Writing and Re-Writing the Working-Class Experience in Barcelona, 1888-1923

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Acknowledgements

The purpose of this project is to explore the city of Barcelona, a city that I came to know and love throughout my personal and professional travels to Spain. It is a city unlike any other in many ways, from its curious urban landscape which stems from the Casco Antiguo and extends beyond Gràcia, its mix of cultures and immigrant populations from around the world, its particular solidarity, to its political history and current practice. This project has evolved over the past three years, as they tend to, and its focus now lies particularly on the working-class experience of industrial, cosmopolitan, and capitalist Barcelona. What first drew me to this project was Eduardo Mendoza's *La verdad sobre el caso Savolta* (1975), a novel I instantly loved and respected for its structural complexity, playful narrator, and deep roots in history. As I began to explore Mendoza's other novels, I discovered *La ciudad de los prodigios* (1986) and was yet again captivated by the intricacy with which he portrays an experience of Barcelona at the peak of its industrialization.

However, two considerations dawned on me. On the one hand, neither of these novels featured protagonists who remained in the lower classes of society throughout, but rather they showed character ascension into a higher socioeconomic class. On the other hand, Eduardo Mendoza is a Catalan-born author who writes in Castilian and enjoys a considerable amount of fame. I was missing the voice of the Catalan authors and artists who also have novels and films to share regarding the same topic. My archival search began in the Filmoteca de Catalunya, and I found that Catalan filmmakers were also focused on the working-class experience at the turn of the twentieth century in Barcelona. The films that I will discuss in this project include *La ciutat cremada* (1976), directed by Antoni Ribas and Miquel Sanz, *Victòria! La gran aventura d'un*

poble (1986), by the same directors, and *La teranyina* (1990), directed by Antoni Verdaguer i Serra and adapted from the 1985 novel by Jaume Cabré with the same title.

I am grateful for the opportunity I had to travel to the archives, libraries, and bookstores in Barcelona. I could not have completed this project without the financial support from the Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences (AHSS) Summer Research grant awarded by the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at the University of Virginia. The academic support and inspiration from my director, Andrew A. Anderson, has been invaluable throughout this entire process. Thank you for the many consults, suggestions, and resources you have provided me over the past three years. I appreciate the time my committee – E. Michael Gerli, Samuel Amago, and Mark Sicoli – has taken to read and provide feedback on this project as well as their overall support for my research. Lastly, I thank all of my family that has lifted me up along the way, especially my husband Jacob who has supported my long research trips and lengthy writing days for several years now.

Writing this dissertation in amidst the global COVID-19 pandemic has had its share of challenges, one of which was access to sources. With many libraries around the world closed for months, and then open only partially, it became difficult to acquire books and articles that I had hoped to include in the project. A fortuitous exchange of messages on the website todocoleccion.net – a site similar to eBay for purchasing books, newspapers, collector's items, etc. – led me to form a professional relationship with an individual seller on the site. After seeing several of my requests that had piqued his interest, he asked about my project and what other kinds of materials I might need. Over the next few months, packages of newspapers and magazines from the 1970s and 1980s arrived on my porch. It was quite a slow process, given the extended shipping times from Spain to the United States, but it was a happy solution to the

problem of locating sources. This particular form of archival research opens a new pathway for doing research in today's global world connected by the internet. It is one avenue for pursuing research that involves collectors who share a common interest with the scholar. At the same time, I found the Catalan Twitter community to be incredibly responsive. Not only in my own research, but also as I observe that of other scholars, I have noticed the community-based research practices that are emerging from social networks such as Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram. Particularly during the pandemic, scholars from all disciplines have often worked together to locate sources. The experiences we have shared over the past fourteen months have forged, in many cases, a strong community of scholars and interested individuals eager to help each other. This has certainly been my experience, and it is one for which I am extremely grateful.

A note on language

The question of language is important in this project, as it conveys political and power dynamics at play in the historic and contemporary periods. I have chosen to write the main text in English, as that is my native language and the one with which I am most comfortable. However, I consult films, articles, interviews, novels, etc., written in Catalan, Castilian, and English. In an effort to make this study accessible to as many people as possible, I have also translated all direct quotes into English. All translations in this project are my own, unless otherwise noted. At the same time, I refer to organizations born out of Catalunya by their original Catalan names and acronyms, and I provide translations into English only in parentheses. When referring to places and people within Catalunya, I also generally use the Catalan names. Nevertheless, this system is not perfect, and there were many times where I had to make a decision of which language to use. In the Appendix, there is a list of acronyms and their meanings as well as a catalogue of the key historical figures mentioned throughout the text. These are meant to assist the reader who is approaching this topic for the first time, but it is by no means a comprehensive review of all the many organizations and individuals alive and active in the time period under consideration.

"LA LLIBERTAT", *EL PRIMERS FREDS* (2004), JOAN MARGARIT

La llibertat és la raó de viure,
dèiem, somniadors, d'estudiants.
És la raó dels vells, matisem ara,
la seva única esperança escèptica.
La llibertat és un estrany viatge.
Va començar en les places
de toros amb cadires a la sorra
en les primeres eleccions.
És el perill, de matinada, al metro,
són els diaris al final del dia.
La llibertat és fer l'amor als parcs.
La llibertat és quan comença l'alba
en un dia de vaga general.
És morir lliure. Són les guerres mèdiques.
Les paraules República i Civil.
Un rei sortint en tren cap a l'exili.
La llibertat és una llibreria.
Anar indocumentat.
Les cançons prohibides.
Una forma d'amor, la llibertat.[1]

"LIBERTY"

Liberty is the reason for living,
we used to say, we dreamers, when students.
It's the reason of the old, we now say, for a change,
their only skeptical hope.
Liberty is a strange journey.
It began in the bull-rings
with chairs in the sand
in the first elections.
It's the danger, mornings, in the metro,
it's the newspapers at the end of the day.
Liberty is making love in the parks.
Liberty is when dawn breaks
on the day of a general strike.
It is dying free. It is the medical wars.
The words Republic and Civil.
A king leaving by train to go into exile.
Liberty is a bookshop.
Travel without papers.
The songs that are forbidden.
A form of love, liberty.[2]

[1] Poem from the Joan Margarit website: https://www.joanmargarit.com/category/seleccio-de-poemes-escrits-i-recitats/els-primers-freds-ca-ca/.
[2] This translation is taken directly from the Joan Margarit website: https://www.joanmargarit.com/en/liberty/.

"SEGURETAT", CÀLCUL D'ESTRUCTURES (2005), *JOAN MARGARIT*

Els paletes a l'alba fan un foc
amb restes d'encofrats.
La vida ha estat un edifici en obres
amb el vent al més alt de les bastides,
sempre de cara al buit, perquè se sap
que el qui posa la xarxa no té xarxa.
De què serveix haver repetit tant
paraules com amor?
Pobres bombetes a un final de línia,
s'encenen els records. Però no vull
que ningú em compadeixi: em repugna
aquesta forma fàcil del menyspreu.
Necessito el dolor contra l'oblit.
Una foguera encesa amb uns fustots
davant de la bastida és el que sóc:
una petita resplendor
que, sigui el que sigui ser jutjat,
ningú ja no em podrà negar mai més.[3]

"SAFETY"

The bricklayers at dawn get a fire going
with the remains of plank mouldings.
Life has been a building under construction
with the wind at the top of the scaffolding,
and always facing into the void, because you know
that the man who's installing a safety-net has no net.
What use is it to have gone on repeating
words like love?
Feeble light-bulbs at the end of a line,
memories come on. But I don't want
anyone to feel sorry for me: I find
that easy kind of contempt repugnant.
I need pain against oblivion.
A bonfire lit from scraps of wood
burning beside some scaffolding, is who I am:
a tiny blaze
which, whatever it may mean to be judged,
no one can deny me ever again.[4]

[3] Poem from the Joan Margarit website: https://www.joanmargarit.com/category/seleccio-de-poemes-escrits-i-recitats/calcul-destructures-ca/.
[4] This translation is taken directly from the Joan Margarit website: https://www.joanmargarit.com/en/safety/.

Introduction

My purpose in this project is to explore the cultural representations of the working-class experience at the turn of the century in Barcelona, Spain. I am most concerned by the process through which filmmakers and writers in post-Franco Spain depicted the quality of life, activities, and organization of the proletariat in industrial Barcelona from 1888 to 1923. The project intends to provide a deeper understanding of the Catalan lower class and its place within the greater Spanish history of the time. The historic period is significant for a number of reasons, including both foreign and domestic economic and political circumstances. Among the most important historical themes are: the growth of Catalan separatism, general urban expansion, industrialization, and the rise of trade unions, worker unrest, violence, and anarchism. Furthermore, the key historical events of these years are: the Barcelona Universal Exposition of 1888, the loss of the remaining Spanish colonies in 1898, the Tragic Week in 1909, World War I and its economic impact, the strikes of 1917 and 1919, and finally the coup d'état in 1923 that resulted in the dictatorship of Miguel Primo de Rivera and ended the period of the Restoration of the monarchy. It is clear that this time period was filled with political and social turmoil, as well as a large increase in industrialization and modernization of the city. In this project, I study works of literature, art, and film of Barcelona that analyze the city and its culture from 1888-1923. I limit the scope of my investigation to analyzing the works that were created during the period between 1975 and 1990, the fifteen years following the death of Francisco Franco, the dictator who had controlled Spain since 1939.

There are three primary reasons for which I have chosen to study Barcelona: its tendency to be overlooked, its unique and particularly innovative artistic movements, and the way its tumultuous past relates to its politically unstable present. Though there are many canonical

works that are set in Barcelona, fewer works written and/or produced by Catalan authors and artists are actually studied in the Spanish literature classroom. I see this as an enormous missed opportunity to consider literature coming out of a city that has been shown to be one of the most innovative artistic settings in Spain. I also believe there is value in studying Barcelona's political past for it gives us insight into the difficult political situation that the metropolis is experiencing at the present. While the city's socio-political instability certainly dates back further than 1888, I believe that is a good starting point given the celebration that year of the Barcelona Universal Exposition, which increased industrialization, class difference, tourism, and violence.[5]

I study authors who have written in Catalan as well as those who write in Castilian, incorporating both canonical and non-canonical works in the process. Eduardo Mendoza's two novels set in Barcelona, *La verdad sobre el caso Savolta* (1975) and *La ciudad de los prodigios* (1986), are the basis for a large part of the project.[6] I also consider the film *La ciutat cremada* (1976) directed by Antoni Ribas and set in Barcelona from 1899-1909.[7] The film explores class relations and industrialization and has seldom been studied in an academic format. Lastly, I study the films *Victòria! La gran aventura d'un poble* (1983, directed by Ribas) and to a lesser extent, *La teranyina* (1990, directed by Antoni Verdaguer), which have also been largely ignored in scholarship about Spanish cinema during the Transition.[8] In fact, a number of books and

[5] The first international exposition began in London with the Great Exhibition in 1851. It was followed by the 1855 Universal Exposition in France and six others before the 1888 Universal Exposition in Barcelona. Barcelona also held another Universal Exposition in 1929, but after that event, the next time Spain would host the event was in 1992 in Seville. From here on, I will refer to these events with the general term "Expo," although they are also known as World's Fairs, International Expositions, and Universal Expositions, among other titles.

[6] Both of these novels have been translated into English, and throughout the project, I will provide translations of the Castilian text using the English versions, *The Truth About the Savolta Case* (translated by Alfred Mac Adam in 1992) and *The City of Marvels* (translated by Bernard Molloy in 1988).

[7] While there is no existing translation of the film or script, the commonly used English version of the title is *The Burned City* and the published Castilian translation is titled *La ciudad quemada*.

[8] The Castilian title of *Victòria!* is *Victoria! La gran aventura de un pueblo*. While there is no existing English translation of the *Victòria!* film or script, the English version of the title would be *Victory! The Great Adventure of the Working Class*. The published Castilian translation of *La teranyina* is titled *La telaraña* and the English translation would be *The Spiderweb*.

anthologies quickly pass over *La ciutat cremada* and rarely, if ever, mention the other films listed.[9] Later in the introduction, I will demonstrate precisely why I believe this is a missed opportunity. However, in order to orient the readers before delving into these sources in greater detail, I will first provide a summary of Catalunya's origins and history, culminating with the social, political, and economic circumstances of Barcelona through the first quarter of the twentieth century.

Catalunya – Origins and History

A brief survey of the sociopolitical history of Catalunya will help us better understand the time period in question. The province had its own complex system of government "Cortes" starting as early as the thirteenth century. Historian Thomas Bisson states that Catalunya "belongs to those countries for which the concept of nation preceded that of State. There is no doubt that the Catalan nation existed before the twelfth century" (455; cited in Casanovas 2).[10] The County of Barcelona even had a parliament and its own constitution. In 1137, a dynastic union brought the Kingdom of Aragon and the County together in a composite monarchy known as the Crown of Aragon, within which the County remained a distinct entity. Later, Catalunya "developed one of the most advanced – if not the most advanced – constitutional system in fourteenth-century Europe" (Payne, "Catalan" 15). However, in the fifteenth century, Catalunya lost some of its autonomous power when Fernando de Aragón married Isabel de Castilla and

[9] Ramón Rubio Lucía's book *The History of Spain through Cinema* (2009) makes a brief mention (roughly three sentences) of *La ciutat cremada*, and it does not mention *Victòria!* or *La teranyina* at all. *Cultura herida: Literatura y cine en la España democrática* (2002), written by Cristina Moreiras Menor, makes no mention of any of the three films. Josep María Caparrós Lera briefly mentions *La ciutat cremada* in his article "Cataluña y su historia, en la pantalla" in *Cuadernos de Historia Contemporánea*, no. 23, 2001, pp. 103-124. He comments on the historical nature of the film and the necessity of a spectator who understands Catalan history in order to comprehend the full plot of the film.

[10] Bisson refers to the formation of a Catalan nation. We know that the Romans had arrived and settled in the area that is now Barcelona as early as the first century B.C. (Busquets 23).

efforts increased to centralize the government. At the same time, "geographic dispersion, inaccessibility and separate economic development all contributed to accentuating difference" (Dowling 9). Furthermore, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, "the historic constitutional pluralism of the five Hispanic kingdoms, together with the legal and administrative rights of the Basque country and the Balearics, were maintained with little change" (Payne, "Catalan" 15). During the seventeenth century, the Franco-Spanish War gave the Catalans an opportunity, with French support, to rise up against Madrid, but it eventually resulted in a loss of part of the Catalan province to the French. The War of Spanish Succession at the turn of the eighteenth century led to the implantation of the Bourbon dynasty in Spain and, at the end of the war, Catalan defeat at the siege of Barcelona (1713-1714). At the time, Felipe V moved quickly to enact the so-called *Nueva Planta* decrees, which abolished the notion of the Crown of Aragon and, with it, the last remaining uniquely Catalan rights and laws (Barrera González 113). Catalunya's constitutional system was abolished, but the regional legal codes were retained (Payne, "Catalan" 16). Under the new military government in the city, Barcelona's population increased, and it moved toward capitalist and industrialist practices, which would expand more broadly later on (Busquets 78-80). In 1715, the plans for the military Citadel, whose importance I address in Chapter 4, were drafted, and the construction was completed between 1715 and 1719 (85-86).

Nevertheless, in the middle of the nineteenth century, Catalan culture and language again began to flourish during the cultural and linguistic movement known as the *Renaixença* (Casanovas 2). When Queen Isabella II was forced to flee in 1868, a constitutional monarchy was put into place, and in 1873 it became a federal republic led by a Republican Catalan, Francesc Pi i Margall. A military coup in 1874 ended the First Republic, and King Alfonso XII

was recalled to rule Spain again. At this time, the period known as the Spanish Restoration began, which entailed a process of restoring both the monarchical and civil powers. Antonio Cánovas del Castillo was known as the architect of the Restoration, and he established the famous *turno pacífico* that created a rotation of political parties in power. King Alfonso XII died in 1885, and the Queen Regent took power until 1902 when Alfonso XIII was old enough to occupy the throne. King Alfonso XIII remained in power until the Second Spanish Republic began in 1931, and he supported the dictator Miguel Primo de Rivera during his power from 1923 to 1930.

The short-lived First Republic had opened the door to radical reimaginings of how Spain might be organized. Its president, Francesc Pi i Margall, favored some form of federalism, and in this he received strong support from the politician Valentí Almirall i Llozer, who published the first daily newspaper in Catalan (*Diari Català*, 1879-1881), founded the *Centre Català* (1882-1887), and wrote the important work *Lo catalanisme* (1886) (Payne, "Catalan" 19). Their goals, such as a decentralized federal state with self-government for its regions and recognition of the Catalan language, were of course completely at odds with those of mainstream politicians and the central government.

The political structure of the Restoration period (1874-1931) was quite complex, with civil, military, religious, and royal powers. Each province had a Civil Governor appointed by the Prime Minister. There was also a Captain General of the military appointed by the Minister of the Interior. A national Civil Guard ("Guardia Civil" in Castilian) police force existed throughout the country and was mobilized as needed. At the beginning of the twentieth century, a good number of Civil Guard officers were stationed in Catalunya, but they were not native and thus were unfamiliar with the customs of the region. Temma Kaplan describes the role of the Civil

Guard: “Originally organized to wipe out bandits the Civil Guard was an armed force occupying every district of the country. Those stationed in Catalunya spoke different languages and had different customs from the Catalans. Not only were they outsiders, but they were trained to stay that way. It was they who became the captain generals’ crack troops in the war against urban workers” (7). The multiple hierarchies of local and central powers often clashed on decision-making regarding the wars, strikes, and economic policies during the Restoration. Furthermore, local versus national interests remained a constant question during a period of high inflation and social unrest.

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, there were several literary and political movements whose roles in Catalunya were sufficiently important for us to describe them here. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, Catalan culture and language began to flourish during the cultural and linguistic movement known as the *Renaixença* (Casanovas 2). After being suppressed by the Bourbon monarchy, Catalan culture made its return. *Modernisme* had a specific Catalan importance that combined a “search for ‘identity’ with the urban processes that were emerging so strongly in the city of Barcelona” (Busquets 164). It emphasized the region’s character and culture and was “out to produce a genuinely Catalan culture: one which will be ‘modern’ in a European sense, but which will also take into account the traditions and pressures of its own society” (Terry 56). It also had a strong impact on architecture during the city’s expansion under the guidance of the Cerdà plan, an urbanization project designed by Illdefonso Cerdà for extending and organizing the city beyond its previous limits. Notable buildings that were designed and built as a result of this movement are Josep Puig i Cadafalch’s Casa Amatller (1900), Lluís Domènech i Montaner’s Casa Lleó Morera (1905), and Antoni Gaudí i Cornet’s Casa Batlló (1907), which were all praised by the city’s bourgeois population (Busquets 165).

These buildings were, however, constructed toward the end of the *Modernisme* movement that was replaced by *Noucentisme*.

Noucentisme was another pro-Catalan trend, and one of its notable works was Eugeni d'Ors' novel *La ben plantada* (1911). The movement rejected the modernist and Art Nouveau aesthetics in favor of clarity and pragmatism (205). *Noucentisme* came about around the same time that Enric Prat de la Riba came to power within the Lliga Regionalista, when "cultural life comes to be regarded officially for the first time as an essential component in the political future of Catalonia" (Terry 57). Joan Salvat-Papasseit was another prominent Catalan literary figure associated with *Noucentisme*, although he later broke off to experiment with the emerging Avant Garde movement. The *Renaixença*, *Modernisme*, and *Noucentisme* movements all incorporated artistic philosophies, but they were also the result and reflection of changing political ideologies.

Throughout this project, my focus is on the city of Barcelona within the context of Catalunya, the autonomous region to which it belongs. While Barcelona is far from representative of the entirety of Catalunya – in fact I would argue quite the opposite given the rural nature of much of Catalunya – the city plays an important role in Spain's larger history. Although I do take into account the rural and industrial areas in the wider province of Barcelona, the primary focus remains the working-class relationships and lifestyle within the city of Barcelona, which in turn is shaped by Catalan culture, practices, and politics.

At this point, a working definition of the class structures in Spain during the period of the Restoration is needed. Within the male, lower-class sector, the primary occupations (although there were many) fell into "three major categories: white-collar and shop work; skilled, apprenticed industrial employment; and labouring" (Smith 41). At the same time, the distinction between lower and middle classes could easily blur: "Barcelona's 30,000-odd clerks and shop

workers (dependents) were on the borderline between the working and middle classes. Although often as poorly paid as industrial workers they tended to come from petty bourgeois backgrounds" (41). The somewhat higher social status of the office workers made them more resistant to unionization, and the laborers often thought of them with low regards due to their attempt to merge with the middle class.[11] While factory workers were almost unwaveringly in the lower class, there were also distinctions between skill levels including floor workers, apprentices, skilled workers or journeymen, and foremen. These ranks are significant because the apprentices, journeymen, and foremen often had closer relationships with the employer and would therefore be less likely to support a workers' strike (41). Within the middle-to-upper classes, there were also important hierarchies that will become evident throughout this project. Particularly, within the industrial elite population, "a number of so-called 'good families', who had diversified their investments in industry, banking and the land, … began marrying their daughters into old aristocratic blood in order to add social prestige to wealth" (70). A bit further down the social ladder were industrialists who combined their investments through diversifying their businesses and through marrying their daughters to unite Catalan industrialist families (70). These industrial middle-class bourgeois populations are the groups that often supported the Lliga Regionalista, a group that will be discussed in detail shortly.[12] Outside of the industrial classes, there were also the non-industrial bourgeois and the upper-class, aristocratic families.[13] Members

[11] Throughout this project, I use the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) definition of petty or petite bourgeois: "A member of the lower-middle or commercial classes in a society" ("Petite Bourgeois").
[12] I use the OED definition of bourgeois as: "A member of the (usually urban) middle class of any country, sometimes *spec.* of the mercantile or shopkeeping middle class" (def. 1a). However, notably, the OED also adds that the bourgeois are: "Chiefly in Marxist theory: a person who upholds the interests of capitalism, or who is considered to be an exploiter of the proletariat, typically through ownership of the means of production" ("Bourgeois").
[13] The OED defines aristocracy as: "The class to which such a ruling body belongs, a patrician order; the collective body of those who form a privileged class with regard to the government of their country; the nobles. The term is popularly extended to include all those who by birth or fortune occupy a position distinctly above the rest of the community, and is also used *figuratively* of those who are superior in other respects" ("Aristocracy").

of each of these social classes are represented within the films and novels that I examine in detail throughout this project.

Why This Time Period?

With this broader history in mind, I will now present an overview of the major technical, political, social, and economic circumstances that shaped the city at the turn of the century. In 1868, Giuseppe Fanelli, an Italian anarchist, arrived in Spain and began to work to aid the working-class plight. Along with Karl Marx and Mikhail Bakunin, Fanelli wanted to spread left-wing and revolutionary ideology around Europe. When Fanelli arrived, he introduced union groups in Barcelona and Madrid to the International Workingmen's Association and Bakunin's Social Democratic Alliance. The former association became known in Spain as the *Federación Regional Española de la Asociación Internacional de Trabajadores* (FRE-AIT; "Regional Spanish Federation of the International Workingmen's Association") and began to introduce anarchism into the evolving organized labor unions (Smith 104). At the same time, industrialization was booming, and Barcelona was quickly becoming the industrial capital of Spain. People from all over the peninsula, and from other European countries, flocked to the city as it prepared for the 1888 Expo, an event which required many working men for its preparations. At first, the city's influx of newcomers was welcomed because it helped speed along the construction of sites for the Expo. However, as the Expo's preparations came to a close, large populations of unemployed workers remained in the city, living in slums or on the beaches, and contributing to overall social unrest. Meanwhile, the city was amassing large debts after having financed the Expo, and although it did bring visitors and tourists to the city, the profits were not sufficient to repay the event's expenses. The lack of financial support from the central government in Madrid spurred discontentment within the local Barcelona government.

Additionally, throughout the last decade of the century, worker's movements and anarchist attacks emerged with greater frequency.

The economic strife and political conflict were exacerbated by the Spanish-American War in 1898, at the end of which Spain lost its remaining colonies: Cuba, the Philippines, Guam, and Puerto Rico. Draftees were sent to fight in the colonies, many of whom did not return. Furthermore, among the political left and right, there were strong disagreements over how to proceed in these wars, and if Spain should even continue to fight. When Spain finally lost the war a few short months later, it found itself in a troublesome economic position due to the loss of raw goods to import and the export market it had established in the colonies. Barcelona was hit particularly hard due to the quantity of cotton and other textile factories in the region that depended upon exports to the colonies. Although Barcelona-based financiers, industrialists, and factory owners demanded protection from the central government, the requests were consistently put off, implemented only partially, or denied altogether. Many of the industrialists belonged to the Foment del Treball Nacional (FTN; "Promotion of National Work"), an organization founded in 1889 (although its roots date back to a century prior) and which was made up of business owners who wanted to defend Catalan economic interests. Members of the FTN went on strike by refusing to pay taxes, and after the declaration of martial law, many of them were arrested. The working class and returning soldiers were also angry about the situation in Barcelona at the time. Soldiers who did return were unable to find jobs, as the level of unemployment continued to rise following the loss of the colonies.

Roughly a decade later in 1909, the unrest had grown remarkably as a result of yet another war involving the Spanish protectorate in Morocco. The war in Morocco was waged primarily for economic motivations, namely the mines that were financed by wealthy Spanish

businessmen. When mine and railroad workers were attacked on several occasions in 1909, the Spanish military sought reinforcements to retaliate. The soldiers who were sent to war were conscripts, and although the draft was not new, they were angry to have to fight to defend the economic interests of the wealthy. At the same time, middle- and upper-class men who were drafted often paid a fee to avoid serving in the military, which exacerbated the disparity in privilege between the classes. After several weeks of unrest in July 1909, the Tragic Week occurred during the last week, from July 26 to 31. During this week, workers – backed by trade unions and anarchist organizations – led strikes, burned churches, and revolted in the streets.

At that time, several anarcho-syndicalist organizations were operating in Spain, with a heavy concentration in Barcelona. By 1840, there had already been numerous trade unions within Spain, but their reach and formal activities expanded throughout the second half of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth (Maluquer de Motes 162). First, Pablo Iglesias Posee founded the Unión General de Trabajadores (UGT; "General Workers' Union") in Barcelona in 1888, the same year as the Universal Exposition. Roughly two decades later, Solidaridad Obrera ("Worker's Solidarity") was founded in 1907. The Confederación Nacional de Trabajo (CNT; "National Labor Confederation") was born out of the Solidaridad and founded in 1910, one year after the Tragic Week. Within the CNT, there were also several smaller industrial unions that represented certain sectors, such as textiles or metallurgy. To give an idea of its influence, in 1919 it reached nearly 500,000 members in all of Spain, with roughly 60 percent of them being Catalan (Smith 1). Although the anarchist CNT and the socialist UGT operated separately, they often converged ideologically and in their activities. Anarcho-syndicalism had been expanding throughout Barcelona at the turn of the century, rooted in

socioeconomic inequalities and political corruption known as caciquism ("caciquismo" in Castilian), in which political bosses rigged elections to guarantee a favorable result (2).

In addition to the tensions caused by the war and the surge in anarchism, the industrial sector was also expanding rapidly, despite economic setbacks such as the 1898 war. This was truer for Catalunya than any other province, with over 38 percent of all Spanish patents between 1880 and 1930 coming from Catalunya (Maluquer de Motes 161). What is more, 81.9 percent of the nation's textile production was coming from there in 1900 (172). The economist and historian Jordi Maluquer de Motes explains why the region was so favorable to industrialization: "Els elements explicatius decisius són comuns, per exemple, amb el nord d'Itàlia, i resulten determinants sobre els costos mitjans a llarg termini de les empreses, fent-los més baixos malgrat la dimensió: superior dotació de capital humà, intensitat de les relacions intraindustrials i interindustrials i potència de les economies externes" (159).[14] In order to meet heavy industrial demands, the average workweek by 1889 was 63 hours, but even by 1910, the workdays remained long. It wasn't until the 1919 strike at La Canadenca ("La Canadiense" in Castilian) – which later became a general strike – that the standard workday was reduced to eight hours (163). Additionally, inflation was high, consumer prices were increasing, and there was no subsequent pay raise for workers, which led to heightened violence and growing anarcho-syndicalist membership.

