 1923 “with one debatable exception, were won by candidates supported by *caciques* from either the Liberal or Conservative parties” (37).

At least in the Galician case, as represented in the novel, the *cacique* comes either from the bourgeoisie or from the peasantry, but takes control over both peasants and aristocrats alike through violence and intimidation, making a mockery of both feudal privilege and any semblance of a representative, electoral system. The two principal *caciques* in *Los pazos* are the reactionary, Carlist lawyer, Barbacana, and the liberal functionary, Trampeta. While each of them is a member of the middle class, they gain influence not by honest work, but rather by corruption and intimidation. For his part, Primitivo, who is described by the narrator as a “cacique subalterno,” uses his influence to promote one (or both) of the two main *caciques*, depending on which will be most advantageous to him (334). Crucially, *cacique* masculinity in *Los pazos* goes far beyond the political bosses themselves, be they the main, bourgeois *caciques*, Barbacana and Trampeta, or the peasant Primitivo. Because it is based on violence and intimidation, I see *cacique* masculinity as a useful framework to describe the violent negotiations of masculinity—and the ways that violence or the threat thereof is used to contain the authority and influence of others—throughout the text. At one time or another in *Los pazos*, aristocrats, peasants, and clerics all fall under the sway of the violent manliness that characterizes *cacique* masculinity.

We can see these negotiations, for example, in the hunt scene in chapter XXII of *Los pazos*. On a macro level the hunt is, as I have noted, the supposed domain of gentry masculinity in the novel, though Pedro’s dependence on Primitivo to carry out the hunt undermines the marquis’s aristocratic manliness. On a micro level, the hunt also illustrates the small ways in which the participating men exert, confirm, and contest their own manliness and that of others. As Greer says, “[w]e usually think of the hunt as an activity in which human beings confront the animal world, an exercise in which more or less civilized man measures his strength against nature in its pristine force. But it is also the terrain in which man tests his powers against man” (201-2). The negotiations of power and manliness displayed in the hunt do not involve violence among male characters in *Los pazos*, but they do make use of violence toward animals as a means of comparing and evaluating manly skill. As we have already noted, various characters from a range of social classes confirm and exert their own virility by calling Julián’s manliness into question, thus subordinating his masculinity to their own. The hunt scene is another example of such subordination. The chaplain’s lack of hunting clothes and gear makes him a target of mockery—the “blanco de las bromas de los cazadores”—before the hunt even begins (315). Once the hunt is underway, says the narrator, “ocurrióseles a los cazadores que sería cosa muy divertida darle a Julián una escopeta y un perro y que intentase cazar algo.” In other words, Pedro and his companions know that Julián has little experience or skill at hunting, and they insist that he participate just so that they can take pleasure in his incompetence. Try as he might to refuse, he eventually gives

into this peer pressure because, as the narrator says, “Quieras o no quieras, fue preciso conformarse” (315-16). When the retriever provided for Julián—an expert hunting dog, described as an “hidalgo animal”—is confused by the chaplain’s incorrect commands, the implication is that the chaplain is even less “manly,” in a sense, at least in terms of gentry masculinity, than the so-called “hidalgo” dog (116). According to Robert Lott’s analysis of the hunt scene, the chaplain’s “utter ineptness, in the midst of primitive manly virtues, makes him the butt of ridicule” (4). By extension, his ineptness also highlights the “primitive manly virtues” of the other hunters. Thus, he shores up their manliness by displaying his own lack thereof.

Another, more complex scene in which masculine dominance and subordination turn into violence, or at least abuse, is the one in which Primitivo, Pedro, and the abbot inebriate Perucho—at that point in the novel, a mere toddler—as a means of shaming and containing Julián. When the priest tells them that he prefers drinking water instead of wine, he receives a disdainful look from the drunkard abbot, who believes that “el que no bebe, no es hombre” (108). When one of the dogs then snaps at Perucho, causing him to cry, Julián rushes to comfort him. But Pedro scolds the child for such a show of weakness. He then hands his wine glass to the boy, who eagerly gulps it down, prompting vociferous praise from Pedro. When Julián objects to giving such a small child alcohol, the other men take his objection as a challenge. The marquis, the abbot, and Primitivo then goad the boy into gulping down alcohol until he is nearly too drunk to continue, at which point the majordomo offers Perucho a copper coin to keep drinking. This prompts Julián to put aside his natural timidity and to confront Primitivo in defense of the boy (111). But the majordomo prevails, and Perucho drains the wine bottle.