Unique conditions of advanced industrialization, poor working conditions, colonial wars, an international rise in unions and anarchy, and tensions between Barcelona and Madrid created a situation full of tensions and multiple flare-ups. Furthermore, class differences and an inability

[14] "The decisive elements are common to, for example, northern Italy, with the determining factors of long-term average costs for large companies, which were low despite their size; larger supply of human capital; intensity of inter- and intra-industrial relations; and the power of external economies" (my translation).

to unify Barcelona prevented the necessary sociopolitical changes from occurring (Balfour 28). Likewise, "the fact that this time of growth was inflected by urban violence only heightened the city's understanding of what it meant to be under prolonged attack as both working- and ruling-class Barcelona felt besieged from without and from within" (Davidson 21). It is a defining moment in the history of Barcelona, and it is one that evidently had a strong impact on the filmmakers and writers of the Transition period fifty-plus years later. In this project, my aim is to analyze the role that these authors and filmmakers had in Catalan culture contemporary to the period of their publication. There was a clear interest in looking to the past for examples, lessons to avoid, a desire to recuperate historical memory during the Transition period, and perhaps to consider a sociopolitical process that been set into motion and then interrupted by the years of the dictatorship.

The Transition

The Spanish transition to democracy, or simply the "Transition" (*la Transición* in Castilian) as it is now commonly called, occurred in the period following Francisco Franco's death in November 1975. However, Franco's reach had been diminishing even before that, when he effectively granted most of his power to Deputy Prime Minister Luis Carrero Blanco beginning in 1969. From then until 1975, liberals and younger politicians became interested in ways to transition to democracy, while the strong Falangists, Civil Guard, and military still vehemently defended the dictatorship (Preston 14). It is worth nothing that around this same time, Portugal and Greece were also experiencing similar shifts to democracy after the fall of dictatorships (Colomer Rubio 260). In the early 1970s, prices in Spain were soaring, while workers' wages were not increasing at the same rate, and many strikes were organized around

the country (Preston 20). Carrero Blanco was assassinated by ETA, a Basque terrorist group, on December 20, 1973, and Franco appointed Carlos Arias Navarro to power (38). Following Franco's demise, Carlos Arias Navarro remained the leader until July 1976 when Adolfo Suárez was appointed to the position of Prime Minister by King Juan Carlos I. Under Suárez's government, strikes and unions were made legal, and elections were set up for 1977, which Suárez won. In 1978, two important documents that enshrined democratic principles and signaled the beginning of a new era were written and enacted. The Spanish Constitution was drafted, approved, and put into effect, marking a critical milestone in the Transition to democracy. As such, its first article reads: "España se constituye en un Estado social y democrático de Derecho, que propugna como valores superiores de su ordenamiento jurídico la libertad, la justicia, la igualdad y el pluralismo político" (*Constitución* 9).[15] Secondly, the Moncloa Pact, which was signed between various political parties and involved the participation of trade unions, established ways to address unemployment and economic issues such as instability. Three years later, Suárez resigned from his role as Prime Minister, and Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo was appointed in his place. A military coup led by Lieutenant Colonel Antonio Tejero marched into a congressional session during which Sotelo's appointment was being confirmed on February 23, 1981, now known as 23-F. King Juan Carlos denounced these attacks and called for democracy during a televised speech leading to the end of the coup. The next election took place in October 1982, and the candidate for the Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE; "Spanish Socialist Workers' Party"), Felipe González, won. Although this successful democratic election marks the end of the Transition for many historians and critics, such as Paul

[15] "Spain is hereby established as a social and democratic State, subject to the rule of law, which advocates as the highest values of its legal order, liberty, justice, equality and political pluralism" (*Constitution* 9).

Preston, that is not the case all.[16] Nonetheless, given that it was the first Socialist government in Spain since the spring of 1936, it marked a critical and symbolic milestone in Spanish politics.

Although 1982 marked a successful, peaceful transition of power in a newly formed democracy, the amount of unrest and instability that followed over the next decade suggests that the Transition was not yet fully complete. As Rosi Song states, "indeed, the 1980s are commonly understood as years of disenchantment, trauma, and melancholy during which Spaniards struggled with the vestiges of Franco's regime" (5). The previous decade, the 1970s, was also a period of trauma and turmoil in which Spaniards sought to envision their future in a democratic country. Workers were migrating from rural areas and southern regions to cities like Madrid and Barcelona, but "whilst there was an extensive phase of industrialisation and growth in industrial employment, it was not clearly parallelled by a phase of coherent and consistent state services to support urbanisation" (Martínez Lucio 675). This in turn led to trade union organization and mobilization in the city. The Comisiones Obreras (CCOO; "Workers' Commissions"), formed shortly after the beginnings of democracy, was a union created on the basis of open assemblies of workers, and "it represented the reclamation of public space in the wake of the authoritarian tradition in Spain as it challenged state dictates that restricted the rights of assembly and communication" (676). Another union, the UGT, had been operating covertly and minimally throughout the dictatorship, but it reemerged in the public eye in the 1970s. The economic crisis of the 1970s and 1980s renewed the CCOO and UGT's efforts, with the latter focusing more heavily on a strong relationship with the new Socialist government, which aimed to restructure industrial sectors (676). Joblessness increased steadily as the nation's economic decline took

[16] Juan Carlos Colomer Rubio marks the end of the Transition as 1981 after the democracy was consolidated following the failed military coup (260). Rosa Montero also references 1981 as the point in which the Transition concluded (316).

hold, with a rise in the number of unemployed workers from 415,000 in 1977 to roughly two million in 1985, higher than any other western European country (Jimeno and Toharia 21). In December 1988, the UGT and CCOO joined together and called for a general strike in Barcelona, Madrid, Valladolid, and other major cities to protest the governmental response to inflation and unemployment, which included allowing youths to earn less than minimum wage. Unemployment at that time was 40 percent, the highest of all countries in the European Union. CCOO Secretary José Manual de la Parra stated that the movement was so successful that "there obviously is no other option but a serious reflection on what this means for the country" (Delaney n.p.). Later, one of the reasons for the decreased demonstrations and unrest at the end of the 1980s was that the "extent of mobilisation had changed due to the steady institutionalisation of urban and labour movements" (Martínez Lucio 670).

In addition to the purely domestic factors, two international occurrences would bring the Transition to its conclusion. In 1986, Spain entered the European Community (later the European Union), which brought significant economic advantages as well as the symbolic acceptance into the larger community. Even if the Transition appeared to be complete in some areas of Spain at that moment, I would argue that it had not come to a conclusion for Catalunya until after the success of the 1992 Olympics held in Barcelona. Just as it had done during the *Renaixença*, the city "was able to slough off its overt prison garb as it built and developed frenetically. This process of revitalization culminated in the hosting of the 1992 Olympics" (Davidson 22). The Olympics in Barcelona – similarly to the Expo held the same year in Seville – attracted global attention and was a way for the newly democratic nation to show its political stability and cultural pride. Regardless of what is chosen as the end date for the Transition, what is clear is

that it was not a seamless period of political harmony. Jo Lebanyi and Helen Graham describe the sense of disenchantment that the Spanish public felt after the dictatorship:

> The term *desencanto* (disenchantment/disappointment) used to describe this sentiment in fact covers a set of different, albeit interrelated, responses to developments in Spain since the end of the dictatorship. Most usually it denotes a general sense of disappointment with the reality of the liberal democratic system in action. Partly this has been the result of impractically high popular expectations that democracy – for so long the striven-for, almost mythical goal – would provide a panacea for all national problems. ("Democracy and Europeanization" 312)

Even in the years after the Transition had supposedly been accomplished, Spain was plagued with doubt over what the future would look like.

Historical Memory

Spaniards' relationships to the past, both during and before the regime, resurfaced in a new light in the post-Franco era. Nevertheless, "through censorship, oppression, triumphalist rhetoric, propaganda, and violence, the Francoist regime turned the past into a taboo for generations of Spaniards. Normalising Spain's collective relationship to the past should have been part of the process of democratisation, but the government failed to address this need" (Song 15). Perhaps for this reason, authors like Eduardo Mendoza sought ways of analyzing the nation's past from its conflictive present period. The process was less about trying to reproduce historical fact perfectly, but rather the works represented a possible experience of someone living in the past in a way that connected to the author's present. Song claims that "rather than emphasizing the referential value of these recollections as accurate, accountable memories, we

should consider their affective value. It is affect, rather than truthful representation, that insists on, and provides, an enduring connection between past and present" (21). Similarly, José Saval proposes that:

> Desde ese lugar conocido, y reconocible, nos trasladará a otro tiempo, a otro momento histórico desde el cual observar el presente. …. [*La ciudad de los prodigios*] no deja de ser, en la medida que analiza el pasado desde el presente de su creador y del lector, un comentario de la Transición política y la fecha que podría ser su fin, 1992 o 1993, puesto que la inminencia de los Juegos Olímpicos de 1992 son fácilmente asimilables a las vicisitudes de la ciudad, sus habitantes y los personajes inventados, o no, que pueblan sus páginas. (8)[17]

Perhaps, then, it is due to the imminent Olympic Games that Mendoza so profoundly commented on the 1888 Expo (and later the one in 1929) in his novel. Both events provided opportunities for a nation operating under a new political structure to open itself to the international community. The films and novels I have chosen to address in this project show in particular how the post-Franco Transition was fraught with uncertainty. It was not a brilliant period full of progress, but one marked by doubt, financial upheaval, and working-class unrest. These cultural products relate the early twentieth century to 1970s and 1980s Barcelona, when the nation is experiencing a similarly problematic political moment. Through close readings of the cultural representations, I examine the parallels between the past as a mirror for the present and future.

[17] "From that familiar and recognizable place, he transports us to another time, another historical moment from which we can observe the present … [*The City of Marvels*] does not cease to be, in the measure that it analyzes the past from the present of its creator and its reader, a commentary on the political Transition and the date that could be its end, 1992 or 1993, given that the imminence of the 1992 Olympic Games are easily assimilated to the vicissitudes of the city, its inhabitants, and the invented (or not) characters that populate its pages" (my translation).

As I briefly mentioned earlier, the question of historical memory is critical in the decades following Franco's demise. Without the strict censorship of the regime, artists, authors, filmmakers, journalists, and common citizens were able to contemplate and reflect on the experiences of the past openly, including the Spanish Republic, the Spanish Civil War, and the thirty-plus years of repression that followed. While much of the work on historical memory in the post-Franco period focuses on recuperating the past of the Spanish Civil War or life under the dictatorship, one must also remember that texts and films relating to subversive aspects of prior history, such as anarchism and uprisings against the established order, would have been largely censored from 1939 to 1975. Therefore, it is only in the post-Franco period that the past of the late Restoration period can be recovered from a sort of narrative distance through cultural responses, as any attempt to do so in the latter part of the 1930s and 1940s would have been interrupted. At the same time, a political process that began in the 1930s had seemingly also been thwarted at the end of the Civil War. Catalunya had achieved an "Estatuto de Autonomía" ("Statute of Autonomy") in 1932, the Basque Country in 1933, and Galicia in 1936. While these dates do not arise in the works I analyze in this project, they are historically important because they occur as a culmination of sorts of the period of unrest and uprisings throughout the first third of the twentieth century. Likewise, in the post-Franco period, after the adoption of the Constitution of 1978, Catalunya in 1979, the Basque Country in 1979, and Galicia in 1981 were the first three regions to achieve autonomy.

Barcelona's past during the Restoration connected with the Transition period in Mendoza's, Ribas', and Verdaguer's present, and in the end, the "meaning of the past depends on its connection to and with the present" (Song 23). These creators could more deeply understand the past *and* present by contemplating the ways in which they connected. What is

important to point out is that the authors and filmmakers chose to focus on the era of struggle rather than that of partial achievement of the goals in the early 1930s. With this perspective, it is possible to see an appreciation of and a way of learning from the struggle that led to the realization of such goals, particularly for *La verdad sobre el caso Savolta* and *La ciutat cremada*, which were published and released prior to the Catalan Statute of Autonomy. At the same time, *Victòria! La gran aventura d'un poble* and *La ciudad de los prodigios*, which came out after the Statute, seem to have additional focuses in mind – such as the push for further regional freedom or even complete independence and the concerns of what another large-scale event like the Olympics would bring. We know that Mendoza also embarked on a memory project by digging into the city's past as he wrote in the 1970s and 80s:

> In my free time I read old newspapers and began to recover the memory – not the history, but the memory – of the old city. At that time, families were very large and we had these endless Sunday dinners where everyone talked about the old times. But everything I learned was distorted by memory. I would listen to my grandparents, but they got it all wrong. What I wanted to do was write the real memories of the city's inhabitants. (Luciani 13)

The author expands on what he means by "real memories" in the prologue to *La ciudad de los prodigios*: "el impulso inicial era el mismo que me había llevado a escribir *El caso Savolta*, esto es, dar vida a algunos episodios de la historia reciente de Barcelona, basándose en la memoria colectiva más que en datos históricos fidedignos" (7).[18] Mendoza, just like later critics such as Rosi Song and Jo Lebanyi and authors like Javier Cercas, was more concerned with the idea of

[18] "The initial impulse was the same as that which had driven me to write *The Savolta Case*, that is, give life to some episodes in Barcelona's recent history, based on collective memory more than reliable historical fact" (my translation).

representations of history, collective memories, and individual lived experiences than what was considered "historical fact." Literary critic Suzanne Schwarzbürger confirms that within Mendoza's novels, "la ficción se aprecia más que la verdad, y se estima más la fragmentación que unidad y coherencia; como característico para esta estética no hay que olvidar de mencionar casi lo más importante, que es ese matiz irónico constante" (215).[19]

While Ribas' film *La ciutat cremada* depicts a historical time period, namely that of the decade between 1899 and 1909, it also attempts to show lived experiences of individuals within the Barcelonan society of the time. Three historians – Josep Benet, Isidre Moles, and Josep Termes – worked on the script of *La ciutat cremada*, and unsurprisingly, they all disagreed on certain historical "facts" (Batlló 51). In the prologue to the film's script, the privileging of anecdotal experiences is also made evident: "puc testimoniar que, en llegir el guió, m'ha estat molt fàcil entendre la *realitat* històrico-política de la Catalunya de primers de segle, a través de la *naturalitat* anecdòtica i impressionista, d'un seguit d'escenes familiars i populars" (González Casanova 5).[20] The psychology of individual characters, including their choices, options, lives, and relationships is a way to understand the historical memory of the city at the turn of the century: "la família de la burgesia barcelonina que serveix de fil conductor de la peripècia política i històrica, no només és el pretext per a un memorial de costums, sinó que és l'exemple viu d'una psicologia de classe, tant rica en els seus matisos i variada en les seves possibilitats, com impotent i covarda a l'hora de les grans decisions" (6).[21] Through these representations, the

[19] "Fiction is appreciated more than truth, and fragmentation is more highly esteemed than unity and coherence; one cannot forget to mention perhaps the most important characteristic of this aesthetic, namely, the constant touch of irony" (my translation).
[20] "I can testify that, reading the script, it was really easy for me to see the historical-political *reality* of Catalunya at the beginning of the century, by means of the anecdotal and impressionist *nature* of a series of familiar and popular scenes" (my translation).
[21] "The bourgeois Barcelonan family that serves as a unifying thread for the political and historical vicissitudes is not just a pretext for a historical cultural point of reference, but it is also a living example of a class psychology, as

authors and filmmakers find another way of analyzing the past and exploring themes that would have been prohibited during the Franco era, such as anarchy and trade unions.

At the same time, the experiences shown in the films also provide an alternative narrative to the dominant one written by the victors. This is certainly the case in the film and novel versions of *La teranyina*, as the events which they describe were largely hidden from public view and those who do know what occurred "have systematically misrepresented what happened so as to escape punishment" (Glenn 34). However, Anne E. Hardcastle points out the limitations with the idea of studying representation: "'Representation' has become a somewhat suspicious word through its postmodern association with simulacra, performance, and replication of an eternally displaced and inaccessible real world" (150). She then adds nuance by stating that her research will incorporate the way in which these representations portray the point of view or impression of the matter, citing the Oxford English Dictionary definition of the word and Bill Nichols' book *Representing Reality: Issues and Concepts in Documentary* (1991). Nichols states that "representation means 'The action of placing a fact, etc., before another or others by means of discourse; a statement or account, esp. one intended to convey a particular view or impression of a matter in order to influence opinion or action' (OED). Here, representation is made or presented; representation is allied with rhetoric, persuasion, and argument rather than with likeness or reproduction" (111). In the works that I analyze throughout this project, I too consider the ways in which director and screenwriter perspectives and impressions are imprinted on the films they have produced.

rich in its nuances and as varied in its possibilities as it is impotent and cowardly at the hour of great decisions" (my translation).

Urban Landscape

Within the recuperation of the city's past, the development of the urban landscape is a key question that has been addressed by Mendoza's novels themselves and critics alike.[22] Although this project does not explore urban development in detail, I find it important to include briefly some of the key findings of the scholars who have investigated the concept, as it is a fundamental aspect of both the time period of representation (1888-1929) and of creation (1975-1986). Class differences were strikingly visible in the housing situations of the working-class and the elite populations at the turn of the twentieth century. Laborers, especially those in textile and metallurgic sectors, often lived in industrial areas such as Saint Andrew and Saint Martin that "lacked city centers and the numbers of taverns, cafés, and markets that made life bearable in downtown Barcelona" (Kaplan 5). On top of living in what were essentially industrial slums, they had no refuge in public sites that existed in areas populated by the middle and upper classes. The latter often lived in Ensanche in nice houses, and sometimes in modernist buildings like those of Antoni Gaudí, which "were fitting symbols of the confidence and wealth of a regional elite, which was determined to regain autonomy over its own section of the country" (5). At the same time, the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth was a period of urban expansion, not just in Barcelona but in large cities all over the world. José Saval writes that although "ciudades como Nueva York, o la propia Barcelona, no frenarían su expansión se puede decir que todas ellas configuraron su personalidad actual, su encanto y su fascinación, su atractivo en los años previos al crack de la bola en 1929 que detuvo de una manera brusca su

[22] I acknowledge that "recuperate" becomes problematic in the same way that "representation" does. When I use the term "recuperation," I am referring to the process whereby individuals and artists take a retrospective look toward the historical past of their country or their own personal past.

expansión" (53).[23] Kalen R. Oswald examines space and power relationships in both of Mendoza's novels, and she even connects the high urban development period of 1917-1919 (*La verdad sobre el caso Savolta*) with the post-Franco era in which the government must either promote social reform or maintain the status quo of uneven urban development (45). Precisely for its history of conflict, Susanne Schwarzbürger claims that Barcelona is "una ciudad ideal para ser motivo literario, incluso se presta mejor que Madrid, por su historia más conflictiva, más dinámica y por su eterna rivalidad con Madrid" (204).[24] She takes that one step further by claiming that Barcelona is in fact the subject and object of the novel *La ciudad de los prodigios*, and thus it becomes an indispensable part of the action (214).

Furthermore, Caragh Wells explores the way in which Mendoza plays with the boundaries between the real and imaginary city of Barcelona in the same way that he blurs the distinction between art and life (715). Wells posits that "the novel also marks a significant departure from previous narrative conventions of writing Barcelona in both Catalan and Spanish fiction" as Mendoza makes references to topographical spaces and situates the plot within the historical context of the two Expos (717). He portrays the city with the "ironic convergence of two distinct narrative modes: the Cervantine model, representative of a time when writers did not perceive verisimilitude to be an essential element of their work, is parodically combined with the nineteenth-century city novel, which sought to convey accurate impressions of the external urban world" (719). The parodic and picaresque nature of the novel has also been commented on by a

[23] "Cities like New York, or Barcelona itself, did not pause their expansion. It could be said that they configured their present personalities, their charm and fascination, their attraction in the years leading up the stock market crash in 1929 that abruptly halted their expansion" (my translation).
[24] "An ideal city for a literary motif, even better suited than Madrid, because of its more conflictive and dynamic history and its eternal rivalry with Madrid" (my translation).

number of scholars, including José Saval and Héctor Brioso Santos, and will be examined further in the next section.

Primary Source Summaries

Throughout each chapter of this project, I will explore the novels and films in detail, but I begin here by providing a summary of each individual work which will serve as a point of departure for the future chapters. *La verdad sobre el caso Savolta* (1975) is the first of these examples of cultural production, in terms of publication chronology. Published on the brink of the Transition, and written in 1973, the plot spans the years 1917 to 1919 in Barcelona, with flashbacks and flashforwards of protagonist Javier Miranda's life. A somewhat naïve young man from Valladolid, Javier arrives in Barcelona seeking better job opportunities. He finds work as an assistant for Cortabanyes, who owns a law office. Through his new employer, he becomes acquainted with Paul-André Lepprince, for whom he also begins to work. Lepprince is a Frenchman who has come to Barcelona likely to escape military service in France during World War I, but also to seek profits in the ever more industrial city. Through his manipulative maneuvering – marrying the owner's daughter and eliminating his competition – Lepprince is able to acquire a large stake in the Savolta Factory. Meanwhile, without ever fully knowing Lepprince, his intentions, or his behind-the-scenes acts, Javier obeys his new employers' demands and sinks further into the world of financiers who abuse their factory workers with poor pay, long work hours, and even violence against those who unionize. A notable character is that of Domingo Pajarito de Soto, a reporter whom Lepprince hires to write about the Savolta Factory with the clear intention of manipulating the account to favor the company and discredit workers' complaints. Clippings of his newspaper articles presented as a part of the narrative show that he

condemns poor working conditions and low wages in addition to supporting the various strikes. When Pajarito de Soto does not acquiesce to Lepprince's demands, he is killed in an "accidental" car accident which was clearly carried out by the factory owner's hired hitmen. The novel includes references to major events which involved the working class – the 1917 general strike and the 1919 strike at La Canadenca electric company. After Lepprince's demise in the final moments of the novel when he dies within the Savolta Factory as it burned to the ground as a result of the 1919 strike, Javier and his wife María Coral (who had also been Lepprince's lover for a time) start a new life in New York City.

It would be impossible to summarize this novel without also mentioning its complex and experimental narrative form. In a similar vein as authors of the so-called Latin American "boom," such as Julio Cortázar, Juan Carlos Onetti, Carlos Fuentes, and Mario Vargas Llosa, Mendoza constructed the first truly mosaic novel in Spain with temporal leaps and changes in narrative voice. The reader plays an active role and must assimilate information out of order, which includes adjusting previously acquired knowledge to take into account new information. It dismantles the traditional narrative form in chronological order and suggests that the former novelistic form was no longer adequate for representing the present moment. Furthermore, Mendoza creates multiple, distinct narrative voices: newspaper clippings typically written by Domingo Pajarito de Soto, transcriptions of Javier Miranda's trial in New York City, a letter, a third-person narrator, and a first-person one through the voice of Javier. In addition to chronological and narrative leaps, Javier himself is not a trustworthy narrator, which is made clear through his references to hearing information secondhand ("que no asistí personalmente a la fiesta" p. 118),[25] altered states of consciousness from lack of sleep ("el estado hipnótico me

[25] "That I did not personally attend the party" (Mendoza, *The Truth* 90).

duraba el día entero" p. 175),[26] and alcohol consumption. Although this project analyzes the cultural representation more than the narrative form, the noteworthy style with which Mendoza writes is an important point to bear in mind.

La ciudad de los prodigios (1986) shares some of the same narrative characteristics as *La verdad sobre el caso Savolta*, but it moves closer to a traditional novelistic form. Mendoza intercalates historical fragments that read like a nonfictional account with longer and more frequent sections about the characters and their activities. Instead of the more experimental unmarked temporal leaps in his 1975 work, here he uses flashbacks to depict the past of his protagonist, Onofre Bouvila. The historical fragments do refer to Barcelona's distant and recent past, but they do not require an active reader to piece together different sections with the same intensity as before. However, in both novels Mendoza's historical descriptions do often contain minor inaccuracies, contributing to the untrustworthy nature of his narrators' accounts. *La ciudad de los prodigios* is narrated entirely from the third-person omniscient perspective. Although not written in the autobiographical form like many other picaresque novels, Onofre certainly embodies many of the characteristics of the picaro, including coming from the lower class, lacking scruples, being dishonest, changing jobs frequently without working too hard at any particular one, not worrying about moral nor religious codes, and using bribes and tricks to advance his own position (Saval, "El guitón" 72-73).[27] The novel traces Onofre's arrival in Barcelona and subsequent search for a job in 1887. He arrives on the verge of the Expo in 1888, but by that point, the job market is saturated with the amount of people who had migrated to the

[26] "This hypnotic state would last all day" (Mendoza, *The Truth* 140).

[27] For a detailed analysis of the picaresque tradition in the novel and its debt to *Lazarillo de Tormes*, see: Saval, José V. "El guitón Onofre Bouvila, el pícaro moderno de *La ciudad de los prodigios*." *La verdad sobre el caso Mendoza*, edited by José Saval, Fundamentos, 2005, pp. 71-86. In the same volume, also see: Brioso Santos, Héctor. "La materia picaresca en la novela de Eduardo Mendoza." pp. 49-70.

city looking for work. Onofre takes a job distributing anarchist propaganda, and once this job ends, he is snatched up by don Humbert. The latter is a lawyer who works with the lower classes, and Onofre is employed to work within his mafia-like organization. At this point, Onofre is already on his own personal mission to gain wealth and status within the social scene in Barcelona, and he casts aside all scruples to achieve the goal. He gets rich by exploiting others and manipulating them in ways that allow him to profit. In the end, when he is rich but still not esteemed by society as he had hoped, he drifts away on a hot air balloon during the 1929 Expo, never to be seen again.

Antoni Ribas directed, with Miquel Sanz as the screenwriter, two historical films in the decade after the end of Franco's regime, *La ciutat cremada* in 1976 and *Victòria! La gran aventura d'un poble* in 1983. The former spans the time period of 1899, beginning with soldiers returning from the Spanish-American War, to 1909, ending with the events of the Tragic Week in Barcelona. Josep, the protagonist, returns from the war and marries Remei Palau, a woman from a bourgeois family that clearly disapproves of their union. He takes a job at a factory, refusing to accept money from the Palau family, and becomes involved in anarcho-syndicalist groups. Throughout the film, his position within the lower class and his familial connection to the bourgeoisie become blurred. He participates in anarcho-syndicalist activities, but later he tries to brainstorm ways of helping his brother-in-law evade the military draft. In the final scenes, Josep watches the confrontations of the Tragic Week from the elegant Palau house, but he finally darts into the street with a rifle to contribute, ironically while wearing a nice suit. He runs up to a rooftop and shoots the Civil Guard sniper who was firing on the proletariat from above. Once Josep finds a better position from which to shoot on the roof, Roser Palau – Remei's sister – finds Josep and seduces him, on the one hand to get him to stop putting his life

in danger and on the other, because her husband cannot give her a child. In this moment, Josep pushes his gun aside and embraces Roser, that is, embraces the bourgeois life into which he married while he also commits adultery. This film, released the year after Franco's death on September 20, 1976, became "el precedent més significatiu d'una nova política cinematogràfica a casa nostra" (Caparrós Lera 417).[28]

Victòria! La gran aventura d'un poble represents another turbulent era in Barcelona's history – World War I and the 1917 general strike. Interestingly, the main character Canals is played by the same actor who had the role of Josep in the previous film, Xabier Elorriaga. The film opens with a sequence depicting the atmosphere in the city during the First World War, with industrialists exporting arms abroad, anarcho-syndicalists smuggling those arms for their own purposes, spies surveilling every movement, military deserters from other countries, and wealthy financiers living lavishly and luxuriously unaware of (or without care for) the plight of the working class. Canals is one of the leaders of the anarcho-syndicalist group – never explicitly named – that supports the politician Alejandro Lerroux, wants to take down the bourgeoisie and the crown, and intends to blow up Montjuïc Castle as a symbol of protest.[29] Although the group's initial attempt to involve the military in their plan fails, a few officers join their cause and assist with the break-in to the castle. In the end, the various factions of the anarcho-syndicalist and military groups turn on each other, and the plan fails. When Canals is offered protection from a wealthy man – who has since married Canals' former wife – he ultimately accepts it and moves into a bourgeois home to avoid persecution. The wealth and power associated with the house

[28] "The most significant precedent for a new cinematographic policy at home" (my translation).
[29] Alejandro Lerroux (1864-1949) was a Radical Republican politician. His role in the films and in the history of Spanish politics will be addressed more fully in Chapter 4. Montjuïc Castle was the site of many trials and subsequent executions, especially of anarchists after the 1896 attacks during the Corpus Christi celebration, which I mention again in Chapter 4.

frees him from being arrested for his anarcho-syndicalist activities. Thus, both of Ribas' films include capitulation and a morally suspect compromise for their protagonists, a point which will be explored in greater detail throughout the project.

The last film that I will analyze, although to a lesser extent than the others, is *La teranyina* (1990). The film is directed by Antoni Verdaguer i Serra and is based on the 1985 novel by Jaume Cabré i Fabré. Throughout this project, I reference both the film and the novel with a primary focus on the film. As Verdaguer himself states, "Cabré se concentraba más en los personajes y en el fondo social que en la trama de intrigas que contiene la historia" (Flores 55).[30] Given that in this project I am primarily concerned with how the events in Terrassa during the Tragic Week relate and contribute to what is occurring in Barcelona at the same time, the film provides precisely the emphasis on this relationship. A wealthy family, the Rigaus, own a textile factory called Vapor Rigau. When the owner dies, his brother Julià takes over the family business and strikes a deal with the military to produce army clothing for soldiers in Morocco. When the laborers become aware that they are making the uniforms that they or their companions will die in – most of the draftees were from the working class, with the upper classes paying an indemnity to get out of their service – they begin to organize a strike. Tonet Miséries, one of the leaders of the revolt, incites the workers to action and burns down the factory. Consequently, he is murdered and even after his body appears, nobody knows who is responsible. Mercaderes, another factory worker, has been carrying out tasks for an organization, but when he inquires if they are anarchists or syndicalists, they respond that the less he knows the better. In the end, he finds out that he has been working for Cordetes (a bourgeois member of the family), who in turn has been trying to destroy Julià's power within the family company.

[30] "Cabré concentrated more on the characters and the social background than on the events contained in the plot" (my translation).

During the last scene of the film, Mercaderes is assassinated and blamed for everything that has happened, even though he was unaware of much of it. Inner strife between family members tears the Rigau family apart, and one of them even dies in the Moroccan War, an ironic aspect of the storyline.

Contributions

Through this project, I hope to contribute to the growing – but still quite limited – body of research that considers both Catalan and Castilian film and literature. Although the aforementioned films are remarkable for their historic representations as well as cinematic and technical complexity, they have been very seldom studied in an academic sense. On the other hand, there are a number of studies (as I have mentioned throughout this section) on Eduardo Mendoza's two novels, but what is lacking is a detailed analysis of the representations of the working class throughout. My research aims to provide a more holistic vision of the experience of the proletariat from 1888-1923 through the lens of the cultural representations produced during the post-Franco period from 1975-1990. Both time periods are enveloped within the history of twentieth-century Spanish culture which Lebanyi and Graham define as "the history of a struggle between different ways of interpreting the world, and different ways of interpreting Spanish society in particular: a battle of meanings which shaped individual and collective identities, and affected the material conditions of individual and collective existence" ("Culture" 6). Thus, the subsequent chapters aim to examine not only the society during the era represented through the plot of the cultural works, but also the way in which the creators interpret their own contemporary society.

This project is organized into chapters that each address one aspect of the working-class experience from 1888-1923. Therefore, I have chosen to use a thematic rather than chronological organization. As one might imagine, many of the timelines and contributing factors within my argument overlap, complement, and build upon each other. This approach allows for an integrated analysis of the underlying working-class experience that is present in each of the films and novels. During the first chapter, I begin the exploration of this time period by discussing in detail the particulars of the 1888 Expo in Barcelona. As the reader will find, the Expo introduces many of the subsequent issues that plague the city over the following two and a half decades. Chapter Two explores the impact of industrialization on the proletariat, in both an economic and social sense. In Chapter Three, the effects of the multiple wars – Spanish-American, Rif, World War I – on the socioeconomic consequences and political structures will be analyzed. Finally, the project culminates in Chapter Four with a close look at the trade unions, anarchist groups, and strikes that surfaced as a result of the compounding discontentment discussed in the first three chapters. In the conclusion, I address the reception of the individual works as well as the contemporary political debates in Barcelona and Catalunya more broadly.

In the same way that Jo Lebanyi argues for complementing testimony with archival research and avoiding equating testimony with history ("Testimonies" 195), I weave together the historical vision of these cultural artifacts and archival research on the same topics.[31] Remembering and representing the Catalan history of industrial workers in the Restoration period was critical to the formation of the contemporary sociopolitical circumstances in the Transition, for "memory is the afterlife of the past in the present" (193).

[31] Lebanyi's comment is in regards to testimonies about the Spanish Civil War and the Franco dictatorship. However, while I do not wish to equate the Restoration period with the dictatorship whatsoever, the need to consider both historical archives and individual experiences remains true for any study of historical memory.

Chapter 1: Mega-Events in Barcelona

Esta Exposición que al anunciarse por don
Eugenio Serrano Casanova pareció un sueño;
más adelante cuando se empezó á formar, una
locura; luego, cuando el Municipio se encargó
de ella, una tenacidad, y más recientemente,
abierta ya, una imprudencia, ha sido una realidad,
ha sido un éxito, ha sido una gloria.
"La Exposición cumplida"[32]

Introduction

Barcelona's Universal Exposition (*Exposición Universal de Arte* in Castilian), or simply "Expo," in 1888 marked a critical turning point in the city's economic, geographic, international, and political landscapes. In an effort to increase international attention, raise the status, and expand the economic capacity of Barcelona, the city's government officials strove to make the Expo the best it could be. This entailed building new sites for the Expo to be held and refining the tourist attractions available to visitors. One of the largest obstacles to progress on this project stemmed from the financial support for the event, which was provided by Barcelona's local government as well as the central government in Madrid. Negotiations between the two political spheres frequently resulted in a standstill and increased the tensions between local and central powers, a confrontation that had existed previously and would continue until the present day, albeit in a different form.

I use the term mega-events in the title of this chapter to refer to the two Expos in 1888 and 1929 and the Olympic Games in 1992, all held in Barcelona. In his book titled *Mega-events and Modernity: Olympics and Expos in the Growth of Global Culture,* Maurice Roche states that

[32] "This Expo, when announced by Eugenio Serrano Casanova, seemed like a dream; later as it began to take shape, madness; later still, when the City Council took over, tenacity, and most recently, now open, an imprudence, it became a reality, it became a victory, it became a glory" (my translation).

mega-events are "important both substantively and more formally in understanding structure, change and agency in modern society" (7). He defines them as multinational, cosmopolitan, and supernational:

> multinational in that they involve the presence and 'recognition' of the representatives of many foreign nations in the host nation's event-side [...], cosmopolitan in that they involve the development of 'touristic consumerist' attitudes and values amongst the public of the host nation [...], supernational, [...] the host nation plays a significantly more powerful role than the guest nations. The host nation can attempt to use the mega-event to emphasise its claims to having a leading status, mission and destiny in the world international order. (9-10)

These characteristics certainly come into play in Barcelona's mega-events in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Barcelona's unique position as a leading industrial city in Spain as well as its Catalan character make this city of particular interest when considering the Expos and Olympics.

Though the Expo held in Barcelona in 1929 has received a fair amount of critical and cultural attention, the 1888 event has been overlooked in many cases. As Eduardo Mendoza discusses in his 1990 prologue to *La ciudad de los prodigios* (1986), in many ways this earlier Expo played a far more significant role in both the city's development and hardships around the turn of the century (8). After all, the preparation for the Expo was a leading factor in the mass migration of the working class from the surrounding areas to the city center. Mendoza was keenly aware of the lack of attention paid to this ever-important socio-political event, and he dedicates roughly one-third of *La ciudad de los prodigios* to describing the experience of the protagonist Onofre Bouvila, who comes to Barcelona searching for work, with regard to the Expo. Throughout this chapter, I will discuss the many consequences that this event had on the

city including a population increase resulting from migration to the city center, misery and poor working conditions for the laborers, the expansion of the city limits, the tension between local and central governments, and the rise in tourism.

In an approach similar to that used by Mendoza when writing his novel, I will blend archival sources and fictional references to discuss the importance of these conditions to the time period. I do not wish to imply that Onofre Bouvila's experience is representative of the entire working class, and in fact, I would argue quite the contrary. However, through his encounters with various political and labor sectors, we can capture what individual lives were like for some people. It is worth noting that the vast majority of sources related to this Expo are maps of the sites including buildings and stands, photo albums, inventory lists of what each country brought, economic guides to the city, and other documentary-like sources. While these offer valuable information that I will discuss throughout this chapter, they offer a somewhat sterile view of what the event actually entailed. These sources do not consider the individual lived experiences of the laborers who constructed the buildings, but rather they focus on the government officials' efforts to raise money to finance the project and showcase the city. By concentrating on the logistical aspects, they tend to tell a story of those in power. The fictional experiences of the protagonist in *La ciudad de los prodigios* expose the sentiments of the laborers as well as the conditions under which they worked. It is a necessary addition which tells another side of the same story as the official, nonfiction sources previously mentioned.

I am indebted to the work of previous scholars, who have made some connections between the city and its major events during this time frame. Caragh Wells focuses on the representation of the real and imagined city in the novel, while also commenting on the role of the two Expos as plot parameters (717). The political similarities between the early twentieth

century and the decline of Franco's power in the 1970s are addressed by Kalen Oswald in his article on both *La verdad sobre el caso Savolta* and *La ciudad de los prodigios* (45). Oswald also claims that there is a falseness to the image the city presents of itself during the Expo and again in the Olympic Games in 1992 (52). José Saval's extensive study on the 1986 novel explores the intersections between the Spanish Transition to democracy – which I will comment upon more thoroughly in Chapter 4 – and the first quarter of the twentieth century (*La ciudad*). While many literary critics have focused on urban development, geographic distribution of wealth, and capitalism in Mendoza's novel, fewer have made the working-class populations within these urban spaces the primary object of analysis. At the same time, cultural historians have largely concentrated on international relations, scientific advances, and urban planning. In their book titled *Barcelona: An Urban History of Science and Modernity*, Oliver Hochadel and Agustí Nieto-Galan cover a variety of topics, including those previously listed, but a particular focus on the proletariat is lacking. While they do address urban zones, workers' movements, and education to some degree, the study provides a broad view of many topics rather than a more thorough analysis of the lived experiences of individuals. Lastly, Maurice Roché's overview of mega-events in Barcelona and beyond provides a unique international perspective on the benefits and consequences that hosting such an event has on a city. In this chapter, I aim to explore the events through the experiences of the working class, taking into account the cultural, economic, and political impacts.

The topics that I address in this section – migration to the city center, city expansion, poor working conditions, workers' organizations, and political tension – will serve as the major focal points of my overall project. My intention is to introduce these topics by means of the Expo and Eduardo Mendoza's 1986 novel, but in this first chapter, I do not seek to provide a

comprehensive view of each of these aspects throughout the entire time period (1888-1923) mentioned in the dissertation title. One of the reasons for which I have chosen to highlight this historical event from 1888 is that it provides a foundational starting point for Barcelona's increased and strengthened industrialization and globalization efforts, but it also brings to the surface the key tensions that mark the time period from the preparations for the Expo through to Primo de Rivera's coup d'état in 1923. In what follows, I show how the Expo transformed the city and its socioeconomic, geographical, and political make-up at the same time that it lays the groundwork for the tumultuous 35 years that follow.

Finally, I will conclude the chapter by drawing connections between the time period during which the novel's events take place and the time in which it was written by Eduardo Mendoza. This allows us to read *La ciudad de los prodigios* as a commentary as much about the time period between the two Expos as the contemporary preparations for the other mega-event in question, the 1992 Olympic Games.

Migration to the City Center

More than any other city in Spain, Barcelona was pushing ahead with technological and scientific advances in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Hochadel and Nieto-Galan note that "[i]ndustrial growth demanded a new labour force and shaped its urban geography and architecture with new transport networks and infrastructures. The second industrial revolution brought electricity and chemistry to the already powerful textile industry run by steam" (3). This was experienced most keenly by the businesses and residents of Barcelona, as production increased and technology allowed for better supply and transportation. A growth in industry ran parallel to an increased quantity of laborers in the area, who migrated to the city from the Catalan countryside and other areas of the peninsula. In 1887, there were 78,941 industrial workers in

Barcelona and the surrounding provinces, compared to a mere 4,724 in Madrid (Tuñón 254). As Mendoza's narrator points out, many of these people were desperate to find work and assumed it would be easy to do so in the city.

Beginning in 1886, Barcelona's government was in need of a multitude of wage-workers to complete the expansive building project for the Expo. The plan did not include simply one building to store all of the displays, but rather multiple buildings divided by both artistic category and country. The following map shows the scope of the project which was already in progress by 1886:

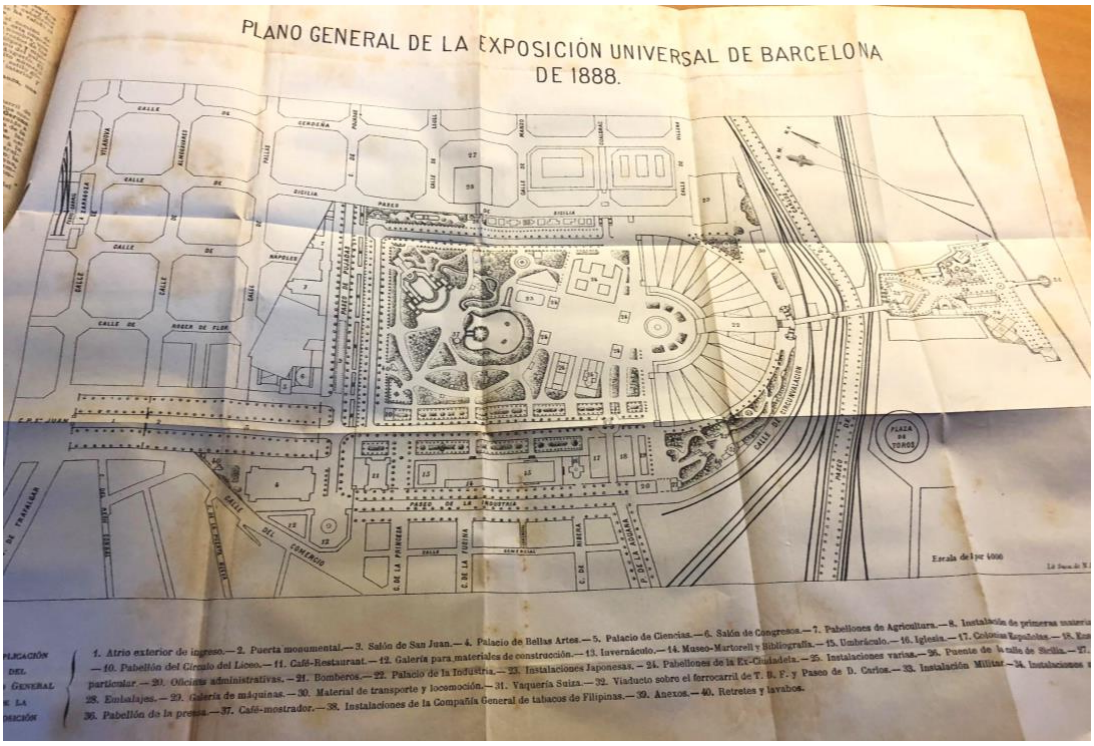

Figure 1. Map of the Universal Exposition.[33]

By mid-1887, when the protagonist Onofre from *La ciudad de los prodigios* arrives in Barcelona, there are already 4,000 men there working on the construction of the Expo buildings. To give an

[33] This map from 1888 is part of Rafael Chichón's *Barcelona y la Exposición Universal: Guía económica*, which I referenced at the Biblioteca Nacional de Catalunya.

idea of the size of the building project and in order to provide some frame of reference to accompany Figure 1 above, let us briefly consider the square meters of the buildings involved. The Palacio de Industria was the largest building constructed for the event, consisting of 50,000 square meters. The remaining buildings measure as follows (all in square meters): Galería de Máquinas, 5,760; Palacio de Bellas Artes, 4,224; Palacio de Ciencias, 3,010; Palacio de Agricultura, 5,760; Pabellón de Colonias, 1,600; Pabellón para el material de transporte, 1,920; Construcción y minerías en el pabellón de aguas, 4,096; Instalaciones de guerra y marina, 1,250; Umbracula (flores y horticultura), 2,240; Museo Martorell, 950.[34] In addition to these more than 80,000 square meters of buildings, there were small buildings, restaurants and kiosks set up throughout the park (Chichón 154-157). These figures inform not only the labor force required to construct the buildings, but also the extravagant cost that hosting the fair entailed.

It is on the Expo grounds that *La ciudad de los prodigios*' Onofre performs his first job ever: distributing flyers of anarchist propaganda. He has arrived too late to be hired for any kind of construction job, positions which thousands of workers already occupied. For that reason, he goes from site to site seeking jobs elsewhere in a comical, although disheartening, third-person narration. Onofre's first attempt is at the port, where he inquires about becoming a dockworker ("estibador"), but a wave of cholera there has shut down operations. He then encounters a couple of women and asks about any job openings, but they laugh in a way that frightens Onofre, who leaves running. When he speaks to a sailor, he is told "no subas a bordo si no quieres morir, chaval"[35] (Mendoza, *La ciudad* 31). At the train station, some workers tell him that he must

[34] "Machine Gallery, 5,76; Fine Arts Palace, 4,224; Science Palace, 3,010; Agriculture Palace, 5,760; Colonial Pavilion, 1,600; Transport Material Pavilion, 1,920; Construction and Mining in the Water Pavilion; 4,096; Marine and War Installations, 1,250; Umbracula (flowers and horticulture), 2,240; Martorell Museum, 950" (my translation).
[35] "Don't come aboard if you value your life, my boy" (Mendoza, *The City* 16).

belong to an association to be able to be a slave ("esclavo") there. Running around the city, "no dejó puerta por llamar"[36] and he inquired about work as a cigarette maker ("cigarrero"), cheesemaker ("quesero"), diver ("buzo"), marble cutter ("marmolista"), well-digger ("pocero"), confectioner ("confitería"), shipyard worker ("astillero"), etc. (32). Various critics have commented on the picaresque nature of this journey, including José Saval and Héctor Brioso Santos. As I mentioned in the introduction, Saval and Brioso Santos both include the following features as characteristic of a picaro, and of Onofre specifically: the importance of the social environment, humor, closeness with his mother, a childhood of poverty, succession of different jobs, a family that he has left, desire for social advancement, and ethical interest, which Saval clarifies operates in the reverse direction for Onofre (*La ciudad* 68, and 50-51, respectively). Furthermore, through Onofre's desperate attempt at finding a job, the narrator describes both the lack of work and the squalid conditions in which those who have found work spend their days. By describing the specific responses to Onofre's inquiries, the narrator suggests that to work in Barcelona's labor sector in 1887 means to become a slave, to die, to become ill or mentally unstable. Señor Braulio, the owner of the boarding house where Onofre stays, goes one step further by implying that it is the city itself that imposes these conditions and devours those who come seeking work: "Bah, será lo de siempre: el hambre, el desconcierto y el miedo, pensó luego. Había visto llegar a mucha gente en las mismas condiciones: la ciudad no cesaba de crecer. Uno más, pensó, una sardina diminuta que la ballena se tragará sin darse cuenta" (20).[37] The whale ("la ballena") in this case is the city itself and each person within it, at least those belonging to the working class, is a small, insignificant sardine ("sardina"). The city is

[36] "He left no stone unturned" (Mendoza, *The City* 16).
[37] "'One more,' he thought. 'Another tiny sardine for the great whale to swallow without even noticing'" (Mendoza, *The City* 6).

experiencing constant expansion as Catalonians from rural areas and Spaniards from other parts of the country flock to Barcelona with the expectation that industrialization surely means abundant jobs. Though this may be the case in some years, the narrator tells us that it is not always true:

> El desarrollo económico de Barcelona se había iniciado a finales del siglo XVIII y había de continuar hasta la segunda década del siglo XX, pero este desarrollo no había sido constante. A los períodos de auge les seguían períodos de recesión. Entonces el flujo migratorio no cesaba, pero en cambio la demanda disminuía; encontrar trabajo en estas circunstancias revestía dificultades casi insuperables. (29)[38]

It is clear that Onofre arrives in Barcelona during a moment of recession, when all the positions are already filled and there is no more money to pay new workers.

After returning to the boarding house empty-handed and being told that he must leave the following morning, the owner's daughter, Delfina, provides Onofre with one last chance to earn money – working for the anarchists. He joins an organization and pretends to believe in an ideology that he does not even fully understand because it is the only option he has left. Even Onofre cannot believe that this is what has become of him after a disappointing search for work: "no podía dejar de decir para sus adentros: Válgame Dios, no sé cómo he venido a convertirme en propagandista del anarquismo; hace unas semanas no había oído hablar siquiera de semejantes disparates y hoy parezco un convencido de toda la vida; sería cosa de reírse si con esto no me estuviera jugando el pellejo" (73).[39] Like the other jobs about which he had inquired, this one

[38] "Barcelona's economic development had begun at the end of the eighteenth century and was to continue until the second decade of the twentieth, but that development was not a continuous process. Booms were followed by recessions. During the recessions, the influx of new immigrants would continue unabated, regardless of the falling demand, and finding work became well-nigh impossible" (Mendoza, *The City* 13).

[39] "Look at me, an anarchist, and a few weeks ago I never heard of all this nonsense. Now I sound like a lifelong supporter. It would be laughable if I wasn't risking my neck for it" (Mendoza, *The City* 51).

also came with the threat of danger. Working with Pablo, one of the leaders of the anarchist group in Barcelona, shapes the young thirteen-year-old Onofre and exposes him to a political group that he will comment on time and again throughout the novel.

The influx of people coming to live in Barcelona had a number of consequences, including unemployment, overcrowded living centers, the need to expand the city's limits, homelessness, and unrest, among others. These issues would continue to manifest themselves in a variety of ways throughout the time period from 1888-1923 and even beyond. We will continue to revisit these consequences as we analyze other sources, such as the film *La ciutat cremada* (1976), throughout the remaining chapters.

Establishing and Expanding City Limits

As Barcelona expanded over the decades and centuries before the Expo, some zones remained outside of the city walls and others became integrated into the city proper. As industrialization efforts grew within the city, zones that had previously been outside the wall were assimilated: "La Barceloneta era un barrio de pescadores que había surgido durante el siglo XVIII fuera de las murallas de Barcelona. Posteriormente había quedado integrado en la ciudad y sometido a un proceso acelerado de industrialización" (Mendoza *La ciudad* 31).[40] Mendoza's novel takes a particular interest in the geography of the city, specifically taking into account what falls within and outside of the old walls. It is not merely a question of geographical location, but also of class difference and the desire to keep the city's center a place for the elite populations.[41] Some of the poorest populations live in the outskirts of the city, and one group in the novel lives

[40] "La Barceloneta was a fisherman's district that in the eighteenth century had grown outside the city walls. Later it became absorbed by the city and underwent rapid industrialization" (Mendoza, *The City* 15).
[41] See the Introduction for a review of studies on the urban development of Barcelona.

in El Morrot, near a pile of coal which would sometimes catch fire and burn uncontrollably. Onofre discovers this area full of prostitutes and criminals when he follows Señor Braulio one night. Rather than attempting to integrate this part of the city, it seems that the police and authorities try to leave it alone as much as possible, entering only by daylight and attempting to leave them to their own penal code.

A rise in the city's population due to an influx of laborers seeking jobs shortly before the Expo meant that the city had to expand. The narrator of *La ciudad de los prodigios* leads us to believe that Onofre's feelings toward the city expansion are at least partially negative: "Al andar contemplaba con ojos de campesino aquellas hectáreas que unos años antes habían sido huertos: ahora, atrapadas por el avance del progreso industrial, aguardaban un destino incierto yermas, negras y apestosas, envenenadas por los riachuelos pútridos que vertían las fábricas de las inmediaciones" (47).[42] It is clear that Onofre is responsible for the thoughts in the previous quotation and that he is observing this scene with the perspective of a native of the countryside who has recently come to the city. At this point in the novel, Onofre has spent little time in the metropolis and has yet to fully integrate himself into Barcelona's city life. Just as Señor Braulio previously described the city as a whale that swallows its victims, the narrator now presents Barcelona as an antagonistic subject that traps and poisons the surrounding territory, bringing it into the city proper. The land has transformed from orchards to a black, putrid wasteland poisoned by the factory run-off. The young protagonist who grew up in a rural area in Catalunya views this as an invasion of the city into the countryside, a perspective that will change as he later revisits his childhood home and realizes that he no longer appreciates that lifestyle either.

[42] "Walking, he viewed with a farmer's eye those acres that only a few years before had been carefully cultivated. Now, hemmed in by the advance of industry, the land, blackened and fetid, poisoned by the sewage from nearby factories, awaited an uncertain destiny" (Mendoza, *The City* 29).

The Working-Class Experience

The preparation for the Expo was dependent upon big ideas and a limited budget, leaving the workers responsible for constructing the buildings much to desire. The city was plagued by poor working conditions. I use "poor" as a double entendre – not only were the working conditions dismal, but the workers themselves were also struggling financially. Those who were in fact able to find jobs in the ever more crowded city were far from content with the conditions under which they were expected to work. Alternatively, those without work lived in poverty and misery.

The need to earn a day's wage was so dire that people would go to work while suffering contagious illnesses, which rapidly spread to their fellow colleagues. This is true of the stevedores whom Onofre meets at the port (Mendoza, *La ciudad* 29), who cannot afford to lose a day's worth of work. Close living quarters and highly contagious diseases lead to entire neighborhoods and sections of the city becoming plagued with typhus, smallpox, and scarlet fever ("tifus, viruela, erisipela o escarlatina"), and Onofre "encontró casos de clorosis, cianosis, gota serena, necrosis, tétanos, perlesía, aflujo, epilepsia y garrotillo. La desnutrición y el raquitismo se cebaban en los niños; la tuberculosis en los adultos; la sífilis en todos" (33).[43] It is not surprising that so many people have fallen ill when we consider the conditions in which the laborers' children are living in 1887 and that they are "tan sucios que era difícil precisar sus rasgos faciales; tenían las tripas hinchadas, andaban desnudos" (70-71).[44] The workers cannot afford to feed, clothe, or bathe their children adequately and they are therefore exposed to the

[43] "He came across cases of chlorosis, cyanosis, amaurosis, necrosis, tetanus, palsy, afflux, epilepsy, and croup. Malnutrition was rife among the child population, tuberculosis among the adults, and syphilis among all" (Mendoza, *The City* 17).
[44] "...so dirty, it was difficult to see their faces. The children had swollen bellies, went around naked" (Mendoza, *The City* 49).

natural elements while also being undernourished. Many of the laborers move their families from the countryside in hopes of finding a higher paying job in the city, but instead of finding financial gain, "ahora vivían en chozas de hojalata, madera y cartón en la playa que se extendía desde el embarcadero de la Exposición hasta la fábrica de gas" (70).[45] These working conditions, although described here in relation to the situation in 1888, endured well beyond the Expo preparations, and in historical sources "nada parece indicar que las condiciones de trabajo, higiene, vivienda, etc., cambiasen durante los últimos años del siglo" (Tuñón 318).[46] In fact, though the city's rapid industrialization brought many jobs, such as those created for the laborers who helped build the Expo site, it also created more rigid class distinctions. This particular situation is unique to Barcelona, as John Hargreaves points out: "The growth of industrial capitalism in Catalonia and the exceptionally severe class polarisation it entailed, generated a social structure which diverged radically from that of the rest of Spain" (24). Population increases, city expansion, and more industrial-sector jobs led to a firmly demarcated class structure which was characteristic of Barcelona at the turn of the century.

In 1887, the city also suffered an intense wave of cold weather during the winter months. Those who worked outside all day without any protection from the elements experienced misery. The narrator of *La ciudad de los prodigios* writes: "Para quienes trabajaban al aire libre la situación resultaba dolorosísima. Los obreros de la Exposición Universal sufrían lo indecible en el recinto, abierto al mar y desprotegido del viento. Mientras que en otros lugares parecidos, como el puerto, las labores se habían paralizado temporalmente, en la Exposición se seguía

[45] "They lived in huts of tin, wood, and cardboard along the beach between the World's Fair landing stage and the gasworks" (Mendoza, *The City* 48).
[46] "Nothing seems to indicate that the work, hygienic, living, etc. conditions… changed during the final years of the century" (my translation).

trabajando a ritmo creciente" (117).[47] The construction could not stop to protect the health of the laborers in the same way that other industries did due to the fixed time frame and opening date. In fact, the narrator points out a complete lack of humanity and consideration toward the laborers through a scene in which a bricklayer is buried under a pile of bricks that fell to the ground, and the construction cannot be stopped even for the time it would take to pull his dead body out of the rubble (127). In reality, it was not until 1900 that there were any workplace protection laws put into place (Tuñón 318), and therefore no legal action could be taken against bosses who decided that time and money were more important than human lives.

When their demands are not heard through other means, the workers decide to go on strike during these cold winter months. It is the first strike mentioned in Mendoza's novel, and although the workers are unsuccessful, the scene exemplifies the growing discontent among the working class. While Roche points out that Expos *could* but often *did not* produce rallies for members of the working class who were working on the Expo itself (77), this was not the case for Barcelona. In fact, his account of the 1888 Expo in Barcelona is extremely lacking, and it is precisely for that reason that we must look to fictional accounts such as *La ciudad de los prodigios* to see what the working-class experience may have looked like.