The drinking scene shows us a game of one-upmanship, victimization of the weak and defenceless, and the negotiation of power dynamics and anxieties about manliness. Another example of this idea appears near the end of the novel. After his party loses the local election, Barbacana’s supporters gather in his office to lick their collective wounds. Pedro Moscoso, the losing candidate himself, is not present, a fact which indicates his role as a mere pawn in the political games of the *cacique* and his coterie. A crowd of drunken revelers can be heard chanting outside Barbacana’s office. In addition to laudatory cries of “Viva nuestro diputado” and “Viva la Soberanía Nacional,” the crowd also shouts, with increasing fervor, “¡Mueran los curas! [. . .] ¡Muera la tiranía! [. . .] ¡Muera el marqués de Ulloa! [. . .] ¡Muera el ladrón [. . .] Barbacana!” (361). Hearing this chanting, the men in the office bristle, anticipating a violent altercation. In a scene that seems more appropriate to a spaghetti Western than to a late-nineteenth-century Spanish realist novel, Barbacana extracts two large pistols from his desk drawer—an act which the other men take as a sort of call to arms. Eventually it becomes evident that the townspeople are merely dancing and shouting, and that they pose no actual, physical threat. But Barbacana and his men decide to go outside and violently clear the crowd anyway, just for fun. Afterward, the narrator describes Barbacana’s men ironically as “héroes de la gran batida” and says, as they gallop off into the countryside on horseback, that they do so “no [. . .] cabizbajos, a fuer de muñidores electorales derrotados, sino lleno de regocijo, con gran cháchara y broma” (366). Tellingly, these men are of differing classes, from the nobleman Ramón Limioso, to the middle-class lawyer, Barbacana, to the animalized peasant, known only as “el Tuerto.” It is precisely their defeat in the election that leads these men to

violence, and they fight alongside one another to contain their anxieties and to feel heroic and manly again. But this scene is not one of triumph because it exemplifies Arendt's idea that violence erupts not as a manifestation of power, but rather of its absence. The scene also shows that, in the world of *Los pazos*, a class-crossing group such as this one can only express its manliness through brutality.

According to Lou Charon-Deutsch, Julián Álvarez undergoes a "ritual-like gender rebirth" when he begins to care for Nucha's baby (118). Because he is "scorned by men for lacking authority and hunting skills and for being too effeminate," she says, "he is ceremoniously admitted into a feminine circle of holding and touching." For Charon-Deutsch, Julián's real manhood lies in "his willingness to be different from what a real man was presumed to be in terms of nineteenth-century Spanish rural society" (117). But in Julián's attempt—albeit a failed one—to overcome his natural timidity and to challenge Primitivo in defense of Perucho, we have already seen that even the chaplain is not immune to the violent tendencies that permeate *Los pazos*. At the end of the novel, as Julián looks back on its events from ten years later, he remembers his final encounter with Pedro, in which the marquis accuses him of sleeping with Nucha, threatens him, and banishes him from the estate. The narrator says:

No olvidará aquellas inesperadas tribulaciones, valor repentino y ni aún de él mismo sospechado que desplegó en momentos tan críticos para arrojar a la faz del marido cuanto le hervía en el alma, la reprobación, la indignación contenida por su habitual timidez; el reto provocado por el bárbaro insulto; los calificativos terribles que acudían por vez primera de su boca, avezada únicamente a palabras de paz, el emplazamiento *de hombre a hombre* que lanzó al salir de la capilla... (393, original emphasis)

While the confrontation does not rise to the level of physical violence, it does constitute a conflict and a challenge. It is only because of this challenge that Julián finally overcomes his supposedly feminine qualities, like timidity, and acquires a bravery that allows him to address Pedro "man to man" for the first (and only) time in the novel. Moreover, as he flees the estate, his newfound manly qualities persist. He speedily saddles a horse "con sus propias manos" and rides away, "desplegando una maestría debida a la urgencia" that draws a stark contrast to his fumbling horsemanship in the novel's opening scene (394).

In the last chapter of the novel, which follows Julián's galloping departure from the Ulloa estate, he returns after serving for ten years as a parish priest in a remote but peaceful mountain village, whose inhabitants are "pobres pastores" (396). Now the narrator calls the priest "más varonil" and says that he is in the midst of "la edad viril" (400). According to Jeremy Squires, in "his final form, Julián is portrayed approvingly by Pardo Bazán," and "the dwindling away of androgynous traits seems to be welcomed" by the narrator's repeated use of words like "varonil" and "viril" to describe him (51). He is, of course, a decade older here. But the description of him as both more mature and more manly appears just a few pages after his threatening—if not physically violent—confrontation with Pedro. The implication is that the once meek and feminized Julián has learned to become a man, at least in part, *because* of that confrontation, in which even he embodies, if only briefly, the *cacique* masculinity that pervades the Ulloa estate and its environs.