The cold also affects homeless people who are living on the beach and are forced to seek shelter elsewhere. This leads the women and children to go to the Palacio de Bellas Artes (Fine Arts Palace) and demand a place to spend the night. The narrator suggests that the only reason the authorities help them find another place (they were not going to be allowed in the Palacio de Bellas Artes) to sleep is to avoid bad press in the months leading up to the Expo. The city's

[47] "For those working outside, the situation was agonizing. The World's Fair laborers suffered unspeakable torment, open as the site was to the sea and the winds. While at other, similar places, such as the port, work had been called off temporarily, at the fairgrounds it went on faster than ever" (Mendoza, *The City* 87).

authorities, more permanently this time, later force the homeless families to leave the beaches once again, in an effort to "limpiar Barcelona de indeseables" (145).[48] The narrator quotes a newspaper reporter who writes that "desde hace algún tiempo nuestras autoridades muestran singular empeño en librarnos de esa plaga de vagos, rufianes y gentes de mal vivir que no pudiendo ejercer en las localidades pequeñas sus criminales industrias, buscan transitoria salvaguardia en la confusión de las ciudades populosas" (145).[49] The need for good publicity and a positive reception of the city by its foreign visitors moves the authorities to disregard the impoverished community, who are not in fact all participating in criminal activities ("criminales industrias").

However, even though the laborers protest that the working conditions are dreadful and inadequate, many recognize that their lives would be even worse off once the Expo came to an end. There would be no more jobs in which to suffer and no way to earn a living wage for their families. On the other hand, some workers maintain a blind optimism for what the future of Barcelona would surely offer at the conclusion of the event. They are sure that "una vez inaugurada la Exposición Barcelona se convertiría en una gran ciudad; en esta ciudad habría trabajo para todos, los servicios públicos mejorarían a ojos vistas, todo el mundo recibiría la asistencia necesaria" (73).[50] In fact, in 1887, there were thousands of unemployed individuals in the textile industry alone (Tuñón 267). Curiously, Mendoza does not directly address the aftermath of the Expo and what became of all the workers when construction halted. Rather, he carries us deeper into the criminal and anarchist world of Barcelona, offering only glimpses of

[48] "...weed out all Barcelona's undesirables" (Mendoza, *The City* 110).
[49] "*For some time now our officials have been singularly active in their efforts to rid us of the plague of loafers, ruffians, and miscreants who, finding insufficient scope for their criminal deeds in smaller communities, seek refuge in the turmoil of populous cities*" (Mendoza, *The City* 110).
[50] "Barcelona would become a great city after the World's Fair inauguration; that there would be work for all; that public services would improve by leaps and bounds, and everyone would receive the assistance he needed" (Mendoza, *The City* 51).

the specific populations mentioned in the first two hundred pages describing the preparations for the main event.

The anarchist group provides Onofre with contacts and connections that allow him to find new sources of income, almost entirely through illegal means, that frequently further exploit the working class and spark increased violence in the city. His familiarity and bonds with the labor sector at the Expo site allow him to take advantage of the workers by selling them a stolen liquid that he promises will make their hair grow. In his case, instead of participating in the solidarity among the low-wage working class, he exploits their trust to make money from their purchases. From this very moment, it is clear that Onofre will adopt an "every man for himself" or even a "survival of the fittest" approach to the rest of his time in Barcelona, and perhaps the rest of his life, in order to climb the social ladder. For this reason, among others, many scholars have made the connection between Onofre and the picaresque tradition.[51] This trajectory will continue through the novel, but his interactions with the working class at the construction site begin to define his character and lack of scruples. When Pablo, Onofre's boss or overseer, finds out about his side job, he first becomes enraged and violently attacks Onofre. However, when he realizes that Onofre can do both jobs and that he cannot admit that what his employee is doing is wrong without also admitting that he lost control over Onofre, he lets it go. After all, "ambos tenían en muy baja estima la sociedad y sus miembros; para ellos cualquier engaño era aceptable, todo les parecía justificado éticamente por la estupidez de la víctima" (*La ciudad* 109).[52] To be clear, Onofre's low esteem for society and his own victims develops in the few short months that he works for the anarchists at the Expo site in Barcelona. He is in the city for less than a year before

[51] See Saval and Brioso Santos.
[52] "They had one thing in common, ideology aside: a very low opinion of society and all its members. As far as they were concerned, any deception was acceptable, could be justified by the stupidity of the victims" (Mendoza, *The City* 80).

he adopts the attitude that it is acceptable to take advantage of those "stupid" enough to fall for his tricks.

At this point in the novel, Onofre is discovering for himself what exploitation means and how it is manifested through the actions of others. He is outraged at the anarchists for being hypocrites who "predica la justicia, pero que luego no vacila en exponerme a todos los riesgos y en explotarme sin la menor consideración, clamaba, ¡ah!" (Mendoza *La ciudad* 98).[53] The anarchists who are trying to cover up the exploitation and convince him that they are doing what is morally right is what prompts Onofre to actually believe that: "Cuánto más justos son los patronos, que explotan al operario sin disimulo, retribuyen su trabajo, le permiten prosperar a fuerza de tesón y escuchan, aunque sea a las malas, sus reivindicaciones" (98).[54] At the Expo site, the bosses are tough and force poor working conditions upon their laborers, but at least it is all out in the open. He sees multiple models of exploitation that almost certainly guide him to the kind that he himself will practice in the future.

Shortly after Pablo informs Onofre that the group will be dissolving temporarily, the latter is introduced into his new role by means of kidnapping as Don Humberto Figa i Morera pulls him into his car near the Expo site. His new boss has a similar moral trajectory to that of Onofre. Figa i Morera begins a career as a lawyer for the criminals and the poor because he sees it as an opportunity to make money, for after all, many of the well-regarded lawyers had already taken most of the potential clients who were rich. His reason for serving this population was never altruistic or impassioned – nor was Onofre's initial connection to distributing anarchist propaganda – but his next step shows the beginning of his moral decline. Figa i Morera takes

[53] "They preach justice but don't think twice about putting me in danger, exploiting me" (Mendoza, *The City* 71).
[54] "The bosses are fairer, they exploit the worker openly, paying him for his work, allowing him to move up if he sticks at it, and listening to his demands - even if sometimes that takes a little prodding" (Mendoza, *The City* 71).

advantage of the poverty and lack of resources available to his clients, and once he has resolved their cases, he hires them to do dangerous and dirty jobs for his wealthy acquaintances. Just as Onofre began to take advantage of those he was theoretically trying to help (by informing them of the anarchist cause), the lawyer uses his position of trust and authority to convince his prior clientele to do dirty work for pay.

An analysis of these two characters' trajectories exemplifies the constant violence, exploitation, and misery defining the working conditions in Barcelona during this time period. It is evident that one need not be in a position of official power through a government job or otherwise in order to take advantage of those belonging to a lower social class. Stuart Hall aptly summarizes one of Michel Foucault's conceptions of power: "We are, to some degree, caught up in its circulation – oppressors and oppressed. It does not radiate downwards, either from one source or from one place. Power relations permeate all levels of social existence and are therefore to be found operating at every site of social life" (34). The layers of power within each social class are made evident through the protagonist's relationship with members of the upper and lower classes. Onofre's ability to exploit the working class without their knowledge will evolve as he begins to take advantage of people with greater power, wealth, and prestige. It is no wonder that Mendoza occupies hundreds of pages discussing the first major event of his novel, the Expo, for it is in these chapters that we get to know Onofre Bouvila and the beginnings of his picaresque, violent, and greedy tendencies that will surface throughout the rest of the novel, and which I will discuss in subsequent chapters. His character development suggests that the Expo is, at least in part, a catalyst for the moral crisis that leads him to a situation of mutual exploitation through his attempt to integrate himself into the upper classes.

The layers of symbolism regarding the geographical and cultural center of the Expo at the Citadel (Parc de la Ciutadella), a landmark known for a history of violence and injustice, cannot be emphasized enough. The site was built in 1714 as a military fortress where rebels were brutally executed. In order to build the Citadel, houses in that area of Barceloneta were destroyed, leaving many homeless. The thousands of homes that were raised "va fer de la Ciutadella un indret odiat pels barcelonins" (Fabre and Huertas 11).[55] Let us not forget that the homeless were expelled from their "residences" on the beach prior to the Expo in 1888, although this time it was not to create space but rather to better portray the area surrounding the park to foreign tourists. The original Citadel was constructed through the use of forced labor in the early eighteenth century, where refusal to work meant execution (Cros and Pouplana, quoted in Busquets 50). Although the construction of the Expo buildings is certainly not forced labor, the wage workers in the novel are being treated and compensated poorly for their hard work, completed under harsh weather conditions and imposing bosses or *capataces*. For years after the Citadel's construction in 1714, it represented violence and the atrocities that occurred there. As Robert Davidson states, "it stood as the solidification of state violence, a condensation of the defeat of the city" (88). Additionally, the geographic location of the building within the medieval walls prevented further city expansion, blocking Barcelona's path to industrialization and reinforcing the central government's control. In 1841, the building was partially destroyed only to be restored two years later by Queen María Cristina (88). Finally in 1848, it permanently went into disuse and was destroyed. While converting the space into a park attempted to mask its violent past, at the end of the nineteenth century, that place still carried (and continues to carry today) the memory of injustice, tyranny, and brutal executions.

[55] "Makes the Citadel a hated place for Barcelonans" (my translation).

Furthermore, the historic Citadel stood as a representation of the central government's power during its use, but the Expo and the park that remained afterward challenged this authority. The columns that stood at the entrance of the Expo read "Comercio" ("Commerce") and "Industrialización" ("Industrialization"), economic forces that challenge the central government's traditional pillars of monarchy or a central governing power and religion. Highlighting the modernization and industrialization occurring in Barcelona specifically, rather than referencing the entire country, is a way of establishing the city's own authority and progress. Rafael Chichón's guidebook for the Expo shows that while typically each country had an area in which to display its novelties, inventions, and products, Barcelona had a section separate from that of Spain, which represented the central government. It is worth noting that both Chichón's guide and Mendoza's novel portray the decision to have the event on the grounds of the old Citadel as being merely coincidental. The guide to the Expo states that "[e]l 18 de junio del 85 el Ayuntamiento, mediante las condiciones que consideró conveniente imponer en garantía de la realización del proyecto presentado, y después de oído el parecer de los principales Centros económicos de esta ciudad, cedió gratuitamente al concesionario el uso de los terrenos del Parque no aprovechados en el día, para la realización del proyecto presentado" (Chichón 137).[56] It would seem that this location was chosen mostly for its current state of disuse rather than being a systematic or advantageous decision.

In theory, the laborers that spent countless hours working in poor conditions to bring the building project to fruition for the Expo were democratically included in the event and welcome to attend. This "democratic" event was open to all classes of people, but who really attended?

[56] "On June 18, 1985 the City Council, under terms that it considered necessary to impose in order to guarantee the realization of the presented project, and after hearing the opinions of the principal economic Centers of this city, gratuitously conceded the use of the park grounds, unused at that time, for the realization of the present project" (my translation).

The cost of admission was 1 peseta per day, 2 on *días de moda,* or 25 for the duration of the Expo (Chichón 158). Even though the working class had made the event possible, they were permitted to enter free of charge only for demonstrations that would teach them to perform their jobs better: "En determinados días se repartirán á las sociedades obreras billetes gratuitos, para instrucción de obreros ante instalaciones técnicas" (158).[57] Despite there being no mention of this injustice in Mendoza's novel, the historical anarchists and workers unions certainly noticed it and "denounced the supposed modernity of the exhibition as a 'bourgeois' display of luxury goods and waste, and criticized the false rhetoric of peace, the commodification of knowledge and the corruption of the prize juries" (Hochadel 18). It was not a space designed for just anyone, but rather a place designed for elites, for the bourgeois and upper-class populations that attempted to control knowledge production and dissemination.

The Expo was a way to control the image of the city of Barcelona and the entire event could be interpreted as an "attempt to achieve cultural hegemony and to exert social control" over the city's population (Hochadel 11). We know through historical references and fictional accounts like that of Onofre Bouvila that cultural hegemony was never achieved, even if it may have seemed that way to a foreign visitor. When visiting the Expo, Onofre suddenly "sintió que se ahogaba, la gente que le rodeaba se le hizo insoportable, tuvo que salir del Palacio a toda prisa, abriéndose paso a codazos. Luego fuera el deslumbrante espectáculo se le antojó una broma siniestra: no podía disociarlo de los sinsabores y la miseria que allí había padecido pocos meses antes; no volvió más a la Exposición" (Mendoza, *La ciudad* 126).[58] The disparity of the

[57] "On certain days, free tickets were given to workers' organizations to teach the workers about technical installations" (my translation).
[58] "Felt stifled and found the people around him unbearable; he left in a hurry, elbowing his way out. Once he was outside, the whole dazzling spectacle struck him as a cruel joke: he could not separate it from the hardships he had suffered there a few months before. He never went back to the World's Fair" (Mendoza, *The City* 133).

luxurious, “dazzling” event and the horrors of the construction process become clear to him, although we will see in Chapters 3 and 4 how his sympathy with the lower classes wanes throughout the novel. While working-class males certainly did attend the Expo, it is also clear that the events “were organised on an exclusionary, elitist and paternalistic basis by power networks of leading politicians, aristocrats, corporate capitalists and professionals… In this respect they reflected, symbolised and reproduced the major class divisions, and thus the underlying social exclusionary character of their ‘host’ societies” (Roche 75-76). Although the Expo often attempted to be democratic and inclusionary, it also further solidified the existing class separations, and this was especially true in the case of Barcelona, where we have already seen evidence of the negative effects on the working class.

Tensions Rise: Local versus Central Power

Enric Ucelay da Cal states that “Spain’s history, like many others, can be understood as a permanent tension between the pull towards centralization (centripetal) and the push towards fragmentation (centrifugal)” (32). These are forces that have existed since medieval times and remained present at the end of the nineteenth century as well. Hosting the Expo in Barcelona first came as an independent idea stemming from Barcelona’s elite and politicians. However, all the local planning for the event needed to be approved by the central government in Madrid due to monetary constraints. In order to receive financial support from Madrid, the politicians in Barcelona needed to make a case for why they needed the extra money and what they would do with it. Ultimately, this led to a long back-and-forth exchange of letters and many delays from the central government, which did not view Barcelona’s event as a priority. Frustration grew, and politicians from Barcelona sent representatives to Madrid in hopes of reaching an agreement faster. However, upon arriving in Madrid, they were made to wait for hours and eventually days

without securing a meeting with the necessary authorities. Mendoza's exaggerated account of this in his novel exemplifies the frustrations of Barcelona's politicians in a comical way that criticizes the central government. The representatives of the central government act as puppeteers who play with the fate of their visitors. Mendoza lays out the financial relationship between the region and the central state: "En esa época, la economía del país estaba tan centralizada como todo lo demás; la riqueza de Cataluña, como la de cualquier otra parte del reino, iba a engrosar directamente las arcas de Madrid. [...] Para cualquier gasto extraordinario debían acudir al Gobierno en busca de una subvención, de un crédito o, como en el caso presente, de un chasco" (*La ciudad* 57).[59] Referring to the politicians' request for financial help as a "chasco" shows just how poorly the meeting goes. We can interpret "chasco" in both senses of the word, as a disappointment and a hoax. They are let down by the central government's lack of attention toward the politicians from Barcelona, but the Madrid representatives also make jokes at their expense, as the narrator writes using clear exaggeration: "Los más allegados al Ministerio les gastaban bromas aún más vejatorias, como colocar cubos llenos de agua en los dinteles de las puertas que habían de cruzar, tender cables en el suelo para hacerles tropezar y acercarles velas encendidas a los faldones del traje para chamuscarlos" (59).[60] While this most certainly did not occur in the way Mendoza's narrator would have us believe, this hyperbolic perspective signals the control the central government has over local governments and the subsequent treatment faced by the latter. Additionally, the ironic tone with which Mendoza's narrator speaks of Madrid exemplifies contempt for the way the central government controls the

[59] "At that time the country's economy was as centralized as everything else; the wealth of Catalonia, as that of every other part of the kingdom, went straight to the state coffers in Madrid. [....] But for any out-of-the-ordinary expenditure they had to turn to the government to obtain a subsidy, a loan, or - as in the present case - a deaf ear" (Mendoza, *The City* 37).

[60] "More vexatious still were the practical jokes played on them by the ministry minions, such as balancing buckets of water on doors along their path, laying trip wires to make them stumble, or singeing the tails of their coats with candles" (Mendoza, *The City* 39).

funding and actions of Catalunya's largest city, Barcelona. The representation of this dynamic in the novel is far from neutral, with the narrative perspective clearly defending the side of Catalan politicians.

On the offensive side, if we can use that term, both Mendoza and historical sources emphasize Barcelona's superiority over the rest of the country. In *La ciudad de los prodigios*, one of the historical sections near the beginning of the novel lays out the major technological and industrial advances, most of which took place in the outskirts of the city on the exterior side of the old city wall. The narrator lists the following advances, among others: a regular stage-coach service between Reus and Barcelona (1818), the first gaslight system (1826), the first steam-powered motor (1836), first railroad in Spain from Barcelona to Mataró (1848), and the first electrical power plant in Spain installed in Barcelona (1873). The narrator comments that "[l]a diferencia que había en este sentido entre Barcelona y el resto de la península era abismal y la impresión que la ciudad producía al recién llegado era fortísima" (Mendoza, *La ciudad* 27).[61] Barcelona clearly had an advantage over the rest of Spain in terms of industrialization and economic growth, making it a perfect place to host the 1888 Expo.

In the economic guide for the Expo there was a clear attempt to prioritize Barcelona over the country as a whole. This was done partially for obvious reasons: the tourist who would use this guide was visiting Barcelona and would expect to find out more about this particular city. However, the list of participants in the Expo went one step further to highlight the city's innovations and participation. The total table of square meters that each country occupied within the Palacio de Industria ("Industrial Palace") listed Barcelona separately from Spain. It is the only city listed among all of the participants in the form of countries. Not only that, but

[61] "The gap between Barcelona and the rest of the peninsula made an overwhelming impression on the newcomer" (Mendoza, *The City* 12).

Barcelona also had a greater representation in square meters, with 4,200 square meters versus Spain's 3,200 in the Palacio de Industria alone (Chichón 157). This space designated for the city to show its own innovations in the industrial field was a marker of the fact that Barcelona was more advanced than other cities in the peninsula, and it intended to show this to the world.

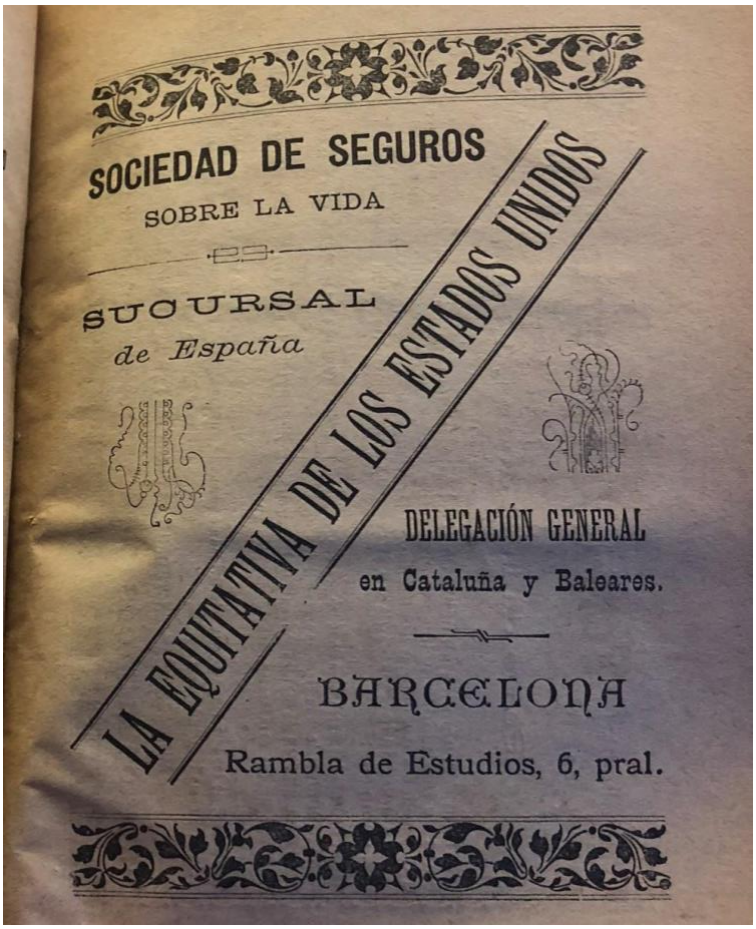

Figure 2. Advertisement in Rafael Chichón's "Barcelona y la Exposición Universal: Guía económica"

When we look at the advertisements in the guide book, we can see the vast array of services and products being offered in the city. While many of them do not stand out as being entirely different from those available in other cities in Spain, there is one in particular that draws our attention. It is an advertisement for a life insurance company that claims to be up to par with such companies in the United States. The advertisement reads "la equitativa de los Estados Unidos" in a large font across the entire front of the page (see Figure 2 above). Although

the company is a Spanish one, this advertisement is specifically for the branch in Barcelona, a place that appears in a larger font and therefore draws more attention than the country itself. The city already occupies a superior economic and industrial position over the rest of Spain, but the ability to advertise its local businesses by means of the Expo guide will only boost Barcelona's economic wellbeing. It positions Barcelona specifically – not the entire country – as a site worthy of visiting and spending money there.

Tourism

The elaboration of a complex guide for visitors underscores the important touristic element of the Expo. This was Barcelona's chance to make the city a prime tourist destination by showing all that it had to offer. Chichón's economic guide for visitors titled *Barcelona y la Exposición Universal (Guía económica*) ("Barcelona and the Universal Exposition [Economic Guide]") was available in Spanish and French, likely given the geographic proximity as well as the expected visitors from France. One hundred thousand copies were printed and distributed by the *Agencia Oficial de la Exposición Universal* ("Official Agency of the Universal Exposition"). The extensive – around 200 pages – booklet contained sections on general advice, telegrams, arriving to the city, banks, loans, press, theater, entertainment, plazas, trains, buildings for the Expo, police stations, fire stations, cleaning, and more. It is clearly designed to cover all the information that a visitor may need during a first trip to that country.

Archival photos offer proof that the signs and advertisements in the Expo buildings were all written in Spanish and French as well. Although there were representatives from countries all over the world – including Japan, the United States, Austria, Tunisia, Germany, Hungary, Italy, England, Belgium, Paraguay and Chile – the only languages strongly represented in the Expo

were the two previously mentioned.[62] This representation highlights France as one of the cultural capitals of the world, and it simultaneously inserts Spain into that context. Additionally, it allies Catalunya and its northern neighbor, France, perhaps even more strongly so than Catalunya and the rest of Spain. At the same time, it is important to note that French was a commonly spoken language at the time for European educated classes. The same set of archival photos provides visual evidence of the class of tourists visiting Barcelona in its majority: upper-class, wealthy individuals, and business owners. Below, in an image of the inaugural ceremony, we can see clothing indicative of the middle to upper class (including hats, suits, dress clothes, dresses):

Figure 3. The Inauguration of the Universal Exposition, from Pau Audouard's *Álbum de la Exposición.*

[62] Many photos of these stands can be found in the *Álbum de la Exposición (1888)* which I consulted at the Biblioteca Nacional de Catalunya.

It was in the interest of Barcelona's political and economic systems for foreign tourists to have a good experience in the city. Mendoza includes newspaper clippings and quotes to emphasize this point in *La ciudad de los prodigios*: "La atención al 'tourista', como se decía entonces, era el centro de todos los cuidados de aquellos días. Los diarios no hablaban más que de esto. *Cada uno de los visitantes, al volver a su país,* decían, *queda convertido en un apóstol y propagador de cuanto ha visto, oído y aprendido*" (152).[63] This event served as publicity for the city and would, hopefully, attract more tourists for years to come. Perhaps for that reason, Chichón's guide is so extensive, including a series of advice or *consejos* for the traveler. There is a clear warning for tourists to be vigilant of their belongings: "Mucho cuidado con los rateros, ratas y timadores. Asegúrense el reloj y las alhajas; colóquese el dinero en sitio seguro" (3).[64] City officials want tourists to remember Barcelona for its modernization, industrialization, and overall positive experience. This guide tries to ensure that that is what happens, and that the tourists get a selective, positive view of the city without witnessing its underlying issues of crime, poverty, and growing working-class discontent.

The Aftermath

Even after the Expo came to an end, the preparations, tourism, and the event itself left a lasting impact. The city's and individuals' financial situations were severely affected by the aftermath of the event. Barcelona acquired a massive debt from the cost of construction and preparation for the event. The cost of admission and assistance by the central government were not enough to compensate for the amount of money that the city invested in the event. Although

[63] "The 'tourist,' his needs and comfort, that was the chief concern during those last days. The newspapers spoke of nothing else. 'Each and every visitor,' they wrote, 'upon his return to his own country, will be the apostle of all that he has seen and heard'" (Mendoza, *The City* 115).
[64] "Careful with thieves, pick pocketers, and swindlers. Secure your watch and jewelry; place your money in a safe spot" (my translation).

two million individuals attended, Mendoza comments that the cost of building construction alone exceeded five million pesetas (*La ciudad* 163). Historian and art critic Robert Hughes reports that the total deficit after the closure of the Expo was six million pesetas, which was added to the existing eighteen million peseta debt (372). On the individual level, although the expansion of the city promised an influx of job opportunities, those jobs ultimately disappeared once construction was complete. With the Expo's buildings finished, there was insufficient work left for the thousands of workers who had migrated to Barcelona from other parts of Spain.

While the negative impacts of the event certainly stand out, one newspaper from 1888 comments on the lasting positive effects:

> Porque tal vez lo mejor que ha expuesto Cataluña y su capital, no estaba en los terrenos del Parque; estaba derramado, ostentado por toda la población. El Ensanche en su apogeo, la Rambla en su mayor animación, los monumentos inaugurados, las fiestas realizadas, el Hotel Internacional fabricado en menos de dos meses, el puente de hierro lanzado en pocas semanas entre el Parque y el mar y sobre la vía férrea... todo inventado, proyectado, ejecutado y llevado á término en la ciudad de la Exposición ¿no eran aún mayores portentos y no le granjeaban mayor prez y fama que la Exposición misma? ("La Exposición cumplida")[65]

This suggests that the improvements made to the city were even more notable and important than the event that propelled these initiatives. These were, after all, the more lasting improvements to

[65] "Because perhaps the best of Catalonia and its capital was not shown within the Park area; it was scattered, flaunted by the entire population. The Ensanche at its peak, the Rambla at its most animated, the inaugurated monuments, the parties held, the International Hotel built in less than two months, the iron arch launched in just a few weeks between the Park and the sea, over the railway... all invented, planned, executed, and fully completed in the city of the Expo. Were these not even greater wonders and did these not earn more honor and fame than the Expo itself?" (my translation).

the city after the event itself ended. The hope to improve the city and draw in more tourists went far beyond just one singular (though long-lasting) event.

The Expo was also significant for the way in which it can be interpreted as the introduction of Barcelona to the modern world (de la Cuesta Marina 223). This happened in two ways: by allowing other countries the opportunity to get to know Barcelona and by propelling the advancements and improvements within the city itself. In fact, this event in 1888 "inicia una nueva era para el diseño industrial" and ensured that "[e]l triunfo de la buscada unión de arte e industria, era ya indiscutible" (223).[66] Furthermore, Spain had a long and complex history with France due to the prominent view of France as the symbol of progress. A brief glance at the numerous military interventions between the two countries highlights the tension and competition that had existed for centuries, including the Franco-Spanish War, the War of Spanish Succession, and the Napoleonic Wars. Turning to literature, we have seen many representations of the complex relationship between the two countries. Early in the nineteenth century, Mariano José de Larra wrote several texts – which swayed in tone between despair and sarcasm – regarding the way Spaniards viewed France's superiority in progress. Later in the nineteenth century, Fernán Caballero also addressed this tension and the difference of opinion among Spaniards regarding the country's relationship with France in the novel *La gaviota* (1849). I will not dwell on mentioning all of the numerous literary examples of the contention between the two countries, but it is clear that the sentiment had existed long before the Expo. However, France had already hosted an Expo, and this was Spain's chance to demonstrate that it could showcase its progress on the same level as France. Although the first Expo is largely regarded as the one that took place in London in 1851, France had held an Industrial Exposition

[66] "Initiates a new chapter for industrial design" and ensured that "the triumph of the sought after union between art and industry was now indisputable" (my translation).

in 1844 in Paris, one of its many national expositions. France also held the second, fourth, and seventh official Expos in 1855, 1867, and 1878, all before Spain had held any. Additionally, while most of the Expos were at least two years apart, France's fourth one began just five months after the conclusion of Spain's. Thus, the need for Barcelona to show its merit and become part of the modern, progress-driven world was evident.

The Expo and Its Contemporary Connections

The connections between the publication date of *La ciudad de los prodigios* (1986) and the dates which its plot spans, 1888-1929, are undeniable and provide us a way in which to analyze the novel's deeper impact. Mendoza's highly detailed account of Barcelona's historical, cultural, and social conditions during the preparations for the Expo occupy approximately one-third of the novel's total page count. The narrator intertwines historical data (some "factual" and some fictionalized for the story) and the experience of his characters to provide a rich description of the atmosphere prior to the Expo. That there is little detail regarding the Expo itself during its operation and the aftermath when it closes suggests that Mendoza's focus is more acutely on the city's preparatory actions. This would include city expansion, improvement of touristic sites that foreigners would see, the construction of a new hotel, construction of buildings for the event, removal of undesirable populations from eyesight, and the way class and political relations intensified as pressure grew to make sure Barcelona caused a positive impression for its visitors.

At the time Mendoza was writing this novel prior to its 1986 publication, Barcelona was preparing to host the Olympics in 1992. The first bid document was published in 1982, and the city did not receive its official invitation to host the 1992 Olympics until October 1986. Although Mendoza did not yet know that Barcelona would in fact host the 1992 Olympics, he did anticipate the likelihood that it would happen and the preparations that the city would surely

need to begin in order to host it. Just as the city underwent enormous transitions – including building projects, cleaning up the city, and preparations to host large crowds – during the lead-up to the Expo, similar preparations would be underway for the 1992 Summer Olympics. Through his careful analysis of the construction site and class relations leading up to the 1888 event, Mendoza reveals his own anxiety about what hosting another mega-event could mean for the city. The connection between these time periods is undeniable and the comparisons are multiple.

It is from this transitional time period of the 1980s that we learn about the Expo preparations a century before. Regarding the city's arrangements for the Olympics, Saval comments that "la narración nos recuerda el nuevo esfuerzo de la ciudad por convertirse en una ciudad de renombre mundial y dar prueba de sus muchas veces mencionado cosmopolitismo y efectividad de gestión, uno de los ideales de la burguesía catalana" (*La ciudad* 8).[67] Thus, yet again the city needs to prove its progress, its modernity, and its attractiveness as a tourist site. It is worth mentioning that France had yet again beat Spain to this accomplishment, as Paris had hosted the Summer Olympics on two previous occasions, in 1900 and 1924. Hochadel also notes Barcelona's need to "catch up" to other parts of the modern world: "*City of Marvels*, first published in Spanish in 1986, was written amidst the great expectations created by the Olympic Games which Barcelona was to host in 1992. Once again, we might say, the city was eager to catch up with 'modernity' as it had done a century earlier, casting off the grey vestiges of the oppressive Franco regime (1939–1975)" (2). Schwarzbürger also succinctly summarizes the connections between 1888 and the 1980's in Barcelona: "repiten el motivo de la crueldad del progreso; el de la ciudad cosmopolita versus el catalanismo; el de los problemas con Madrid; de

[67] "The narration reminds us of the renewed effort of a city about to become a world-renowned city and show proof of its well-mentioned cosmopolitanism and effective order, one of the ideals of the Catalan bourgeoisie" (my translation).

la conciencia y del orgullo nacional; del mercantilismo de los catalanes y su audacia para crear algo nuevo; de la especulación inmobiliaria durante el ensanche del siglo XIX y antes de los juegos olímpicos, los planes arquitectónicos" (215).[68] While many scholars have rightfully made the connection between these time periods, many do not go beyond observations about the city's desire to show itself as modern and international. What I hope to add to these observations – and to the conversation that Schwarzbürger begins – are the specific parallels that run between the time periods on a more granular level. Mendoza's carefully crafted narrative and high level of detail merits an analysis which is equally intricate.

In order to host a mega-event and welcome a large number of tourists to Barcelona, the city needed to renovate, expand, and construct not only places for the event itself to be held, but also for visitors to tour, enjoy, and rest. Prior to the 1888 Expo, a large number of buildings were constructed to house the exhibits, and a grand hotel was built to house upper-class visitors. While some of those buildings were repurposed following the event, many others went into disuse. For the 1992 Olympic Games, the city was able to upgrade some of the sites on Montjuïc to make them suitable for holding several of the games. Furthermore, the urban renovation prior to the event included a new waterfront area, an international airport, a skyline communications tower, various sports stadia, and a museum of contemporary art (Roche 144). Interestingly, one of the buildings from the 1888 Expo also became a museum, and thus there were didactic and cultural aims for both buildings. The urban development most frequently mentioned in Mendoza's 1986 novel are the gas street lamps that were dispersed throughout the city and changed the way in which individuals viewed the night. Though the technology had certainly advanced significantly

[68] "They repeat the motif of the cruelty of progress; of the cosmopolitan city versus Catalanism; of the problems with Madrid; of national consciousness and pride; of the mercantilism of the Catalans and their audacity to create something new; of real-estate speculation during the nineteenth-century expansion and the architectural plans before the Olympic Games" (my translation).

by the time Mendoza was writing his novel, there were new inventions that changed the way society operated, such as television and thus televised Olympic Games as well as airports and modes of transportation. The cost of city improvements designed to help the mega-events succeed was significant in both cases. In fact, the city spent over eight billion dollars on the 1992 Olympic Games, more than any other host country had spent (Roche 144). Certainly a benefit of hosting the Games is the increased tourism and foreign spending in the city, but this often led to later issues for the working class and poorer sectors of society. As Roche signals, "in general the increase in foreign investment in the city also tends to drive up land values and housing costs in certain areas, leading to a further degree of spatial polarisation as well as social polarisation" (Roche 145). What this means, then, is that even if the working class benefitted from construction jobs and other industries that increased to complete city renovations, they would later face higher living costs.

While the physical preparations, such as building projects, were of great concern before both events, so was the preoccupation with the way tourists would view Barcelona and how the city would assert its own individual and unique identity. Part of Barcelona's attempt to be on par with other modern cities also lay in its desire to impress visitors and therefore draw more tourism, which would continue even beyond the event. Before the two Expos mentioned in Mendoza's novel (1888 and 1929):

> Key segments of urban space were restructured in such a way so as to create an image of the city that did not coincide with the objective urban reality of the time, except in the areas that would be most visible to foreign visitors. *La ciudad* constitutes a critical account of image construction, exposes the falsity of that process as it happened in that

era and forms a special connection to the context in which the novel was published, six years before Barcelona was to host the Summer Olympic Games of 1992. (Oswald 52)

Thus, although the city attempted to project a positive image, in the end it was simply a concealment of underlying issues. As I mentioned previously, Mendoza's novel depicts squalid and dangerous living conditions where the poorest residents are living in zones within reach of chemicals and smoke from the coal fires, zones in which the police dare not enter the majority of the time. The tourist guide developed by Chichón directs visitors to certain areas of the city, and we can be certain that the sectors in which the laborers lived were not included as a place of interest that would be worthy of visiting. While Mendoza's novel depicts the city's attempt to hide the poor and homeless (or "undesirables" as the narrator says) out of sight, an article from the *L.A. Times* in 1992 suggests that police did the same prior to the Olympic Games: "Barcelona has always been a red-light port city, but for the Games, police have driven transvestites and prostitutes away from their traditional downtown haunts to areas away from the center, and a lot of the drug crowd with them" (Montalbano). The fictional account of Barcelona's Expo and the journalistic evidence for the Olympic Games suggest that history was repeating itself – yet again police pushed out the poor populations that would impact the view that tourists form of the city.

Mendoza was not the only one to see the connection between the earlier Expos (in Barcelona and beyond) and the Olympic Games in regards to the generation of tourism. Roche explains the causal relationship between these mega-events: "The birth of the cultural industry of tourism, which has become so dominant nationally and globally, both as an industry and as a form of cultural experience in the late twentieth century, and which in many ways is virtually consonant with the concept of 'post-modern' times, occurred in parallel with, and in close connection to, the development of international expos" (67). The international Expos were

designed to attract tourists from other areas of the world, as much to show off the host country's accomplishments and its place in the world as to increase the number of visitors that would come to the city thereafter. Surely Mendoza could envision what a desire to boost tourism would mean for the city and its inhabitants, particularly those belonging to the lower class, the group around which he centers his narration about the Expo in *La ciudad de los prodigios*.

In addition to attracting tourists, Barcelona needed to prove its modernity and its efforts toward a more stable political future to the world as a whole. The Olympic Games "ejemplificaban, por una parte, la consolidación de la democracia y, por otra, la transmisión al exterior de una imagen de un país que se había modernizado definitivamente" (Hosoda 109).[69] After the 1929 Expo in Barcelona, the city submitted and lost a bid to hold the games in 1933. However, that site eventually paved the way and made possible the later bid in 1986 for the 1992 Olympics, where they would once again attempt to prove this image (110). On top of proving the city's progress and industrialization, the country as a whole needed to show the world that it was a stable democracy in the post-Franco era.

What Mendoza also evokes in his novel is the political uncertainty of both time periods, as the novel's plot spans a large part of the Restoration (1874-1931) and the time in which he was writing is within the scope of Spain's period of transition to democracy that I cited in the Introduction, 1975-1992. The Restoration period began following a military coup by Arsenio Martínez Campos, which resulted in the restoration of the Spanish monarchy. The next major milestone in this process was the composition and approval of the Constitution of 1876, under which the Spanish government was a constitutional monarchy and the king had power over the army as well as some legislative powers such as revoking laws and appointing senators.

[69] "Demonstrated, on the one hand, the consolidation of democracy and, on the other, the exterior transmission of the image of a country that had definitively modernized" (my translation).

Although the constitution and establishment of the *turno pacífico* attempted to create a foundation for peace and prosperity, this period was not without violence. From 1898 onwards, the country was plagued by revolts and protest movements stemming from the loss of last colonies in 1898 (Cuba, the Philippines, Guam, Puerto Rico), the Rif War in Morocco, and ultimately leading to the Tragic Week ("la Semana Trágica") in Barcelona in 1909, as I will discuss in detail in Chapters 3 and 4. The parallels between historic events (Expo and Olympics) in the novel's internal timeframe and its external time of composition allow us to examine the political similarities between the time period I have just described and the one in which Mendoza lived as he wrote *La ciudad de los prodigios*.

Though the death of Francisco Franco – which sparked the period of the Transition – happened more peacefully than the military coup which began the Restoration, both events led to uncertain and unstable political environments. The power of the monarchy was yet again restored under the establishment of a constitutional monarchy with the Spanish Constitution of 1978 (102 years after the previously mentioned constitution). In 1981, one year before Spain solicited a bid to hold the 1992 Olympics (and one year before it hosted the World Cup), a military coup now commonly known as 23-F took place on February 23 in the Congress of Deputies in Madrid. The Civil Guard, led by Antonio Tejero, entered the Congress of Deputies in an attempt to take over and derail the vote to elect a Prime Minister. Though the coup failed and the constitutional order prevailed, it highlighted some of the weaknesses in the transition period, which some had assumed was already over by 1977 or 1978. The time at which Barcelona submitted a bid in 1982 (to hold the 1992 summer Olympic Games) was still fraught with uncertainty regarding Spain's current political position. The democracy was young, and at the time Mendoza was writing his novel, only four elections for the position of Prime Minister had taken place. After

forty years of a dictatorship, less than ten years of successful democratic elections did not guarantee stability.

In this new democracy, the central government and the Catalan government, of which Barcelona formed a part, were still experiencing conflict and determining how the central and local governments could co-exist (and if they should). The conflicts between the two governments as Barcelona worked on plans for the 1888 Expo is glaring and comical for its severe exaggeration in *La ciudad de los prodigios*. The ironic tone with which the narrator describes interactions among the two governments shows a clear preference for the author's native city. Before the 1982 bid to host the Games, there were tensions a decade prior between the two governments when Spain submitted a bid to the 1972 Olympic Games (Hosoda 112). There was contention over which city should hold the Games, and ultimately Spain was unsuccessful in its attempt. However, the conflict that arose was indicative of the experience that the two cities might have during the preparations for the 1992 Olympic Games. While representatives from the central and Catalan governments came together to vote and make the proposal for Barcelona as the location for 1992 Games (114), perhaps Mendoza is inviting us to consider how the past relationships have evolved during the planning of a large, international event. In fact, one parallel that we can draw between the two events in 1888 and 1992 is the political neutrality of the two residents of Barcelona that pushed the initiative, Eugenio Serrano de Casanova in the former case and Juan Antonio Samaranch in the latter. However apolitical these two men may have been, Madrid and Barcelona both had ideas for ways to benefit from the events. Surely Samaranch saw the opportunity to showcase Catalan individuality and provide a boost for political autonomy.

Although the central government agreed to support the Expos and the Olympic Games, the larger financial burden of renovations, improvements, and overall preparations fell to Barcelona. Mendoza's exaggerated descriptions of the Barcelonan representatives' journey to Madrid shows us that they were largely unsuccessful in securing financial support. In 1992, the city of Barcelona wished to use the Games as a way to get the resources they felt they were owed by the central government (Hargreaves 61). After all, the central government would profit from Barcelona hosting the Games through taxes that would be paid to Madrid all while Barcelona would incur a huge debt for fronting the cost of hosting (Marshall 80). The mayor of Barcelona from 1982-1997, Pasqual Maragal, wrote in a letter as he left office: "Barcelona has never asked for the return of that contribution. Nor has it asked that anyone else pay its debt for it. We can pay these debts and we are paying them. What Barcelona asks is that it be compensated once and for all for the expenses that it has incurred on behalf of the central government or the Autonomous Government" (in Marshall 80). The letter offers evidence that even five years after the conclusion of the event, there is still economic and political tension between the Catalan and central governments. Reading Mendoza's novel in 1986 seemed to predict this financial dependence that was beneficial more for the central government than for his city.

Apart from the economic considerations, Catalan identity also played a large role in both events and the ensuing tension between governments. As I mentioned previously, the 1888 Expo made a point to highlight Barcelona to a higher degree than the central government by giving itself space for its own inventions within the Expo itself and by marking the pillars at the entrance of the site with terms that would relate specifically to the host city: industrialization, and commerce. A further complication of language emerges with regard to the 1992 event, for there was then the issue of television as well as the attempt to show off Spain's new (unified)

democracy to the world. Typically the languages for the Olympic Games were French, English, and the native language of the host country, but in the case of Barcelona, country ("país") "se puede entender con un significado más estrecho, en este caso, el de la comunidad autónoma, cuya lengua es cooficial junto al español; además de tener en consideración que en puridad los juegos se adjudican a ciudades y no a Estados" (Hosoda 118).[70] Samaranch was able to make an agreement for Castilian and Catalan to be included as the language of the host country (118). Furthermore, both the Catalan and Spanish national anthems were played during the game. John Short states that, in the end:

> In a mutually beneficial compromise between different parts of the nation-state, Catalan sensitivities were embodied into the Games, while Spain was presented as a modern, liberal, pluralist democracy. The success of the Barcelona Games was in part the 'win-win-win' of the three scales of nation, state, and city. Spain enhanced its reputation as an efficient democracy, Catalonia got an economic boost and a sense of identity in the wider world, and Barcelona received an urban makeover and improvements in its infrastructure and global connections. (35)

Short is perhaps overly optimistic in his estimation of the peaceful agreements between the two governments, as we can see from Mayor Maragal's previous comments. The Games were a step in the right direction in terms of cultural pluralism and compromise among the two regions, but the underlying financial disagreements had a lasting effect that existed for years beyond 1992.

Conclusions

[70] "Can be understood with a more expansive definition, in this case, that of an autonomous community, whose language is co-official to Spanish; in addition to considering that the games clearly appropriate cities and not nations" (my translation).

Throughout this chapter, I have attempted to provide a detailed analysis of the ways in which the mega-events in Barcelona, in 1888 and 1992 in particular, are both related and represented in Eduardo Mendoza's *La ciudad de los prodigios* (1986). The author's anxieties about the city's preparations for the Olympic Games are evident. The working class gets jobs constructing the buildings, but they are then ultimately the group most negatively impacted by the progress brought on by the events. To improve the city's image and touristic appeal, the poor and vulnerable populations are effectively "shooed" out of sight. Tensions between the central and Catalan governments rise as Barcelona fronts the cost of the events, yet still must pay the central government a portion of the profits they receive. All the while, the stimulus to the city is certainly positive in many ways by allowing Catalunya to show and take pride in its own culture, showcasing the technological and industrial advances in Barcelona, and proving to the global community that Barcelona can be on par with France, which had previously held Expos and Olympics.

By connecting these two time periods, in this novel and in Mendoza's *La verdad sobre el caso Savolta* which I analyze in later chapters as well, the author is surely inviting us to inspect these parallels and consider what the future may hold for Spain, and Barcelona specifically. His protagonist in *La ciudad de los prodigios* "is identified with the entire period surveyed by the novel. Each of his activities – delivering anarchist pamphlets, peddling hair lotion, gangsterism, real estate speculation, film and arms production, political conspiracy, and sponsorship of technology – corresponds to a stage in the modern history of Barcelona" (Ramon Resina 955). While Mendoza leads us along through the preparations for the World's Fair, we learn about the city's past at the same time that we discover the possible repetition of these problems as the city

bolsters its plan for the 1992 Olympic Games. Saval comments on the cyclical nature of the novel and what this may mean for us as humans:

> La ubicación temporal, y por tanto histórica, entre las dos Exposiciones Universales celebradas en Barcelona tiene el aliciente de la introspección del discurso histórico, pero al mismo tiempo se puede decir que la novela termina de la misma manera en que se inicia, con lo que se hace referencia a una especie de vuelta al comienzo, de eterno retorno sin que los grandes acontecimientos políticos sirvan para otra cosa que para convertirse en un impresionante escenario, donde los seres humanos no somos más que meros comparsas a pesar de descomunales esfuerzos. (*La ciudad* 47)[71]

I'd like to take this a step further and say that the novel is inviting us to include the 1992 Olympic Games in this cyclical nature as the political, social, historical, and economic conditions prepare to repeat themselves in preparation for yet another mega-event in Barcelona.

[71] "The temporal, and therefore historical, location between the two Universal Expositions celebrated in Barcelona has the attraction of introspection into historical discourse, but at the same time, it can be said that the novel ends in the same way that it begins. In this way, it references a kind of return to the start, an eternal return without great political events serving any purpose other than to become an impressive stage, where human beings are nothing more than the mere puppets despite colossal efforts" (my translation).

Chapter 2: The Working-Class Experience of Industrialization and Capitalism

Com tu devoren marges y camps, y es tornen pobles,
els masos que't rodegen, ciutats els pagesius,
com nines vers sa mare corrent a passos dobles;
a qui duran llurs aigues sinó a la mar, els rius?

Y creixes y t'escampes; quan la planicie't manca
t'enfiles a les cos tes doblant-se a llur jaient;
en totes les que't volten un barri teu s'embranca,
que, onada sobre onada, tu amunt vas empenyent.

(Jacint Verdaguer, *Oda a Barcelona*, 1883, lines 41-48)[72]

Introduction

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, Barcelona led the nation's industrialization and mechanization efforts. Experiments in the field of electricity and streamlined production equipment created new pathways for power plants, textile factories, and mining sites. Transportation was improved through the use of trains and steam-powered engines. Nighttime in the city became simultaneously demystified and theatrical through the use of gas lighting that illuminated the streets. The city experienced a period of developmental splendor at the same time that governmental debts amassed. Although agriculture was the main form of economic activity throughout the peninsula at the beginning of the twentieth century, it fell second in Barcelona where the industrial sector led (Escarra 9). As Barcelona moved through waves of change, the working class felt the effects time and again. Uncertainty grew, and so followed unrest and injustice, particularly for those in the lower classes.

[72] "Like you, your far-off farmsteads break beyond / Field and fence, as hamlets turn to towns, / And race like children to their mother's arms: / Where else but to the sea might rivers run? // You grow and spread, and where the flats abide / You take the incline, bending to its tilt: / Your quarters swell on hillsides like the tide, / And branching out, you lift them further still" (Translation by Ronald Puppo, p. 177, lines 41-48).

The present chapter is comprised of an analysis of films and novels that represent the effects of industrialization on the working class in the period of time between 1888 and 1923. In the course of the chapter, I will revisit Eduardo Mendoza's novels *La verdad sobre el caso Savolta* (1975) and *La ciudad de los prodigios* (1986). We will also consider three Catalan films: *La ciutat cremada* (1976), *Victòria! La gran aventura d'un poble* (1983), and *La teranyina* (1990). I would remind my readers that I do not intend to perform a side-by-side analysis of historical fact and fictional contributions from the novels or films that I study. Rather, my intention is to interpret these sources for their representations of individual lives that (could) have been affected by the events portrayed within them. I concur with Rosenstone, who concludes that "film must be taken on its own terms as a portrait of the past that has less to do with fact than with intensity and insight, perception and feeling, with showing how events affect individual lives, past and present" (7). Furthermore, the films in particular provide a visual representation of the cause and effect that he mentions in the same book: "[films] give a context of meaning to data but do so by abandoning the notion of data as a document (or mirror) of empirical reality and using it to create a notion of cause and effect that is fictive – that cannot itself be documented" (6). I take these cultural artifacts in the form of literature and film and use them as a means to explore the cause and effect of the industrial sector on the working class.

Eduardo Mendoza knows the city of Barcelona intimately. He was born there, has lived in the city for many years, and has written in depth about it and the autonomous region to which it belongs, namely Catalunya. Whether or not his voice represents the Catalan public, or even the Barcelonan public, is debatable, but what is certain is that through his works he offers a critical view of Barcelona's past through the lens of individual characters and their experiences. That the plots of his two novels span six years and forty-one years is indicative of his interest in

Barcelona's evolution over time. It is worth noting the frequent choice to publish his novels in Castilian rather than in Catalan, presumably because it affords wider readership and is perhaps his preferred language of composition. Nonetheless, his novels are rooted in the culture, politics, and social environment of Barcelona. They share some of the same themes as found in the principal literary tendencies of the Catalan novel in the 1970s, namely, the "tension between setting down and tearing up roots, rebellion and convention, and integration and marginality [which] is expressed in the protagonists' doubts and anguish over their choices and decisions" (Piquer Vidal 188). The two protagonists of his novels, Onofre and Javier, teeter back and forth between these dichotomies, and the people they encounter in their life trajectories have similar experiences.

However, if we are to both study and celebrate Catalan authorship, artistry, and perspective, we must also take into account those works produced in the Catalan language. It is unfortunate that the films I will discuss in this chapter have so seldom been studied on an academic level, for their historical and cultural significance cannot be emphasized enough. Antoni Ribas and Miquel Sanz – Catalan filmmakers – wrote and directed two of the films that I will consider in this chapter, *La ciutat cremada* and *Victòria! La gran aventura d'un poble*. Both were filmed and distributed in Catalan, and the reception of their debut in Spain will be considered in the Conclusion of this project. In the copy of the script that I have consulted, both Miquel Sanz and Antoni Ribas wrote a dedication to one of its previous owners, and it read: "Llibertat, amnistia i estatut d'autonomia!"[73] Although their position was certainly less than subtle in the film itself, it is clear through their dedication that they are in favor of Catalan culture, freedom, and amnesty. Upon considering historical events within our time period of

[73] "Freedom, amnesty, and autonomous status!" (my translation).

interest, it is essential to study artists with a variety of political ideals. As we know from theorists such as Hayden White[74] and novelists such as Javier Cercas,[75] history is highly subjective, narrative, and fluid in nature. In this project, I attempt to recover films that represent Barcelona through the lens of the history, culture, politics, and language of a native to the city.

I begin the chapter with an overview of the industrial advances and overall atmosphere in Barcelona at the turn of the twentieth century. A closer look at how each of the main characters in the novels and films that I study interact with and suffer or benefit from industrialization will demonstrate alternate pathways for facing the reality of their time period. I will also discuss women's roles in industrialization and resulting familial circumstances. Finally, I will conclude by offering connections between this time period and that of the transition to democracy and beyond in the post-Franco era.

Moving into the 20th Century

While the 1888 Expo sparked and accelerated the spirit of progress in the most advanced city in Spain, Barcelona's excitement and anxious thirst for change did not stop there. Barcelonans look toward the future with awe and fear:

[74] Hayden White writes that: "*How* a given historical situation is to be configured depends on the historian's subtlety in matching up a specific plot structure with the set of historical events that he wishes to endow with a meaning of a particular kind. This is essentially a literary, that is to say, fiction-making, operation. And to call it that in no way detracts from the status of historical narratives as providing a kind of knowledge" (85). White, Hayden. "The Historical Text as Literary Artifact." *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism*, edited by White, Johns Hopkins UP, 1978, pp. 81-100.

[75] Javier Cercas' *Soldados de Salamina* questions the official narratives of history, and whether it is even possible to find truth in historical "fact" or create a "relato real." For more on this novel, see: Anderson, Andrew A. "The Idiosyncratic Narrator in Javier Cercas's *Soldados de Salamina.*" *Neophilologus*, vol. 98, 2014, pp 599-615; Amago, Sam. "Narrative Truth and Historical Truth in Javier Cercas's *Soldados de Salamina*." *True Lies. Narrative Self-Consciousness in the Contemporary Spanish Novel*, by Amago, Bucknell UP, 2006, pp. 144-165.

> Ahora la Humanidad cruzaba el umbral del siglo XX con un estremecimiento. Los cambios más profundos estaban aún por venir, pero ahora la gente ya estaba cansada de tanta mudanza, de tanto no saber lo que traería el día de mañana; ahora veía las transformaciones con recelo y a veces con temor. No faltaban visionarios que imaginaban cómo sería el futuro, lo que éste tenía reservado a quienes lo alcanzasen a ver. La energía eléctrica, la radiofonía, el automovilismo, la aviación, los adelantos médicos y farmacológicos iban a cambiarlo todo radicalmente. (*La ciudad* 247)[76]

Mendoza's two novels as well as Ribas' films feature many of the late nineteenth century inventions and innovations that develop in Barcelona – international expositions, public museums, electric lighting, and social settings such as the cinema (Hochadel 6). As we consider the role of these advances in the city of Barcelona, it is important to keep in mind that "the urban space is both: a creator, incubator and facilitator of these practices of knowledge production and circulation but also an object substantially transformed by these practices" (6). Thus, many advances and inventions were created within Barcelona, but those inventions themselves also changed the city *and* its artistic representation. Although it would seem that these advances would benefit all citizens, in reality that was hardly the case. The rich became richer, and the poor remained so all while prices began to soar due to higher demands.

In the year 1899, the concept of geopolitics was introduced – adapted from the previous field of political geography – and demonstrated "a widespread belief that the changes taking place in the global economic and political system were seismically important" (Heffernan 28).

[76] "Now humanity was crossing the threshold into the twentieth century with a shudder. The greatest changes were yet to come, but people were already weary of change, apprehensive, not knowing what disruption the morrow would bring. There was no shortage of visionaries imagining what the future would be like. Electric energy, radio, the automobile, aviation, and advances in medicine would change the world radically, they said" (Mendoza, *The City* 247).

Due to the vast quantity of changes in the last two or three years of the nineteenth century, Spanish citizens were surely concerned about what the future would bring. The year prior to the coining of geopolitics, 1898, was a significant and defining moment for Spain near the end of the century. That year, Spain forfeited the last vestiges of its colonial possessions, namely Puerto Rico, Cuba, the Philippines, and Guam. The Spanish-American War had lasted eight and a half months (April 25, 1898 - December 10, 1898) following the explosion of the United States' Battleship Maine in the harbor at Havana, Cuba on February 15, 1898. By the end of the war, the losses in human life were significant, with roughly 900 Spanish soldiers killed in combat and 15,000 killed by disease. That is in addition to the approximately 30,000 Spanish prisoners that were captured.[77] On the contrary, the United States deployed 306,760 men and suffered 385 battle deaths and 2,061 deaths by other causes.[78] The war and subsequent loss of its last colonies clearly marks an important geopolitical shift in Spain's diminishing power and had a significant economic impact, as I will address later in this chapter as well as in Chapter 3.

Though the plot of *La ciudad de los prodigios* spans the time period of the Spanish-American War, there is only a slight mention of it. The focus is largely on the wealth that Onofre's father attempted to obtain in the Americas, though we find out that he was too late in making the journey. By the time his father arrived, there were fewer chances to make money in the colonies, and he returned empty-handed though he tried his best to falsely portray success. The year of 1898 is also when Onofre Bouvila stops working for Don Humbert Figa i Morera, and it is in reference to this that the narrator comments on the loss of colonies: "trabajó para don

[77] Stanley Payne reports significantly higher losses in human life by the end of three years of war, specifically in the Cuban campaign: 2,159 deaths in combat and 53,000 deaths from disease (*Politics* 82).
[78] https://www.va.gov/opa/publications/factsheets/fs_americas_wars.pdf. Clodfelter, Michael. *Warfare and Armed Conflicts. A Statistical Encyclopedia of Casualty and Other Figures*, 1492-2015, 4th Ed.