In Julián's ten-year absence, we are told that the nearby village of Cebre has undergone some changes, but that "los dos caciques aún continúan disputándose el mero y mixto imperio," though the balance of power has shifted from Barbacana to Trampeta (399). Moreover, the Ulloa estate has remained unchanged, "desafiando al tiempo" (398). The narrator says, "[n]inguna innovación útil o bella se nota en su mueblaje, en su huerto, en sus tierras de cultivo." Thus, there is little indication that *cacique* influence has ended or that the lazy, brutish Pedro has become a more refined aristocrat or a more effective land manager, even though, as I mentioned above, he does seem a bit more engaged in the running of the estate when we see him again in *La madre naturaleza*.

For all the emphasis on the *caciques* and the violence they both represent and engender in the fictional world of *Los pazos*, Gemie points out that, in reality, Galician *caciquismo* in the late nineteenth century functioned more by persuasion and manipulation than by actual violence. He writes that "the threat of violence was usually enough to impose conformity" and that *caciques* exerted their influence through "a bribe, a sermon, a speech," or in some cases, through manipulation of local tax assessments, whereby "those who had voted 'badly' would be penalized by a high tax demand" (37-38). Moreover, even as Pardo Bazán continues the story of the Ulloa estate and many of its characters in *La madre naturaleza*, the sequel represents a shift in both tone and emphasis. As she writes in her "Apuntes autobiográficos," the author's goal with *Los pazos* is to explore "la montaña gallega, el caciquismo y la decadencia de un noble solar," whereas with *La madre*, she writes: "doy rienda á mi afición al campo, al terruño y al paisaje" (81). The brutal, violent world of the first novel gives way to an idyllic natural environment in the second, and the focus moves from the rural political conflict of *Los pazos* to the doomed, incestuous love triangle formed by Perucho, Manolita, and Gabriel Pardo.

So how, then, are we to interpret Pardo Bazán's choice to emphasize treachery, intimidation, abuse, and murder in *Los pazos*? We can read it as an exhortation and a warning to aristocratic men of her era to embrace middle-class values inherent in the modern masculine ideal, such as hard work and professional education—not as a means of replacing or eclipsing gentry masculinity, but rather of shoring up its waning authority. If, on the other hand, these aristocrats remain stagnant and fail to adopt modern masculine principles, as Pedro Moscoso does in the novel, they risk dire, destructive, and indeed violent consequences, not just for the aristocracy, but also for the broader social order, as well as Spain's progress into modernity.

St. Mark's School of Texas

Notes

¹ Colin McKinney has argued that, after falling out of fashion in the eighteenth century due to French influence, facial hair in nineteenth-century Spain “represented a key dividing line between femininity and hegemonic masculinity, and was symptomatic of a broader effort to remasculinize Spanish men” (“Pogonology” 62).

² We see this gender binary in G. Encinas’s 1875 treatise, *La mujer comparada con el hombre: Apuntes filosófico-médicos*, in which the author lists the qualities he sees as distinctly masculine and feminine: the former being “la fuerza, la majestad, el valor y la razón”, and the latter, “la belleza, la gracia, la finura y el sentimiento” (24). Repeatedly emphasizing women’s “extrema sensibilidad,” Encinas goes even further to mark rational intelligence as the dominion of men: “Las ideas abstractas y generales, los sistemas metafísicos y filosóficos, son casi indiferentes a la mujer, y sólo hay un medio de hacerlos compatibles con su inteligencia, que es de hacerlos pasar por su corazón” (48-49).

³ For more on absenteeism among Galician landlords, see Gemie 36.

⁴ Pardo Bazán’s novels offer various examples of men who pursue university degrees in spite of their aristocratic status. For example, Víctor de Formoseda, who first appears in *Pascual López, autobiografía de un estudiante de medicina* (1879) before being mentioned briefly in *Los pazos*, studies law at the University of Santiago de Compostela even though he is, as *Los pazos*’s narrator tells us, “de muy limpio solar montañés, y no despreciable caudal” (192). Benicio Neira, another aristocrat, from *Doña Milagros* (1894) and *Memorias de un solterón* (1896), also studies law in Santiago, though it should be noted that his law degree does not help him embrace productive work. As Neira’s daughter, Feíta, says in *Memorias*, “Papá, no [se decidió] nunca a... a hacer algo, a solicitar un puesto, a jugar los codos. Su honradez, su modestia, su decencia, le estorbaban...” (250-51).

⁵ Prada and López Blanco contend that the birth of *caciquismo* “puede retrotraerse al instante mismo del nacimiento del Estado liberal” (349). Thus, we can date the beginnings of *caciquismo* to around 1833, some thirty-five years before the September Revolution (Vincent 1; Fernández Casanova 103).

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