Humbert de 1888 a 1898, el año en que se perdieron las colonias" (171).[79] Furthermore, while the loss of life and the last Spanish colonies was certainly a significant occurrence in and of itself, many literary representations focus on the aftermath and consequences of this loss, in economic and political arenas. Mendoza's narrator comments that, as the turn of the century approaches:

> Barcelona se disponía a franquear la línea que separaba el siglo pasado del presente con más problemas que esperanzas por bagaje…
>
> Persistía la recesión. Las tiendas de lujo de la calle Fernando cerraban sus puertas, una detrás de otra… La política económica del gobierno no contribuía a mejorar las cosas. Sordo a las razones y los ruegos de los catalanes destacados en Madrid con el fin de formularlos y de algunos castellanos clarividentes o pagados para serlo, derogó todas o casi todas las medidas proteccionistas que amparaban la industria nacional; desaparecidos los aranceles que los gravaban, los productos extranjeros, mejores, más baratos y más sencillos de uso que los nacionales, acabaron de hundir un mercado ya escuálido de por sí. El cierre de las fábricas y los despidos masivos e imprevisibles se unieron a las plagas que ya se cebaban en la clase trabajadora. (*La ciudad* 222-223)[80]

Thus, the disillusionment continues on at the turn of the century as the economy worsens, unemployment rises, and fear intensifies. The textile industry that had been booming by the end

[79] "Onofre worked for Don Humbert from 1888 to 1898, the year the last remaining Spanish colonies were lost" (Mendoza, *The City* 130).

[80] "Barcelona, burdened with more fears than hopes, was making ready to cross the line that separated the last century from this one… The recession would not go away. Shops selling luxury goods on Calle Fernando were closing their doors one after another… the government's economic policy did not help matters. Turning a deaf ear to the arguments and pleas of the Catalans who came to Madrid for this purpose, and of a few Castilians far sighted or well paid enough to side with them, the government annulled all protectionist measures sheltering domestic industries. With no customs barriers to face, foreign products that were better, cheaper, and easier to use than their homespun counterparts finally killed off a market that had been in poor shape to begin with. Factories closed, and the massive layoffs that resulted added to the misery of the working classes" (Mendoza, *The City* 170-171).

of the nineteenth century, with 20 percent of all cotton production being exported to the Spanish colonies in 1897, was now in sharp decline (Smith 17-18).

Similarly, *La ciutat cremada* portrays the shift from the nineteenth to the twentieth century as a hopeful moment that ultimately leads to despair. Remei cooks at home and we see a large basket of meat, bread, and vegetables. At first glance, it would seem they are doing well economically from the large quantity of food, but Josep interrupts to say that they will be returning all of that food to Remei's parents the next day. In a humorous exchange, Remei says "Pobre pollastre, ja s'havia fet la idea de morir"[81] and her friend Laureà responds, "Nosaltres, com cada any, matarem una col…" (Ribas, *La ciutat* 68).[82] That they must "kill" a cabbage instead of a chicken demonstrates their lack of money as well as Josep's stance not to accept help from Remei's wealthy family that belongs to the bourgeois class. This is not the only time that Josep will refuse privileges and favors offered by the Palau family, for he prefers to live in solidarity with the rest of the working class that does not have such opportunities. His perspective will, however, change by the end of the film, as we will see in Chapter 4. Additionally, his refusal to eat the meat provided by the Palaus can also be interpreted as his commitment to the anarchist cause, for vegetarianism was one of the philosophies of anarchism (Smith 152).[83]

[81] "Poor chicken, he had already gotten used to the idea of dying" (my translation).
[82] "We'll just kill a cabbage, like every other year" (my translation).
[83] Smith states that "anarchists believed that private property and the state had undermined the harmony of the natural and human worlds and led society to develop in an unnatural direction. […] The anarchists placed great emphasis on individual freedom against stifling 'bourgeois' morality and social norms, encouraging a wide-ranging critique of bourgeois cultural practices and the exploration of alternatives. This was apparent, for example, in their rejection of Church and state intervention in all areas of human life, which they regarded as an authoritarian imposition; their interest in vegetarianism, which was embraced because of what was viewed as the natural solidarity which should operate within the animal kingdom and also because of savagery inherent in the slaughter and consumption of meat" (152).

The subsequent scenes of New Year's Eve intercut between three settings: the dining room in the Palau house, the dining room in the Josep-Remei house, and an outlandish party taking place in another house. The sudden changes between settings show a sharp contrast between the ways in which the three groups are celebrating the New Year. In the Palau house, there is fine dining, abundant food, soft music, and a wait staff wearing white gloves. Meanwhile, the Josep-Remei house is cramped and dark, full of people within their same social class who are speaking Esperanto, a language of resistance that is intended to be universal.[84] Their guests eat carrots and cabbage because that is all that is within their means. Another group – featuring Frederic, Remei's uncle, who had gotten extremely rich off business deals in the colonies – celebrates the New Year at a party filled with many drinks, naked women dressed as fairies wearing only wings, and men donning blindfolds as they search for the fairies. It is a scene marked by wildness, freedom, frivolousness, and laughter, and it can be interpreted as a representation of the very wealthy, debauched, and decadent upper class. As the twelve midnight bells toll, we cut back and forth between the three scenes and observe how people are spending the final moments of the year. The Palau family drinks champagne, knits, and prays while the friends at Josep's house read aloud from books in Esperanto, and the final group is running

[84] In 1887, Ludwik Lejzer Zamenhof published under the pseudonym "Doctor Esperanto" and in German a book by the title of *International Language: Introduction and Complete Textbook*, which explained the Esperanto language that he created. It was translated into English in 1889 by R.H. Geoghegan. Later, in 1901, Zamenhof published a book titled *Esperanto*, in which he outlines the vocabulary and basic rules of the language. In the introduction to his *International Language: Introduction and Complete Textbook*, he writes: "How different would the case be, had we but two languages to learn; we should know them infinitely better, and the languages themselves would grow richer, and reach a higher degrees of perfection than is found in any of those now existing. And yet, though language is the prime motor of civilisation, and to it alone we owe the having raised ourselves above the level of other animals, difference of speech is a cause of antipathy, nay even of hatred, between people, as being the first thing to strike us on meeting. Not being understood we keep aloof, and the first notion that occurs to our minds is, not to find out whether the others are of our own political opinions, or whence their ancestors came from thousands of years ago, but to dislike the strange sound of their language. Any one, who has lived for a length of time in a commercial city, whose inhabitants were of different unfriendly nations, will easily understand what a boon would be conferred on mankind by the adoption of an international idiom, which, without interfering with domestic affairs or the private-life of nations, would play the part of an official and commercial dialect, at any rate in countries inhabited by people of different nationalities" (n.p.) http://www.genekeyes.com/Dr_Esperanto.html. Accessed November 1, 2020.

around wildly with men chasing nude women. It is clear that the three distinct social groups celebrate in vastly different ways, and the contrast between Remei's old bourgeois life and her new, working-class one could not be more evident. The juxtaposition poignantly displays the socioeconomic inequalities between Josep's life and that of Remei's family.

Immediately after, we are presented with a scene in which the atmosphere is markedly hopeful, becoming ever brighter with the sun that rises over the horizon. The glow of this scene in contrast with the darkness of Josep's house in the previous one would suggest that the year 1900 will bring better, brighter days. The description in the script states that the sun is rising without a cloud in the sky. Furthermore, the characterization of those present and the general ambience reads, "una emoció solidària, tota energia, domina els rostres dels cantaires" (Ribas, *La ciutat* 83).[85] Josep attends a gathering in the scene which is subtitled "la societats cors de Clavé en homenatje al seu fundador Josep Anselm Clavé en 'lo clarejar' del segle XX" (83).[86] Many working men – old and young – sing together in solidarity and hold signs in support of Clavé. A man shouts "aquest és el nostre segle!!"[87] in what seems to be a hopeful cry for the future of the industrial workers (83). The historical figure Josep Anselm Clavé was a member of the working class and revolutionary movements of the mid-nineteenth century. He was imprisoned in the Citadel after the revolutionary group tried to invade the same building. It is said that during his time in the Citadel, he came up with the idea of a choral society that would unite the working class through song (Aviñoa 83). The men in the film sing in homage to Clavé in hopes that in the future their time is coming. Many of the men in this group would also likely form a part of the anarcho-syndicalist organizations to which Josep belongs, as will be discussed in Chapter 4.

[85] "A feeling of solidarity, full of energy, dominates the faces of the singers" (my translation).
[86] "The Clavé choral society in homage to its founder Josep Anselm Clavé on the 'dawn' of the 20th century" (my translation).
[87] "This is our century!" (my translation).

Yet again, a quick scene change shows the disillusion and falsity of the previous one: men are working in terrible conditions in factories and rather than improving, conditions seem to have worsened. The setting is dark and smoky. Women and young children are coughing and wearing filthy clothes. At the beginning of the transition, we hear ten full seconds of a woman coughing, accompanied by the sounds of moving water and machines in operation. The smoky conditions in which they work are dismal and unhealthy. In stark contrast to the workers' worn and sullied clothes is the owner, who walks through the factory in an elegant, clean suit.

The scenes of anticipated change and progress in contrast with what actually follows in the film is supported by the notion that individuals expected grand-scale changes at the *fin de siècle*, and there was a growing belief that the transition from the year 1899 to 1900 would be more significant than the previous year's. Michael Heffernan writes about the presumption that the *fin de siècle* marks an important moment:

> There is no reason why the turning of a century should carry any particular historical significance. The idea that history falls neatly into hundred-year blocks and can be assessed in these units is obviously ludicrous. Yet in the supposedly Christian parts of the world where the larger sweep of time is measured in such terms, the passing of a century tends to give rise to wistful reflection of the past as well as intense speculation about the future. (31)

In *La ciutat cremada*, the working class joins together and sings in celebration of the dawn of a new century. This scene is a demonstration of the hope that the workers had upon ushering in a new century, but it is also a rallying cry for the men to join together to bring the change that was so direly needed following the industrial boom of the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The abrupt shift in the film to the dire conditions previously described illustrates the equivocal idea

that the end of the century would be marked by drastic (and immediate) change from one year to the next.

In the remainder of this chapter, we will look ahead at industrialization and the working-class experience in the first twenty years of the twentieth century, as represented in the films and novels currently studied. The industrial renovation contributed to a shift in the attitudes and occupations of the working class in Barcelona, which later led to the social unrest we consider in Chapter 4.

An Overview of Industrial Barcelona at the Beginning of the 20th Century

Although industrialization was happening around the globe in the nineteenth century, between 1900 and 1929, "la producció mundial d'energia es va multiplicar per un factor proper a 10, encara sota el predomini dels combustibles sòlids, amb grans novetats des de la perspectiva dels recursos —hidroelectricitat i petroli— i dels usos —electricitat i motorització del transport" (Maluquer de Motes 135).[88] Therefore, in the first decades of the century, industrialization was already multiplying exponentially due to the increased production of energy and resources such as electricity. Other historical and political circumstances also led to a wave of high production from particular geographic regions within the Iberian Peninsula.

Especially during the antebellum and wartime periods of the decade of the 1910s, demand for industrial products and materials from Barcelona grew. Its strategic position near the Mediterranean Sea and the French border made it a key place from which to buy war materials, as we will discuss further in Chapter 3. Furthermore, the industrial infrastructure of the city

[88] "The global production of energy multiplied by approximately a factor of 10 - with solid fuel still predominating - with great innovations in resources such as hydroelectricity and petroleum, and in uses such as electricity and motorization of transportation" (my translation).

provided a solid base upon which to expand and grow. As the demand for production increased, factories began to modernize and shift ownership. For example, some wool factories in Barcelona (Terrassa & Sabadell) underwent a process of mechanization and expansion and then ceased to be family businesses (*Documentos y estudios* 12). Many of them were still owned by Spaniards, but they were occasionally owned or financed by foreign investors, most of whom were French (Escarra 54).

The tariffs that went into effect in order to safeguard the industrial advances of Barcelona aimed to increase the country's profits, but they ultimately led to mixed results. Before the turn of the century, the Cánovas Law, a protective tariff, was passed in 1891 and went into effect in 1896. The tariff offered protection for Spain's interior market and minimized foreign competition (*Documentos y estudios* 13). In particular, it created high duties on imports of iron, steel, and textiles, tariffs which were also applied to imports in the Spanish colonies (Smith 17). However, reduced exports after the loss of the colonies in 1898 led to more protectionist tariffs to be passed through 1906. Another modified tariff law went into effect in 1912 and yet another in 1922. Regardless of changes in politics and colonies, some degree of Spanish protection measures were maintained between these years (Tena Junguito 343). Although tariffs were in place, the amount of products and materials they protected differed significantly from one year to another, with a deep dip in protectionist measures precisely in the last two years of the twentieth century. This is perhaps why Mendoza's sweeping observation of the tariffs, cited previously, indicates an absence of a useful protectionist measure. In the end, these policies "provided not only welfare losses for the economy in the period implemented but also long run competitiveness losses in main sectors protected" (Tena Junguito 353). Additionally, the tariffs were not entirely beneficial because they did not allow for the level of industrial growth they had hoped to protect

(353). High tariffs aimed to protect the exports to the colonies, but the level of Spanish protectionist measures also discouraged, to a degree, international markets (Smith 17). Between 1895 and 1905, the value of the Spanish peseta also depreciated by around 30 percent due to "fiscal disorder and monetary expansion to finance the colonial war" (Tena Junguito 356). In the end, the tariffs were not sufficient to protect the industry in Barcelona and the value of the Spanish peseta for trade purposes. This led to economic instability in the region through the end of the nineteenth century and into the first quarter of the twentieth century, an instability that would be further exacerbated after the end of the First World War.

The electrical industry also held a particular importance in Barcelona during this time period. It was the place of origin for electrical progress in Spain, and for that reason it was a rapidly growing industry with many factories and plants. Furthermore, it was to play a large role in next Expo, which ended up occurring in 1929, despite many attempts to hold it sooner.[89] The population went from working in principally agricultural sectors to working in a variety of industrial fields, fueled increasingly by electricity. In fact, by the end of the nineteenth century, there were roughly 800 electrical plants in Catalunya with an electrical capacity of 72,000 kilowatt-hours per day, a number that continued to grow over the next twenty years (*Documentos y estudios* 35-36). The shift in labor sectors also led to an increase in urbanization, as Maluquer de Motes points out: "La població rural perdia participació sobre el total al temps que en guanyava, amb molta rapidesa, la població urbana. Creixement econòmic, industrialització i urbanització són fenòmens estretament associats" (131).[90] This shift from rural to urban

[89] For more details on the role of electricity in the two Expos in Barcelona see: Ferrán Boleda, Jordi. "Technology for the Public: Electricity in the Barcelona International Exhibition of 1929." *Annales Historiques de l'Electricité*, vol. 1, no. 4, 2006, pp. 31-48.

[90] "On the whole, the rural population decreased participating at the same time that the urban population quickly increased. Economic growth, industrialization, and urbanization are closely related phenomena" (my translation).

environments, and its consequence of rapid city expansion, is demonstrated clearly in both of Mendoza's novels.

With a rise in industrial production came an increase in labor exploitation of the working class. The wages were low, hours long, and conditions dismal. The industrial workforce operated under a new organizational structure, which included variable work hours depending on the production needs and the capacities of the machines. Frequently the work week would exceed seventy hours throughout six days (Maluquer de Motes 132). The three films in particular provide ample evidence of the poor working conditions which lead to organizing, unionizing, and ultimately marches and revolts, which we examine in greater detail in Chapter 4.

Representations of Industrial Barcelona

Just as the films and novels we analyze depict high hopes for the *fin de siècle* that ultimately leads to disillusion, the shift to an ever more industrial society also results in disappointment and anger. *La verdad sobre el caso Savolta*'s Pajarito de Soto says in only the second page of the novel that he is denouncing the reality of industry in Barcelona because:

> Lejos de ser semilla de los tiempos nuevos y colmena donde se forja el porvenir en el trabajo, el orden y la justicia, es tierra de cultivo para rufianes y caciques, los cuales, no contentos con explotar a los obreros por los medios más inhumanos e insólitos, rebajan su dignidad y los convierten en atemorizados títeres de sus caprichos tiránicos y feudales (20).[91]

[91] "Far from being the seedbed of a new era and a hive where the future is forged in work, order, and justice, is a breeding ground for pimps and gangsters, who not content to exploit workers using inhuman and unheard-of means, destroy their dignity and transform them into frightened puppets with the exercise of their tyrannical and feudal egoism" (Mendoza, *The Truth* 3-4).

Thus, from the very beginning, Mendoza sets the stage for the world of Barcelona which we are entering through reading. The workers become puppets of brutal industrial tyrants, and this treatment fueled anarcho-syndicalist rhetoric and action in protest of the poor labor conditions, to be addressed in Chapter 4. The protagonist of this novel, Javier Miranda, came to Barcelona seeking work because he found none in Valladolid, a much smaller city with less than a quarter of the population of Barcelona (in 1920).[92] He had expectations of better wages and overall job opportunities. The passage describing his migration is precisely juxtaposed with the previous quotation regarding exploitation in the city. Just as we saw in *La ciutat cremada*, the characters have hope for a better future – *trabajo, orden y justicia* ("work, order, and justice") – but they are all quickly disillusioned by what comes next. Both the films and the novels use quick scene changes to mark a shift in tone and show the contrast between expectation and reality.

The exploitation of factory workers is also evident in all the works I consider. *La verdad sobre el caso Savolta* features a mysterious and oppressive character appropriately named "El Hombre de la Mano de Hierro" ("The Man of the Iron Fist") who provokes fear in all proletariat homes for his strict measures. The owners and leaders of the factories use fear to keep the discontented workers subjugated and prevent them from unionizing. In addition to fear tactics, the workers are also subjected to longer working days without any further benefit from the profits after Lepprince takes over the factory:

> La empresa duplicó, triplicó y volvió a doblar sus beneficios. Se dirá: qué bien, cuánto debieron beneficiarse los humildes y abnegados trabajadores, máxime cuanto que para que tal ganancia se hiciera posible tuvieron que incrementar en forma extraordinaria la

[92] "Alterations to the Municipalities in the Population Censuses since 1842." *Instituto Nacional de Estadística*, https://www.ine.es/intercensal/intercensal.do?search=1&cmbTipoBusq=0&textoMunicipio=-%20BARCELONA%20(Total%20provincial)%20-. Accessed November 1, 2020.

> producción, multiplicando la jornada laboral hasta dos y tres horas diarias, renunciando a las medidas más elementales de seguridad y reposo en pro de la rapidez en la manufactura de productos. Qué bien, pensarán los lectores que no saben, como se dice, de la misa la mitad; y que me perdonen las autoridades eclesiásticas por comparar la misa con ese infierno que es el mundo del trabajo… (Mendoza, *La verdad* 48)[93]

Moreover, it is one drunken man in a bar who brings to light the context of their payment: "creéis que os pagan por el trabajo que realizáis en sus fábricas, pero es mentira. Os pagan para que no os muráis de hambre y podáis seguir trabajando de sol a sol hasta reventar" (224).[94] The workers, then, are not being paid for the actual work they are completing, but rather are being paid for their mere existence so that the factories can continue to abuse them by subjecting them to long hours and poor conditions.

In addition to the miserable conditions of those working *within* the factories is the plight of those who are unemployed. With some factories closing, "el paro aumentaba y los inmigrantes procedentes de los campos abandonados fluían en negras oleadas a una ciudad que apenas podía dar de comer a sus hijos. Los que venían pululaban por las calles, hambrientos y fantasmagóricos, arrastrando sus pobres enseres en exiguos hatillos los menos, con las manos en los bolsillos los más, pidiendo trabajo, asilo, comida, tabaco y limosna" (Mendoza, *La verdad* 195).[95] Rising unemployment levels also work to the benefit of industrialists, as they attempt to

[93] "Business doubled, tripled, and redoubled its benefits. Someone might say, how wonderful, how the humble, self-sacrificing workers must have benefited, especially because in order for those profits to be made possible, they had to increase production in an extraordinary way, adding two or three hours to the workday, suspending even the most basic security measures as well as rest to speed the manufacture of the products. How wonderful, readers who don't have a prayer of knowing the facts might say; and may the ecclesiastical authorities forgive me for bringing up prayer in the context of that hell which is the world of labor…" (Mendoza *The Truth* 28-29).

[94] "You think you're paid for the work you do in their factories, but it's a lie. They pay you so you won't die of hunger and can go on working for them from sunup to sundown until you drop" (Mendoza, *The Truth* 181).

[95] "Unemployment was on the rise, and black waves of immigrants from the abandoned countryside were flowing into a city that could barely feed its own children. The new arrivals swarmed in the streets, hungry and phantasmagoric, a few of them dragging their poor possessions around in little bundles, while the majority simply

keep workers in line by threatening dismissal from their post. They cannot afford to be put out of work, nor can they stand the conditions under which they are forced to labor. All the while, the narrator claims that the politicians do nothing to help people in either condition – working countless hours in the factories or begging for countless hours in the streets.

Capitalism and Corruption

As factories increased production, the wealthy owners exploited workers to make even more money in less time. The geographer David Harvey explains that "accumulation, the basic tenet of capitalism, depends on the exploitation of labor in order to make profits and seeks to maximize those profits in the shortest possible time" (quoted in Oswald 41). Of course, those profiting were the factory owners, and this did not trickle down to the workers of the factory, who in 1913, were paid between 3.85 and 4 pesetas per day while the daily expense for a family of four was approximately 5.75 pesetas per day (Balcells 12). Mendoza criticizes the lack of pay increases as factory owners become richer and impose longer hours: "Pues, ¿qué sucedió sino que la prosperidad inmerecida de los logreros, los traficantes, los acaparadores, los falsificadores de mercaderías, los plutócratas en suma, produjeron un previsible y siempre mal recibido aumento de los precios que no se vio compensado con una justa y necesaria elevación de los salarios?" (*La verdad* 52).[96] At the beginning of *La ciutat cremada*, the historic character Francesc Cambó makes a comment to Doctor Robert regarding the corruption of the rich factory owners and leaders: "L'única manera d'acabar amb la corrupció és acabar amb els cacics"

walked around with their hands in their pockets. All begged for work, a place to stay, food, cigarettes, and money" (Mendoza, *The Truth* 156).

[96] "What happened, then, except that the undeserved prosperity of the profiteers, traffickers, hoarders, falsifiers of merchandise, in sum, the plutocrats, caused a foreseeable and always badly received rise in prices which was not compensated for by a just and necessary rise in salaries?" (Mendoza, *The Truth* 32).

(Ribas, *La ciutat* 23).[97] He is the representative of a the Unió Catalanista who sees a solution to the city's problems in 1899, which would entail getting rid of harsh factory bosses and increasing moral administration in the government.[98] During a scene of a factory set in 1901, one worker named Ferrán – who is also a friend of Josep – declares that the problem is less about the *cacique* and the *amo*, but rather due to the bourgeois capitalist society in which they live. Disagreements over who is responsible for the ills of the current society and how they should be combated become a frequent source of frustration and division among the organizations fighting for social change. Nevertheless, the strike that Ferrán immediately threatens to start is directly against the bourgeois class, a move that Josep ultimately supports. Although Remei's family has benefited socially and economically from both corruption and capitalism, Josep refuses to have any part in it. He prefers to live in poverty with Remei and their children over receiving help from the people within the economic class against which he and his friends fight.

On the other hand, in *La ciudad de los prodigios*, Onofre sees commercialism and capitalism – previously unknown concepts to him – and embraces them, deciding to rise from being exploited to actively exploiting others. During his work in the Expo, he sees many items, many of which he later steals to resell, and "nunca había pensado que existieran tantas cosas que se pudieran comprar y vender, se dijo. Este descubrimiento lo tuvo alterado varios días" (129).[99] He becomes obsessed with goods and profits, and this obsession would only grow throughout the novel. Around the turn of the century, in 1897, Onofre buys real estate in developing areas, says they are on the rise, and sells them at a ridiculously high price only for the buyer to find out it

[97] "The only way to get rid of corruption is to get rid of the *caciques*" (my translation).
[98] The Unió Catalanista ("Catalanist Union") was a conservative organization of industrialists with Catalan interests in mind, and one of its branches would later become the Lliga Regionalista.
[99] "'I never dreamed that there were so many things that could be bought and sold,' he said to himself. This discovery depressed him for several days" (Mendoza, *The City* 97).

was all a scam and they are stuck with a lousy investment that tied up all their money. He would have rumors started that popular stores were moving into the area, or that a railroad track was to be built nearby, and the buyers – overcome with greed – would purchase the lot without verifying the rumor, which was of course false. He later exploits Delfina by converting her into an actress whom he renames Honesta Labroux and parades her around in his theater company's productions until she reaches a state of insanity. If it is at all unclear how he feels about the accumulation of wealth up to this point, it becomes quite evident later when he kidnaps and exploits workers – including laborers, technicians, and engineers – to build his secret project, a hot air balloon. As Saval notes, his social and economic status rise at the same time that his moral scruples decline (*La ciudad* 50). Furthermore, the novel explores how Onofre uses financial capital to transform his own existence: "This hero's rise from social insignificance to boundless economic might challenges the ethos of traditional (precapitalist) society by subjecting reality to the transformative magic of capital, which the novel vindicates as a metaphoric embodiment of desire" (Ramon Resina 953). Capital does take on a magical, transformative property in Onofre's hands. It has the capability to pull him out of the lowest working class to which he belonged upon arrival in Barcelona in 1887, and he subsequently rises to the top, literally and figuratively, by the end of the novel with his departure from the city via hot air balloon.

However, during his last visit to Delfina who had been staying in an asylum, it becomes clear that even with wealth, he still has not been able to accumulate everything that he desires. He remarks: "Yo soy un fallo en el sistema… No son mis actos lo que me reprochan, ni mi ambición o los medios de que me he valido para satisfacerla, para trepar y enriquecerme… En realidad soy yo quien ha perdido. Yo creía que siendo malo tendría el mundo en mis manos y sin

embargo me equivocaba: el mundo es peor que yo" (*La ciudad* 469).[100] Oswald claims that, "[t]he way individualism plays out in this novel communicates that in order for individuals to break out of their exploitation, they must abandon their scruples, subject themselves to exploitation, resort to alternative ways of accumulating wealth and ultimately exploit others" (53). At the same time, if we consider the picaresque nature of the novel that has previously been mentioned, his path could also be interpreted as a lesson *not* to follow. Nonetheless, Onofre's dialogue with Delfina suggests that even an individualistic approach to exploitation and wealth cannot outdo the capitalist society entrenched in evil. Onofre does break away from being directly exploited, and exploiting others is his primary means for doing so, but in the end, he is still unable to fully dominate the society in the way he hopes because of the strict class divisions.

The protagonist of *La verdad sobre el caso Savolta*, Javier, has similar aspirations as the young Onofre – rise up from completing petty tasks, make lots of money, and experience the world of women and commerce. The bland work in his position at Cortabanyes' law office bores him, and when he meets Lepprince he sees an opportunity: "Yo buscaba el éxito a cualquier precio… Veía en él una posible vía de salida al marasmo del despacho de Cortabanyes, a las largas tardes monótonas e improductivas y al porvenir mezquino e incierto" (78).[101] Although his few first interactions with Lepprince reveal the nature of his business – he asks Javier if he has a gun and if he knows how to use it – this does not scare off Javier. Instead, he sees a world of possibility that awaits him by earning Lepprince's trust and moving up in his work with this new

[100] "I do not fit in the system. Not that they hold against me the things I've done, or my ambition, or the means I used to climb higher and get rich. [...] And yet I've lost. I thought that by being evil I would have the world at my feet, but I was wrong: I am evil, but the world is more evil still" (Mendoza, *The City* 365).
[101] "I wanted success at any cost… I saw in him a possible escape from the morass of Cortabanyes's office, from those long, monotonous, unproductive afternoons and from a poor, uncertain future" (Mendoza, *The Truth* 55).

boss. Money, material possessions, and women are driving factors for his participation in illegal activities that physically and systematically harm the working class:

> Me pintaba, en cambio, un panorama esplendoroso de la mano de Lepprince, en las altas esferas de las finanzas y el comercio barceloneses, en el gran mundo, con sus automóviles, sus fiestas, sus viajes, su vestuario y sus mujeres, como hadas, y un caudal de dinero en monedas deslumbrantes, tintineantes, que manaban de los poros de esa bestia rampante que era la oligarquía catalana. (Mendoza, *La verdad* 79)[102]

Although Javier is well aware that Lepprince pays hitmen to frighten workers out of organizing strikes and making demands of their bosses – as we will discuss further in Chapter 4 – he is able to overlook this in the beginning because of the promise of capital gain for himself. He sees an opportunity to ascend in social class through assuring the continued exploitation of the lower class. Javier does seem to regret his actions eight to ten years later as he recounts the events: "Ahora que la madurez me ha vuelto más sereno, ya es tarde para rectificar los errores de la juventud. La perspectiva de los años sólo me ha traído el dolor de reconocer los fracasos sin poder enmendarlos" (221).[103] Thus, if we are to believe the narrator, Javier reaches a moment of some recognition of the negative consequences of his actions, but it is unclear for which aspects of his past he feels most sorry. Furthermore, it is also possible that Javier feels remorse for the strategic errors that he made, which prevented him from garnering the success he sought. The ambiguity of his feelings toward Lepprince and his overall trajectory within Barcelona prevents the reader from being able to assume a clear identification between Javier and the working class.

[102] "By contrast, he painted a glorious panorama for me with Lepprince - the highest circles of finance and commerce in Barcelona, the highest society, with its automobiles, its parties, its travel, its clothes, its sylphlike women, and a flood of money in shining, tinkling coins that would flow from the pores of that rampant beast, the Catalan oligarchy" (Mendoza, *The Truth* 55).

[103] "Now, maturity has calmed me down somewhat, but it's too late to rectify the mistakes of my youth. Hindsight has only brought me the pain of recognizing my failures without being able to amend them" (*The Truth* 178).

In summary, the individual experiences of the protagonists in each of the films and novels analyzed suggest that members of the lower class have two options in this society: be exploited by those wealthier and more powerful or rise up beyond the lower class and in turn exploit others to support one's own advancement. Josep (*La ciutat*) and Canals (*Victòria!*) fall into the former category whereas Onofre (*La ciudad*) and Javier (*La verdad*) fall into the latter. Both Onofre and Javier resort to committing or commanding acts of violence to advance their own positions, but they never end up where they want to be. Javier flees to the United States, disillusioned with how his life in Barcelona turned out, and Onofre disappears, never to be seen again. On the other hand, Josep and Canals resort to violence as a means of resisting the oppression they face. One of the main outlets of violent resistance comes in the forms of strikes, as we will discuss in Chapter 4. The individual actions and storylines of each of the four male protagonists gives a window into possible experiences and trajectories of working class males at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Women's Roles in Industrialization

Historically, women had a strong presence in the industrial workforce of the first quarter of the twentieth century. Due to a somewhat decreased physical effort required to operate the more modern factory machinery, companies were able to employ women and children in large numbers (Maluquer de Motes 132). In fact, working-class women often started working around age eight, sometimes in the domestic sector at first and then the industrial one (Smith 38). In 1905, women made up 28 percent of the working class in Barcelona, and the total working-class population was 27 percent of the city's population (Balcells 9). By 1913, working women made up approximately half of the working class in Barcelona, and they were paid on average roughly

half of that of their male counterparts (10). Despite their historical prominence in the industrial workforce, they are seldom portrayed as more than love interests or cabaret entertainers in Savolta's novels, Ribas' films, and Verdaguer's film.

Savolta's novels feature male protagonists whose love interests involve women from all parts of society – women from cabarets, working class women, and women from wealthy families. Onofre Bouvila of *La ciudad de los prodigios* falls in love with multiple women who all suffer poor fates due to his actions. Delfina becomes an actress whom Onofre parades around to market his films; Margarita Figa i Clarença marries him after he takes her virginity and forces her father's hand, only for Onofre to later abandon her; finally, he carries María Belltall away with him in what seems like a kidnapping on a hot air balloon created by her unknowing father. However, of all these women, only María is at all involved in the industrial sector through her work with her father on the hot air balloon for the 1929 Expo.

The three films analyzed scarcely represent women in their roles within the industrial working class. Similarly to Onofre, Josep leads Remei's father to believe that they have consummated their love in order to marry her. Josep and Onofre both belonged to lower classes that would make unacceptable matches for the women they chose, and the fathers initially did not approve of the marriages. Remei is also less than supportive of Josep's solidarity with the working class and even attempts to use her privilege to get him out of a day's work. She shows up to the factory in elegant attire appropriate for the bourgeois class, and Josep is so taken aback by her out of place presence there that he asks "queien ha mort?"[104]

On the other hand, in *La ciutat cremada*, some women are shown wearing dirt- and soot-covered clothing, coughing and operating large machines. One female worker is sexually

[104] "Who died?" (my translation).

assaulted by the boss or *capataz*, and her solemn, knowing walk to his office leads us to infer that his action is one that has been repeated multiple times with women in that factory. Thus, not only do the women work in dismal conditions with men, but they are also further subjected to the sexual will of the *capataz*. Though women are present in the factory scenes, they are markedly absent in scenes of protest and fraternal gatherings like that of the Clavé choral society at the turn of the century. However, the factory scene previously mentioned is viewed through Josep's perspective. We see through his eyes, which is made evident through the bouncing of the camera in line with each of his steps. He (and we) watches the women and children stirring steaming pots, coughing, and being visually scanned by the *capataz* as he selects his next victim. Immediately following that scene, Josep shows his protest by derailing a cart carrying oil drums. Thus, although the women do not protest themselves in this film, it is suggested that their treatment and working conditions influence the acts of protest carried out by the male factory workers. Notably, accounts of trade unions during that time period suggest "the view, shared in both middle and working-class male circles, that only men could play an active role in the world of public affairs. Hence, …, there were a number of instances in which no effort was made to unionise female workers" (Smith 39). In *Victòria! La gran aventura d'un poble*, Canals' wife first works in a factory but then secures a job as a maid in a wealthy household. We do not see or hear many details regarding either of her occupations. Finally, the women in the film *La teranyina* play a more prominent role, but those featured are also the factory owners belonging to the upper class. They make decisions regarding the future of the factory and are shown to have a voice stronger than that of the working women in Ribas' films.

Connections

Just as at the turn of the twentieth century, in the post-Franco era Barcelona was experiencing a critical point in its economic and industrial development. This Catalan city played a major role in the economic landscape of the Iberian Peninsula in both historic moments, leading the country's industrial production. In fact, Édouard Escarra declares in 1970 that what characterizes Catalan industry is "precisamente su *diseminación*, la dispersión de sus energías y sus capitales, es decir, la considerable importancia casi general en el país, que posee la pequeña y mediana empresa, las formas poco concentradas de producción" (44).[105] At the same time, Spain's currency lost value – in the face of the uncertainty of the beginning of the twentieth century and again in the years following Franco's dictatorship in the uncertain path to democracy. In addition to a petroleum crisis, "un 26% de inflación y la devaluación de la peseta en un 22% en 1977 obligaban a sentir un cierto desencanto" (Saval *La ciudad* 27).[106]

During the years in which Mendoza was writing these two novels, Spain was undergoing a period of transformation marked by uncertainty of what the future would bring. However, trade expansion throughout the world, and particularly in Europe, allowed for some economic growth. Both of Mendoza's novels focus on the internationalization of industry through immigration to Spain, Expos, foreign-owned factories, and exports of war materials at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. Likewise, in the post-Franco era, international markets would expand once more as the "posibilidad de entrar en el Mercado Común europeo

[105] "Precisely its dissemination, the dispersion of its energy and capital, that is, the considerable, nearly universal, importance in the country which the small and mid-sized companies have, the scarcely concentrated forms of production" (my translation).
[106] "Inflation levels of 16 percent and the devaluation of the peseta by 22 percent in 1977 caused people to feel a certain disillusionment" (my translation).

abrió nuevas esperanzas y consolidaba la democracia" (Saval *La ciudad* 27).[107] Nonetheless, rises in inflation (which reached 26% in 1977 compared to 6-7% in 1960-1973) and unemployment (from 7% in 1977 to 22% in 1984) had a particularly strong impact on the industrial working class (Pérez-Díaz 8 and 14, respectively). The inflation levels in Spain were significantly higher than that of other countries within the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), which Spain joined in 1961 (16). Economic instability, which more strongly affected the working class, was replete in both the first and last quarter of the twentieth century.

What is more, the working class experienced the effects of the rise of capitalism in both the setting of the works and the setting in which the authors composed the novels and films. We have seen the interaction between the characters' lives and the growth of capitalism as the city industrializes. While some characters condemn capitalism, others embrace it fully or have a mixed, ambiguous response to it. Each of the works as a whole criticizes the capitalist system of accumulation of wealth around the beginning of the twentieth century in its own way, as has been discussed. At the same time, capitalism had been gaining momentum in Spanish society in the two decades leading up to Franco's death, even as the regime denied this (Ramon Resina 952). Regardless, Spain still fell far behind its counterparts in the Western world:

> Spain entered, not just the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries, but even the *second half* of the twentieth century, without having assimilated what the Western world had gradually and relatively less traumatically experienced over a longer period of time, generation after generation: an efficient and accepted form of capitalism; a legitimate and

[107] "Possibility of entering the Common European Market awoke new hopes and consolidated the democracy" (my translation).

> liberal form of democracy; and a cultural system rooted in the values of individual freedom and tolerance. (Pérez-Díaz 4)

Furthermore, the industrial class had existed "on the fringes of political life for a long time", and it also "harbored intense anti-capitalistic feelings" (12). The urban population, and in this case, particularly that of Barcelona, was hostile toward capitalism. Spain's urban population had "perhaps one of the most radical industrial proletariats in Europe in the first third of [the twentieth] century" (3). The anticapitalistic sentiment was especially characteristic of the workers in the first quarter of the twentieth century, but it continued into the post-Franco period as well and was supported by several unions of the time.

Artistic responses to the preoccupation with industrialization and capitalism, as I have discussed previously in this chapter, suggest that the two time periods at hand were characterized by both market expansion and uncertainty. Although the post-Franco era meant that Spain would be more involved in the international trade market, economic circumstances within the country were far from stable. While many accounts of the transition would have us believe that economic growth was characteristic of the time period, Song points out that that was not in fact the case: "The remembered brilliance of this period, along with the economic, social, and political progress recalled…, seems painfully at odds with the daily coverage of Spanish politics and finance" (2). Financial changes and instability are replete in the era which the plot spans and in which the creators – Mendoza, Ribas, Verdaguer – were composing their artistic representations of the former period. The production of these films and novels allow us to observe how the uncertainty of the economic and political present and future manifests itself through analyses of the past.

Chapter 3: War – Who is it Good For?

Introduction

War isn't new nor was it at the beginning of the twentieth century, but that wartime period did present particular challenges and manifest certain nuances in Spain. The process of industrialization, as we have just seen, seeped into many aspects of Spanish social, economic, and political life, and this could not be more true for the colonial wars and World War I. Additionally, the working class experienced these wars in a vastly different way from the middle class, bourgeoisie, and elite populations. An examination of the films *La ciutat cremada*, *La teranyina*, *Victòria! La gran aventura d'un poble* and the novels *La verdad sobre el caso Savolta* and *La ciudad de los prodigios* affords a view of the ways in which the wars had an impact on the working-class sector's economic, occupational, and sociopolitical conditions.

The causes of the Spanish American War in 1898 are multiple, and here we will briefly recall those and the main events, with the certainty that a complete history of the war and its long development does not fit into the scope of this project. The war in 1898 came at the end of twenty years of battles with and within the colonies. From the beginning to mid-nineteenth century, the United States supported Spanish sovereignty over Cuba, a policy that changed drastically by the 1890s when the United States declared it would use force to end Spain's power in Cuba (Hendrickson 1). In 1868, the Cuban Rebellion broke out with Cubans declaring independence from Spain after years of repression (4-5), although the revolution did not discourage Spain from maintaining control. At that time, there were roughly 21,000 troops in Cuba, but only one third of them were actually participating in combat due to corruption and poor hygienic practices (Payne, *Politics* 67). In 1878, Spain declared that they would bring about

reform and grant autonomy, but in reality this was a stalling tactic rather than a true surrender (Hendrickson 6). When the Ten Years' War finally ended, Spanish troops had lost over 50,000 men and large amounts of money (Payne, *Politics* 68). After revolts in both Cuba and the Philippines in 1895, Antonio Cánovas decided to take military action to preserve Spain's power over the colonies (Hendrickson 6). When Captain General Martínez Campos was unsuccessful in his attempts to appease the Cuban insurgents and convince them to lower their arms in exchange for amnesty, he was recalled to Spain, effectively ending his military career (Payne, *Politics* 72). One year later, General Valeriano Weyler y Nicolau was sent to Cuba to quell the rebellion, but his attempt to concentrate all the rebels in one area for monitoring ultimately failed (Hendrickson 7). At the same time, revolts were breaking out in the Philippines in order to establish an autonomous government. In 1897, Práxedes Mateo Sagasta became Prime Minister and issued a decree for reforms and autonomy in Cuba. That year, it was reported that 185,227 men had been sent to Cuba, 28,744 to the Philippines, and 5,848 to Puerto Rico in the two years since 1895, all before the official start of the war (Payne, *Politics* 79). When the US battleship *Maine* exploded in 1898, Spain was blamed (largely by the US media), and although the causes of the explosion are uncertain (Hendrickson 8; Berner xii), it was likely the doing of Cuban provocateurs (Varela Ortega 319). The US was prepared for war in Cuba, and Congress authorized use of force against Spain on April 19. Spain responded by declaring war within days. Two major naval defeats in Manila and Santiago Bay destroyed the Spanish fleets (319). Within less than four months of the declaration, a cease-fire was announced on August 12, and on December 10 the Treaty of Paris was signed. Spain had lost control of the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Guam, and Cuba.

The Hispano-Moroccan Wars did not begin in the twentieth century, but rather have a long history dating back to the middle of the nineteenth century, with several additional conflicts

occurring in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Just as Spain had colonial holds in the Caribbean, it also had several territories in North Africa. One of these was Ceuta, which was theoretically Spanish since 1668 after the Treaty of Lisbon, with disagreements regarding the border resulting in the Hispano-Moroccan War from 1859 to 1860. After the war ended at the Battle of Tetuán, Ceuta became and still remains today a Spanish autonomous city. At the same time, Tetuán was taken and later became the capital of the Spanish protectorate in Morocco between 1913 and 1956 (Payne, *Politics* 118). The last major territory is Melilla, which had been under Spanish rule since the end of the fifteenth century, and today it is still an autonomous city like Ceuta.

For the purposes of this project, I am most concerned by the events which began in 1848 when Spain occupied the Chafarinas islands, and in 1859, when Spain declared war on the Moroccan sultan, a war that lasted only until 1860 when a treaty was signed (Bachoud 40). In 1877 the Spanish Association for the Exploration of Africa was founded. It was not until 1883 that Morocco ceded to Spain the territory it owed since the 1860 treaty, namely Ifni on the Atlantic coast. Two additional protectorates were established in Africa in 1884: Río de Oro (western Sahara, south of Morocco) and Río Muñi (further south on the African coast) (Payne, *Politics* 62). Years later in 1893, there was a small skirmish after the Riffians attacked Spanish workers who were fortifying defenses in Melilla. That conflict was settled quickly, and Spain turned its attention to the colonial struggles in the Americas (Bachoud 41). Alfonso XIII took the throne as king of Spain in 1902, and he was so invested and directly implicated in the conflict with Morocco that he was referred to as *el Africano* ("The African") (79). In the twentieth century, the conflicts began after Spain signed a treaty with France in October 1904, which gave

the former a protectorate in Morocco. It consisted of the northernmost part of the country, mainly fronting the Mediterranean, though a small area (Arcila, Larache) was on the Atlantic coast.

Unfortunately, this protectorate in Morocco brought consistent political, economic, and military problems. Spanish troops marched into the Beni Bu Ifrur mining region on a mission with a mix of mercantile and military goals to open the mines (Bachoud 47). This agitated the Beni Bu Ifrur tribe, who on July 9, 1909 attacked the Spanish workers constructing a bridge on the outskirts of Melilla. In turn, this attack lead to reprisal from Spanish troops, and the Rif War had begun.[108] On July 27, 1909, what is known as the Desastre del Barranco de Lobo ("Disaster of the Wolf Ravine") occurred and Spanish forces were defeated in the battle. They had been ambushed by Riffian forces, who, familiar with the terrain, were able to hide out and lure Spanish troops into a trap (48). It was not until December 7, 1909 that Spain was able to subdue attacks in Morocco and arrange a temporary ceasefire for negotiations with the sultan (49). The Kert Campaign, which began when Riffians attacked Spanish troops who were exploring the interior Rif region, lasted from August 24, 1911 to May 12, 1912. Months later, through the Spanish-French Treaty of November 27, 1912, Spain received a territory in the north that was extremely difficult to control (54). Although the disputes, battles, and skirmishes were far from settled in the interim, we will skip ahead to the Desastre Annual ("Disaster of Annual") in July 1921. The previous year, Spanish military commanders had attempted to assert control over the whole region, leading to armed confrontation. During this particular battle, the Spanish army in Morocco was defeated and roughly 13,000 Spanish soldiers were killed or disappeared (Pennell 799). Over the next several years, smaller battles between Spanish and Moroccan forces were

[108] Although historian Stanley Payne establishes the beginning of the Rif War as 1920 ("El protectorado de Marruecos: 1908-1918"), historian Andrée Bachoud cites the beginning of the Rif War as 1909, with the start of the Second Melillan Campaign. I concur with Andrée Bachoud, as the scope of the Rif War extends far beyond the battles that began in 1920.

common, tapering off, but not ending entirely, with the arrival of Primo de Rivera's dictatorship in 1923.[109] Throughout the conflicts, Riffians rebelled against Spanish occupation, and at home, Spain encountered resistance from its citizens due to conscription and the rising military spending under both the Count of Romanones and Eduardo Dato (39). Andrée Bachoud comments on a fatal cycle that Spain entered in regard to its Moroccan occupation:

> Los problemas económicos, los desequilibrios estructurales, la evolución política internacional pesan con especial intensidad; pero, de un lado, la guerra de Marruecos contribuye a poner de relieve y a agudizar las particulares dificultades de España y, de otro, esas dificultades económicas y políticas constituyen un obstáculo considerable para que España encauce y resuelva su problema marroquí (39).[110]

Thus, the constant struggle to maintain the colonial territory in Morocco plagued many aspects of Spanish life, for the soldiers who were sent to fight, the politicians involved in the decision-making, and the financiers with investments in Morocco.

When the First World War broke out in 1914, Spain maintained its official neutral stance, but the actions of political groups and industrialists challenged that neutrality. The reality was that, after its substantial military involvement in the last colonies in the Americas and later in Morocco, Spain was in no position to participate in a war of this scope. Therefore on July 30, 1914, Eduardo Dato declared a state of neutrality that "no solo atañía al Estado, a los actos del gobierno, sino que abarcaba a todos los ciudadanos, pues ordenó 'la más estricta neutralidad a

[109] Perhaps ironically, Primo de Rivera's coup was precipitated by the desire to block the presentation to parliament of the "expediente Picasso," the report by General Picasso that was commissioned after the Disaster of Annual and which would have identified the army's many shortcomings. Thus, his coup allowed him "to avoid the debate on the responsibilities of Annual precisely when the Cortes was about to act as a genuine parliament" (Ben-Ami 9-10).
[110] "Economic problems, structural imbalance, and the course of international politics are especially heavy burdens; on the one hand, the war with Morocco contributes to highlighting and exacerbating Spain's particular difficulties, and on the other, those economic and political difficulties present a considerable obstacle in Spain's efforts to control and resolve its Moroccan problem" (my translation).

los *súbditos españoles*'" (Martorell Linares 20).[111] Nonetheless, as we will see shortly, individual activity – especially in the industrial sector – was frequently far from neutral, aiding one country or another in whichever way would lead to the greatest financial profits. Furthermore, more or less the whole country split into two bands, the liberal-leaning "aliadófilos" (Ally-supporters) and the conservative-leaning "germanófilos" (German-supporters).

The focus of this chapter is not to recount all the minor details and events of each of the three wars previously mentioned. Rather, it traces the impact of the colonial wars and the First World War on the working class in Barcelona. As such, I take into account as much the economic as the sociopolitical and military history surrounding the wars in the span of 1898-1923. I argue that, in Barcelona, the consequences were experienced most acutely by the working-class population, although I certainly do not claim that the proletariat is the only sector to suffer from the effects and aftermath of the wars. The chapter advances in chronological order, and following a brief contextual summary, I analyze how the three films and two novels address and represent this experience. In the conclusion, I draw connections between the military, international, economic, and political concerns of these wars with the historic moment of the transition to democracy and beyond in Spain.

The Spanish-American War

As the spring of 1897 approached, the war in the Philippines was ending, but the prospect of winning a war in Cuba looked more optimistic. Spanish conservatives and liberals disagreed on the direction of the war – with conservatives convinced that Spain should continue fighting in Cuba, while the liberals argued for autonomy to end the war (Varela Ortega 318). The

[111] "Not only concerns the State and governmental acts, but also encompasses all citizens, so he ordered 'the strictest neutrality of the *Spanish subjects*'" (my translation).

government faced accusations of leading the country into a war it was bound to lose, at the expense of the troops. In fact, "Admiral Montojo was so convinced beforehand of defeat that his battle preparations, avoiding both deep waters and the populated areas near Manila, related more to saving civilian and seamen's lives than to military considerations" (320). Given that the generals were instructed to engage their forces even though they would surely face defeat, the high levels of desertions come as no surprise. The general public showed displeasure with the situation through demonstrations against sending more troops (321). What is more, the politicians showed their priorities with a slogan they began to spread: "Better honour with ships, than ships without honour" (324).

Surprisingly, given its historical depth, Mendoza's *La ciudad de los prodigios* makes little mention of the ways in which the colonial wars specifically changed the lives of the working class, but it does depict the demonstrations against conscription. The narrator remarks on the embarkation of the young troops, presumably belonging primarily to the lower classes, and the distraught farewells from their mothers:

> Todas las semanas salían hacia América y África centenares de mozos, imberbes muchos de ellos. En las dársenas del puerto y en los andenes de la estación se podían ver escenas desgarradoras. La Guardia Civil tenía que efectuar a menudo cargas contra las madres que intentaban impedir el transporte de tropas reteniendo los barcos por las amarras o bloqueando el paso de las locomotoras. De aquellos cientos y miles de jóvenes que partían hacia el frente muy pocos habían de volver y aun éstos, mutilados o enfermos de gravedad. (Mendoza *La ciudad* 223)[112]

[112] "Every week hundreds of youngsters, many of them little more than children, were packed off to America or Africa. On the quaysides and railroad platforms, there were heart-rending scenes. The Civil Guard were often obliged to charge groups of mothers trying to stop the transportation of the troops by hanging onto the ships'

This scene echoes others that we shall see as Spain waged the Rif War and sent many troops off yet again, just eleven years later, an event that is alluded to in this remark. Nonetheless, the novel's focus on this historical moment at the turn of the century lay more on the economic circumstances that surrounded the war, namely the effect that it had on the industrial landscape in Barcelona as presented in Chapter 2. The effects remarked upon by the narrator include stores and factories closing, massive layoffs, cheaper foreign products, and poor protectionist measures for domestic goods.

When the troops returned from the colonial wars, they encountered new and different problems. There was a food crisis that "intensified the dismal spectacle of starving and sick troops returning to their native land" (Varela Ortega 331). Layoffs in factories were frequent as a result of the loss of the textile markets that had existed in Cuba (Kaplan 86). Additionally, some skilled, unionized factory workers lost their jobs and were replaced with unskilled immigrant workers who could be paid lower wages (60). Catalunya's industrial production depended largely on trade with the Spanish colonies in the Americas, and the aftermath of the war left politicians, economists, and industrialists worried. Many of the profits enjoyed by the Catalan cotton mills were a direct result of the Cuban slave trade, and the markets in Cuba accounted for roughly twenty percent of the profits in the industrial sector (Harrison, "Espanya catalana" 148). Even in 1895, three years before the end of the Spanish-American War, Juan Puig of the Fomento del Treball Nacional commented regarding the colonies:

> A más de treinta millones de pesetas ascienden los productos manufacturados de algodón exportados a las Antillas por las Aduanas de Barcelona en 1894. No resulta exagerado calcular en 1.500.000 de piezas la exportación algodonera a Ultramar; cantidad enorme

mooring ropes or blocking the path of the locomotives. Of the hundreds and thousands of young people sent to the front lines, few returned, and those that did returned maimed or seriously ill" (Mendoza, *The City* 171).

> que basta para dar movimiento a ocho mil telares y a quinientos de husos. Si a esta considerable producción algodonera, sumamos la de los demás textiles, nos asustaremos ante la idea del número de obreros españoles que pueden quedar sumidos en forzosa huelga si se cierra el mercado antillano. (15)[113]

There was a profound fear of what would happen as a consequence of the loss of the colonies, both for factory owners and workers.

La ciutat cremada carefully depicts the soldiers' grim return to Barcelona from the Spanish-American War. The film opens with a solemn, dark, grey, foggy scene focusing on the soldiers returning from battle in the Americas. The men pray for a fellow soldier who has died on the ship – whether from disease or battle wounds we do not know – and decide where to lay his body to rest. Many of the soldiers, "demacrats" ("emaciated"), are crowded together on the ship, covered with blankets. As the men all cheer when they see land, a soldier jumps overboard to swim the final mile back to Barcelona. However, tragically, he is swimming in the wrong direction and cannot hear the cries of his fellow men who urge him to swim the other way. Thus, in the first two minutes alone, we witness two dying soldiers within a scene marked by despair and gloom. This opening scene sets the stage for what is to come in the rest of the film. Josep, one of the first-class soldiers on this boat, will find that life back in Barcelona carries its own share of troubles.[114] The soldiers returning from the war arrive in a Barcelona abundant with progress and industrial advances, but the very funding for these efforts has just been lost. It is not

[113] "In 1894, 30,000 pesetas worth of manufactured cotton goods were exported to the Antilles from Barcelona Customs. It is not exaggerated to calculate that 1,500,000 cotton items were exported overseas; an enormous quantity that could move 8,000 looms and 500 spindles. If in addition to this considerable cotton production we add the other textiles, we would become startled at the idea of how many Spanish laborers could be pushed into a forced strike if the Antilles market close" (my translation).

[114] First soldiers are one step up from the lowest ranking, that of soldier, in the enlisted Spanish army. The ranking is as follows (from lowest to highest): soldier, first soldier, corporal, first corporal, corporal major (https://armada.defensa.gob.es/ArmadaPortal/page/Portal/ArmadaEspannola/personalempleo/prefLang-es/06divisas). Accessed March 11, 2021.

easy to find work, and many of them would likely take working-class jobs in the newly constructed factories. This is precisely what Josep does, even as he tries to spark relationships with those in the upper class.

The scene immediately following this opening scene, and woven into the opening credits, is that of "l'ombra de la fortalesa militar sobre la ciutat"[115] and a man being shot by a firing squad (Ribas, *La ciutat* 15). The military fortress in the shot is Montjuïc, which, as noted in the Introduction, was frequently associated with its history of repression and executions. This was the site in which the anarchists that were blamed for the 1896 Corpus Christi bombing were executed. The shot is significant because Josep will later attempt to break into the fortress to prevent yet another execution. The song that was sung by the soldiers on the boats suddenly stops, silence falls, and all that is heard is the sound of drums and gunfire. Immediately after, the song returns and the camera scans over several monuments in Barcelona, suggesting a grandeur that directly contradicts the firing squad just witnessed. The first monument shown is that of Christopher Columbus, which lies at the end of La Rambla, the main street in Barcelona that connects to the port.[116] Afterwards, the camera scans "diversos plans d'eficis i monuments de la Barcelona de l'Exposició de 1888", including that of Juan Prim, a general recognized for his bravery in the Hispano-Moroccan War in 1859-1860 (15).[117] Ultimately, these shots of the monuments, particularly for their position immediately after a firing squad and the returning soldiers singing a Havanan song, serve to ironically emphasize Spain's colonial failures rather than any kind of success worth celebrating. While the viewers are not yet aware, the film will

[115] "The shadow of the military fortress over the city" (my translation).
[116] Christopher Columbus had close connections with Barcelona, as that is where he was greeted by King Fernando and Queen Isabella and recovered after his first voyage to the Caribbean. Robert Hughes posits that Catalans were, in fact, convinced that Columbus – or Colom as they knew him – was Catalan, although he was Genoese in reality. He also states that "it has never been lost on Barcelona that Columbus, up there on his monument, slightly higher than Nelson Stylites in Trafalgar Square, is pointing out to the sea with his back toward Castile" (366).
[117] "Different shots of buildings and monuments from the 1888 Barcelona World's Fair" (my translation).

conclude with scenes portraying the Tragic Week in 1909, a result of the colonial Moroccan military campaigns.

La ciutat cremada reveals the social standing and regard of soldiers at the turn of the century in Barcelona – respected for their service, but belonging to the lower class nonetheless. This is especially true given that historically most of the soldiers sent to the colonies were working-class men. They were often young (around twenty years old), unprepared with little training, and sent to the colonies shortly after conscription (Headrick 246). An anarchist pamphlet that was released and widely circulated during the war spoke out against the inequalities of military service, whose burden fell more heavily on the lower class, and encouraged the soldiers in Cuba not to fight against the Cuban people: "De embarcar soldados para Cuba, que vayan todos, pobres y ricos… Vais a encontraros ante el pueblo que quiere redimirse y libertaros de una servidumbre que os degrada. No disparéis vuestras armas contra él; acordaos de que sois carne de su carne y sangre de su sangre" (254).[118] The socialists also condemned this burden, "sobre todo en lo que se refería a la redención del servicio militar, que transfería todo el peso de la guerra sobre los hombros de la clase obrera" (254).[119] Thus, most of the men returning on the ship at the beginning of Ribas' film are likely part of the working class, of which Josep is a part.

Josep arrives with Frederic at the Palau house for the first time to drop off money from the latter's recent business investment in Cuba. Frederic hired Josep for a sum of one hundred duros (five hundred pesetas) to transport his earnings from the Americas back to Spain, knowing

[118] "If we are going to send soldiers to Cuba, everyone must go, poor and rich… You are going to find yourselves before a nation that wants to liberate itself and free you from a servitude that degrades you. Do not fire your arms against it; remember that you are skin of their skin and blood of their blood" (my translation).
[119] "Above all regarding the exemption of military service, which transfers all the weight of the war onto the shoulders of the working class" (my translation).

that a soldier would not be thoroughly searched the way he would be. During a conversation between Senyor Palau and Frederic, we learn that he has brought back dollars because now that America won the war, dollars have greater value than the peseta. He is seemingly unphased by the economic consequence of the devaluation of the peseta for the rest of the population, given that he has made so much money from Cuba. Senyor Palau's daughter, Remei, hands Josep his bag filled with money, without knowing that what is inside actually belongs to her father and Frederic. Senyor Palau and his familial associate panic upon realizing that the soldier has all of that money in his possession, and it is evident that they distrust him. However, when they find that he has not taken any of the money, they invite him inside to share a meal. At this time, Josep discovers Remei's charm and plans to win her over. Though his friends tell him he has no chance with her because of the distance between their social standings, he works to find a way. Josep convinces Remei that the only way that her father cannot refuse their union is by making him believe that they have consummated their relationship. Thus, it would be more shameful for the daughter to have lost her virginity and not marry than it would be for her to marry a soldier. Although their union could presumably increase Josep's social standing, he chooses a path of solidarity with the rest of the working class, at least at the beginning.

The class difference between the Palau family and Josep cannot be overstated. While Josep dresses in suits, immediately adopting a bourgeois wardrobe with his recently earned five hundred pesetas – which would equal roughly one hundred and twenty five days of wages for the average factory worker – we must not lose sight of his social standing and ideological position. To put this into context, another soldier, who did not receive extra money from smuggling profits, stands on the side of the street begging for money because the State still had not paid the soldiers their wages from fighting in Cuba. On the other hand, Senyor Palau is a part of the FTN,

an organization formally founded in 1889 (though with roots dating back to the previous century) and composed of upper-class financiers, industrialists, and business owners.[120] This organization did create initiatives intended to help the lower class, such as the Escola Industrial de Barcelona, but ultimately its members are in positions of power over the working class. In the period following the loss of the colonies, the FTN worked to protect Barcelona's industrial and economic interests through petitioning the central government in Madrid for embargos and an open door policy for trade, among other demands. On November 14, 1898 it sent a letter to the Queen Regent asking for administrative decentralization and an economic agreement in which each Catalan province could collect its own taxes and distribute the revenue as they saw fit (Harrison, "Industrial Élite" 51). Although *some* demands were initially approved by the central government, they did not come to fruition in the end, which is "not all that surprising given the tide of rampant catalanophobia, stirred up by the Madrid press, which accompanied the outbreak of protest movements in the Principality such as the *tancament de caixes* against Villaverde's attempts to raise taxes to liquidate the colonial war, not to mention the imagined threat of Catalan separatism which haunted many of the Madrid-based political establishment" (Harrison, "Espanya catalana" 150). In a scene at the beginning of *La ciutat cremada*, the organization meets on October 27, 1899 to discuss an announcement made by Eulogio Despujol y Dusay, the Lieutenant General of the Army and Captain General of Catalunya. His proclamation declared Barcelona to be in a state of war – or rather, under martial law – and therefore, allowed the government to suspend constitutional guarantees. The tactic of martial law was used frequently throughout Spain during the Restoration period to control what the government saw as revolutionary acts, particularly strikes. As such, the military was often called in to quell

[120] A history of the Foment del Treball Nacional is available through the organization's website: https://www.foment.com/en/about-us/history/. Accessed February 3, 2021.

demonstrations and marches, leading to confrontations between the army and the protesters. In his 1899 proclamation, Despujol y Dusay announced that the following actions, among others, would be considered sedition:

> La resistencia material ó pasiva al pago de las contribuciones é impuestos, siempre que, á juicio de la Delegación de Hacienda, sea notoria la solvencia de los deudores al Tesoro… La negativa á que los agentes ejecutivos, sus auxiliares debidamente autorizados por ellos, y los testigos designados por unos y otros, entren en el domicilio de los deudores para practicar las diligencias de embargos y las demás prevenidas por la referida instrucción. (*La Dinastía* 1)[121]

As *La ciutat cremada* demonstrates, some of the members of the FTN had ceased to pay taxes, and therefore this directive applied to them, including Senyor Palau, who chose to wait in his home to be arrested rather than turning himself in.

It is worth noting that in the end, 1899, the year immediately following the loss of the colonies, turned out to be a fairly prosperous year. This is largely due to established trade connections and the depreciation of the value of the peseta, which allowed for lower prices in Spain and therefore less foreign competition (Harrison, "Espanya catalana" 149). Nevertheless, following this short burst of economic prosperity, the year 1900 brought worsening conditions and an industrial recession. The poor economic situation led to labor unrest, factory closures, and large layoffs within the working-class population, as we have just seen (150). The Lliga Regionalista – a dominant political organization in Catalunya – was founded in 1901, largely as a

[121] "The physical or passive resistance to paying contributions and taxes, provided that, by the Treasury Department's judgement, the debtor's solvency to the Treasury is evident… The refusal to admit executive agents, their directly-authorized assistants, and designated witnesses into the home of the debtor to complete embargo investigations and others forewarned by the aforementioned proceedings" (my translation).

consequence of the result of the Spanish-American War and the economic downturn. This group, which wanted to improve Catalan politics and economics, would also stay active throughout World War I (153) and play a role in the political unrest we will analyze more fully in Chapter 4.

Many wealthy families had invested money in the colonial enterprise in the Americas, but as that opportunity went under, they redistributed their investments to another territory: Morocco. Rich families, including the prominent Güell and Comillas families, invested their money in the Hispano-African society (Kaplan 93-94), which led to their greater vested interests in maintaining that territory as conflict arose surrounding another of their economic ventures. Although some of the wealthier families supported Spain's involvement in the Hispano-Moroccan War, the working-class men had quite different reactions, as we shall see in relation to the film *La ciutat cremada*.

The Rif War

In 1909, at the outbreak of the Second Melillan campaign, many working-class men were called to fight. At the same time, workers lost jobs, and those who did have jobs suffered worsening working conditions (Casellas 822). The number of troops called to action rose significantly in just a few weeks, from July 9 to July 25, and by that time there were twenty-four thousand Spanish troops in Morocco, most of whom lacked training (Kaplan 94). In 1885, a rule had been passed that allowed those who could afford to pay a fee exemption from fulfilling their military service. The result of this was that the primary male breadwinners in working-class families were sent to war, while the bourgeois and elites simply paid a fee to save their lives. The amount required for exemption was 1,500 pesetas, which was approximately three years' worth of wages for someone in the working class (Kaplan 94). That the lower-class men were obligated

to fight in the war while the bourgeoisie and elite found ways around it led to strikes, riots, and general unrest. The Royal Decree – which ordered the reserve military forces to join the action – published on July 11, 1909 triggered the Tragic Week, with action primarily taking place in Barcelona (Gajate Bajo 91). In addition to separating young men from their families in order to go to war, "el injusto sistema de reclutamiento generaba un fuerte rechazo entre los mozos. Las protestas, por tanto, no se hicieron esperar y, si bien en Madrid fueron acalladas, en la capital catalana se impuso el caos" (91).[122]

Although we will consider in detail the events and representations of the Tragic Week in Chapter 4, a brief description will help contextualize the overall ambience in Barcelona. Men in the lower classes who could not afford to send a replacement by paying a large sum of money were sent to war and many never returned. Military conscription was not limited to times of war, and even in peace men were drafted for the reserves and required to serve for a period of two years, although many never saw combat. While there was still some strain on working-class families when men were required to complete training, they often came back after they had fulfilled their duties, making the situation tolerable. However, this was not the case during the Rif War when large amounts of troops were mobilized to fight in North Africa. Moreover, the working class often did not perceive any personal benefit from maintaining the African territories, which served to increase the wealth of financiers and investors at the expense of laborers. These sentiments led the working class to organize and partake in what became known as the Tragic Week from July 26 to August 2, 1909. During this week, in the city under martial law, churches were burned, the protestors and the military fought in the streets, and many people were killed and injured. Shortly after the Tragic Week, two additional conflicts took place in

[122] "The unjust system of recruitment was strongly rejected by the conscripts. Protests, therefore, began without delay and, if in Madrid they were silenced, in the Catalan capital chaos broke out" (my translation).

Morocco – the Kert Campaign from 1911 to 1912 and the continuation of fighting in the Rif War from 1920 to 1926, as previously mentioned.

There was a cloud of controversy surrounding Spain's involvement in Morocco, with opinions differing across class lines and political parties. Although *La verdad sobre el caso Savolta*'s Javier Miranda belongs to the lower-middle class, he is often surrounded by men of a higher socio-economic standing, and therefore his interactions with them reveal differing points of view on political engagement of the period. When a client asks Cortabanyes how he feels about the Rif War in Morocco, Javier interrupts to simply say "feo asunto, en efecto" to which the client, seemingly misunderstanding Javier, replies that "¡Es intolerable! Cuatro negrotes de mierda zurrándole la badana a un país que años ha conquistó América" (352).[123] While Javier seems to accept that Spain's colonial ventures have ended, "los tiempos han cambiado, señor mío" (352),[124] his interlocutor blames the failing enterprise on the lack of strong leaders like Cánovas had been. In *La ciudad de los prodigios*, Onofre's brother, who belonged to the lower class, was sent to war in Morocco in 1907, an event which did not seem to have any profound impact on Onofre given their lack of a significant relationship. On the other hand, the narrator does comment on other families who were protesting the recruits' departure to Morocco, just as he had regarded the Spanish-American war previously cited: "Las madres de los reclutas que habían de partir para África volvían a manifestarse, como lo habían hecho en tiempos de la guerra de Cuba, en la estación ferroviaria, se sentaban en las traviesas y no dejaban salir al tren" (Mendoza *La ciudad* 330).[125]

[123] "A really bad situation" / "It's intolerable! A handful of shitty blacks beating the pants off a country that once upon a time conquered the New World" (Mendoza, *The Truth* 291).
[124] "Times have changed, my dear sir" (Mendoza, *The Truth* 291).
[125] "The mothers of the recruits bound for Africa were demonstrating again, as they had at the time of the Cuban war, in the railroad station; they sat on the ties to block the train's path" (Mendoza, *The City* 259-260).

The plot of *La ciutat cremada* is bookmarked by the consequences of two wars, the Spanish-American and the Hispano-Moroccan. The last third of the film explores in detail the Tragic Week, which occurs in large part as a result of the Hispano-Moroccan War. Specifically, sending working-class men to go to war in Morocco, nearly all of whom will not return, prompts the proletariat demonstration. Senyor Palau's son-in-law, who belongs to the upper class, escapes going to war, and when his daughter Roser asks how her husband managed to get out of serving, the son-in-law responds that "No sé cómo lo arreglaron. Conocemos a todo el mundo en Capitanía" (*La ciutat* 129).[126] Meanwhile, Senyor Palau's son Francesc must serve in the war because he was unable to get his name off the draft list. Now that Josep has accepted and adopted his position in the bourgeoisie through his association with the Palau family, he takes on the same attitude of hoping that Francesc can find a way out of it. When he is introduced into the scene, the script and his on-screen appearance describe his comfort with his new status: "Porta un clauer a la ma. Ha millorat en tots conceptes. Ara es belluga amb seguretat, però ho fa amb una tensió de fera engabiada" (131).[127] Josep's solidarity with the working class breaks down as he hopes someone could go to war in Francesc's place. In the end, alongside Josep, Señor Palau sees off his uniformed son as he heads toward the ships, and Josep's elegant, black suit sharply contrasts the light blue military uniforms of those going off to Morocco, a position he had once occupied in the Spanish-American War. The description of Josep as a "fera engabiada" ("caged beast") signals that his transformation into the bourgeoisie is not entirely complete, but rather it is a position he assumes to maintain appearances within his spouse's family.

[126] "I do not know how they arranged it. We know everyone in Captaincy" (my translation). Here, Captaincy refers to the high-ranking military officers who were involved in the government.
[127] "He carries a keychain in his hand. He has improved in every way. Now he moves with confidence, but does so with the tension of a caged beast" (my translation).

Censorship and news reporting played an important role in public knowledge (or lack thereof) about what was happening in Morocco. As María Gajate Bajo declares, in addition to interrupted telegraphic and telephonic communications, "entre 1898-1923, más que la descarada censura o la suspensión de garantías, fueron el envío de circulares aleccionadoras a los directores de periódico" (87).[128] One newspaper salesman in *La ciutat cremada* shows how, in 1909, sections of the paper were blank where articles had been removed by the editors due to censorship. The salesman proceeds to verbally report to the buyer what had existed on that page prior to its deletion, suggesting that although the official reports were hidden, word of mouth managed to spread some of the news. This practice of leaving pages blank or printing black blocks was common at the time in order to show the readers that the newspaper was being censored.

La teranyina focuses directly on the Rif War by highlighting the factory involvement in the production of military uniforms. The film opens with the sound of textile machines, immediately implicating the importance of the factory setting. The family-owned Vapor Rigau factory – founded in 1878 – is undergoing a change in leadership, as the previous owner, Senyor Rigau, passed away. The family disagrees on whether or not the factory should accept a request to start making military clothes in cooperation with the army. On the one hand, Julià Rigau favors the agreement, stating that it would bring in a large revenue. However, other members of the family suggest that the workers will become angry with the decision and perhaps cause unrest. The workers converse about the war and become angry with the current situation that allows rich families to pay and avoid going to war while the poor have no options. They do not see the benefits or purpose of the war, whereas Julià claims that the war is a way to defend

[128] "Between 1898-1923, more than blatant censorship or the suspension of guarantees, they would send instructive notices to the newspaper directors" (my translation).

Spain's honor and expand to obtain greater raw materials, production capacity, and labor. As soon as the factory workers realize that they are producing uniforms, they decide to revolt rather than nourish the war with their own hands, and they start organizing: "la iniciativa es nostra."[129] Workers go on strike and paint the walls of the factory with "Rigau, traïdor" and "aquí es fa roba militar."[130] While churches are burning in Barcelona during the Tragic Week, the factory also burns and along with it, all of the uniforms for soldiers destined for Morocco. While we will consider the uprisings, demonstrations, and protests further in Chapter 4, it is important to emphasize the causes that led to such measures. *La teranyina* clearly critiques the hypocrisy and inequity of the Spanish conscription policy. While the workers have no alternative than to fight, and likely perish because they are unprepared and ill-trained for war, those in the upper classes are able to pay their way out of that circumstance. On top of it all, the men who vehemently oppose going to the war are ironically and cruelly forced to make their own uniforms for a factory's benefit, a factory that has used its money to buy the proprietary family its way out of conscription. In what seems to be an intentional karmic turn, the film ends with the family's own destruction through greed for power and money. At the end, Julià states "tota a família està morta i podrida."[131]

The title of the film, *La teranyina*, is also symbolic of the webs of class tensions and politics throughout one of the defining years of the conflict in Morocco, 1909. As Kathleen Glenn has pointed out, the Castilian title *telaraña* ("spider web") comes from the combination of the words *tela* ("fabric") and *araña* ("spider") and highlights the spinning motif throughout the work (35). Juan Eduardo Cirlot's *A Dictionary of Symbols* indicates that "the symbolism of the

[129] "The initiative is ours" (my translation).
[130] "Rigau, traitor." / "Military clothes are made here" (my translation).
[131] "The whole family is dead and rotten" (my translation).

spider's web is identical with that of fabric. Because of its spiral shape, it also embraces the idea of creation and development – of the wheel and its centre. But in this case death and destruction lurk at the centre" (51). He also writes that "spiders, in their ceaseless weaving and killing – building and destroying – symbolize the ceaseless alternation of forces on which the stability of the universe depends" (304). Finally, fabric embodies the "alternation of life and death, condensation and dissolution, the predominance of *Yang* or of *Yin*, are, for the Taoists, like the alternative 'waves' of thread in the weave of the fabric" (379). The forces of creation and destruction and of good and evil are represented in the film through opposing social classes who each fight for their own interests. At the same time, the entire plot of *La teranyina* of course revolves around a textile factory where workers weave and spin fabrics.

In regards to the war, the lower classes were not the only ones discontent with the situation, as the Spanish military officials also had their share of qualms. Although not explicitly referenced in relation to the Spanish-American or Rif War in the films and novels I consider, I deem it necessary to briefly mention how the discord in the military affected the troops in both of these conflicts. During the colonial wars in the Americas and Africa, there was a severe inflation in the number of officers and high-ranking officials in the military. As Josep Termes reports, "aflorava així a la superfície un problema que venia de lluny: el descontentament d'una bona part dels oficials de l'Exèrcit, iniciat arran del desastre del 98 i de la pèrdua de les colònies. Entre les causes d'aquest descontentament hi havia la hipertrofia dels càrrecs de comandament, la puja del cost de la vida, que també afectava els càrrecs mitjans de l'Exèrcit, el convenciment que hi havia favoritismes i parcialitats a l'hora de decidir els ascensos a la carrera militar, etc" (6).[132] At the

[132] "A problem that had been on the horizon for a while began to surface: the discontentment of a good part of the Army officers, beginning as the result of the disaster of 1898 and the loss of the colonies. Among the causes of this discontentment were the excessive number of command positions, an increased cost of living, which also affected

turn of the century after the Spanish-American War, there were 23,000 officers for roughly 80,000 soldiers in Spain whereas France had one-sixth that amount of officers for more than double the amount of soldiers (Cardona 10-12). Roughly a decade later in 1911, there were between 22,000 and 27,000 officials in the Spanish military (Bachoud 111). Thus, there was a huge inflation in the number of officers in the Spanish army during both of the colonial conflicts, which increased the cost of the war and caused issues over the promotion process among the troops. Meanwhile, the mid-rank soldiers suffered from insufficient pay, and those in the lower ranks often greatly lacked money. Their families frequently lived in unsanitary conditions, had insufficient means for purchasing nourishment for their children, and were unable to access necessary medical care (111). Not only were the officer ranks overfilled, but also the lower ranking soldiers could scarcely live on the pay they received, which contributes to the general discord within the military and between the military and civilians.

In addition to the grievances previously mentioned, the military reacted to local events happening in Barcelona. The satirical Catalan magazine *Cu-cut* published a cartoon that depicted "local Army officers expressing surprise at a Catalan celebration of electoral victory, then ruefully admitting that in Spain only civilians had triumphs of which to boast" on November, 23 1905 (Payne, *Politics* 94). As a result, military officers stormed the *Cu-cut* headquarters in Barcelona, harming employees, destroying furniture, and smashing equipment. The event garnered support from officers in other parts of Spain, and it increased the desire to heighten discipline on the Catalan public. With the support of King Alfonso XIII, the military created *La ley de jurisdicciones* ("Law of Jurisdictions"), which allowed the military to punish acts of treason and was passed on March 20, 1906 (95-97). This was one step further in securing the

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the common ranks in the Military, the belief that favoritism and bias were used in deciding on Military career promotions, etc." (my translation).

power of the military within Spain at the time, and it was particularly important in Barcelona where uprisings in the streets were becoming more common.

World War I

Even as Spain confirmed its official neutrality, World War I had a large-scale impact on daily life, manufacturing, and the overall economy in the country. Numerous scholars confirm the profound effect of the war, and as Rome Liugi Arduini states: "It is inaccurate to say that Spain stays out of the conflict: it has been experiencing war, probably to a greater extent than any other neutral country, as much in the social and political fields as at the economic level. Spain, without being in war, has the war at home" (cited in García Sanz 501). World War I critic Francisco Romero Salvadó argues that neutrality was the most logical stance for Spain, given the recent colonial wars, lack of available military budget, and economic opportunity this position could bring (47). This was especially true for Barcelona given its strategic maritime position and high industrial production capacity. A brief analysis of the opening sequence of the film *Victòria!* will paint a picture of Barcelona's involvement in the Great War.

Victòria! begins by explicitly setting the scene with on-screen descriptions of four potentially revolutionary movements occurring in Barcelona around 1917 when the film is set: *el constante resurgir del nacionalismo, el de los parlamentarios progresistas, el de los sindicatos* y *el de las Juntas de Defensa militares* (Ribas 00:30-01:02).[133] The last movement listed, that of the *Juntas de Defensa*, relates to the inflation of career military officers as previously mentioned: "surgido en el seno del ejército entre los mandos intermedios para acabar con la corrupción y el favoritismo en la vida militar. Es el movimiento de los 'junteros' que rápidamente se ha

[133] "That of the constant resurgence of nationalism, of the progressive members of parliament, of the labor unions, and of the Officers' Syndicates" (my translation).

extendido a todos los cuarteles de España" (Ribas *Victòria!* 1:01).[134] The *Juntas de Defensa* was a group of military officers that organized themselves and got official recognition when Eduardo Dato legalized the group in 1917. They sought to reform abuses that had been part of the military system for a long time, wanted to protect themselves against favoritism within King Alfonso's close-knit *Casa Militar*, and as a part of the reorganization of the military, wanted an increase in pay for themselves (Brenan 98). The group was also involved in political and social issues of the time period and were opposed to Catalan autonomy or other forms of federalism. They were unhappy with the working-class protests of the time, but even still, socialists and Lerroux's radical republicans tried to attract support from the *Juntas de Defensa* (100). These efforts in particular are highlighted in Ribas' *Victòria!*

Just as *La ciutat* begins with a dramatic scene that marks the tone of the movie as well as Josep's future within it, *Victòria!* manages to encompass all of its primary themes and main character groups within the first sequence. Canals – Josep's counterpart in this film – is a twenty-three-year-old man who belongs to the working class and a trade union. With his fellow unionists, he loads weapons onto a nearby boat along the shore in Barcelona. At the same time, spies from both fronts of the war – disguised as beggars, violinists, men holding advertisements – wander the beach and streets. Meanwhile, the manufacturers and industrialists have gotten rich without scruples over the past three years of war and "molts d'ells celebren fins a la matinada els seus guanys fàcils i abundosos" along with cheerful women (Ribas *Victòria* 21).[135] The camera then cuts from a woman taking cocaine and orgasming to two men picking up prostitutes in their carriage, and finally to a dead man in the water near the carriage. When the two couples see the

[134] "Emerged from the army among the officer ranks to end corruption and favoritism in military life. It is the movement of the 'junteros' that has rapidly extended to all quarters in Spain" (my translation). This quote comes directly from the opening on-screen captions of the film, and it was not included in the published script.
[135] "Many of them celebrate their easy and abundant profits until dawn" (my translation).

dead man, they simply throw him a life preserver ring and turn back to their love-making, while one of the women exclaims "este es un baño babilónico" (*Victòria* 09:53).[136] Even as the men are enjoying the company of their prostitutes, they talk to each other about invoices and profits. The scene is a blatant display of bourgeois excess, frivolity, and lack of regard for the lives of others. It is evident that we, as observers, along with the spectators within the film, are surveilling the behavior of others. This is accomplished by the use of point-of-view shots through binoculars in which we observe the actions of various characters. The emphasis on surveillance is unmistakable – as we observe from the point of view of a woman looking through binoculars, we find various other men observing us with their own set of binoculars. Lastly, in one final contrast between social classes, immigrants – mostly from other areas of Spain – jump the walls of the casinos to look for food scraps and valuable objects that have washed ashore as a result of sunken Spanish ships, attacked by German torpedoes as they were providing weapons and boots for the French Allies on the Somme front.[137] That the film layers the working class, foreign spies, rich industrialists, and immigrants in this sequence not only shows the most important characters of the film, but also emphasizes the differences in their lives and livelihoods. It is notable that the immigrants and working class are only shown in the water and on the sand of the beach in this first sequence, physically and socially on the fringes of a thriving bourgeois society.

The Role of Industry

Spain's aforementioned official neutrality allowed Barcelona's industrial sector commercial opportunities that otherwise would have been limited. Due to this position, raw

[136] "This is a lavish bath" (my translation).
[137] This scene occurs only in the script, but it does not appear in the final cut of the film.

goods and manufactured products were exported to the belligerent countries, many of which had nearly shut down their national markets (Romero Salvadó 47). In particular, mining, industrial sectors, and banking expanded and experienced "a spectacular boom" (47). Textile factories expanded production to make uniforms and blankets for soldiers at war, even more so than they had for the Hispano-Moroccan conflicts (Martorell Linares 23). The chemical industry grew and metallurgy expanded with iron and steel exports up by 50 percent in 1914-1918 from 1910-1913 (23). Ports expanded and large quantities of coal were required to distribute the raw materials and products to other countries and foreign companies (Termes 10).

The rapid economic growth and expansion of trade opportunities financially benefited some sectors of the population enormously, including factory owners and investors. Gual Villabí summarizes the booming industry which he describes as a "verdadera orgía de ganancias" in *Memorias de un industrial de nuestro tiempo*:

> Unas veces eran contratos para proveer de algunos centenares de miles de mantas; otras se trataba de cantidades fabulosas de tejido para uniformes… llovían las demandas, muy superiores a nuestra capacidad productora y, bajo los agobios a que se sometía a los compradores para poder entregarles sus pedidos, se avenían a todas las condiciones, ofrecían espontáneamente mejores precios, con tal que se les sirviese, y éstos emprendieron enseguida una carrera ascensional desenfrenada. Fue una época fantástica, un sueño portentoso en el que todos los negocios fueron prósperos y fáciles, consintiendo una verdadera orgía de ganancias. (quoted in Termes 10)[138]

[138] "Sometimes they were contracts to provide hundreds of thousands of blankets; other times it was for fabulous quantities of fabric for uniforms… the demands rained down, much more than our production capacity could support and, under pressure from the buyers to be able to give them their orders, they accepted all conditions, spontaneously offered better prices, provided that it served them, and they suddenly began an unstoppable upward race. It was a fantastic time, a magnificent dream in which all business was prosperous and easy, consisting of a true orgy of profits" (my translation).

The opening sequence in *Victòria!* perfectly displays this thriving environment that the industrial upper class occupies as a result of increased production due to wartime demands. Making exorbitant amounts of money due to a horrible political situation in Europe is also clearly criticized by Mendoza's narrator:

> De esta situación aciaga se refocilaban muchos en Barcelona. Ahora todo el que tuviera algo que vender podía hacerse rico de la noche a la mañana, llegar a millonario en un abrir y cerrar de ojos, de una sola vez. La ciudad era un hervidero: del amanecer de un día hasta que despuntaba el sol del siguiente, sin cesar en la Lonja y en el Borne, en los consulados y legaciones, en las oficinas comerciales y en los bancos, en los clubs y en los restaurantes, en los salones y en los camarines y foyers, en salas de juego, cabarets y burdeles, en hoteles y fondas, en una callejuela siniestra, en el claustro desierto de una iglesia, en la alcoba de una furcia perfumada y jadeante se cruzaban ofertas, se fijaban precios al albur, se hacían pujas, se insinuaban sobornos, se proferían amenazas y se apelaba a los siete pecados capitales para cerrar un trato. (Mendoza, *La ciudad* 351)[139]

Using the words seethed, sinister, snatched, and sins (in the English translation of the novel) contributes to a depiction of a capitalist Barcelona as an evil place with the evildoers being the wealthy, money-hungry members of the upper class.

What is more, the wealth also came by means of arms smuggling out of Barcelona and into countries involved in World War I. Arms smuggling and the large profits made from it are

[139] "Over this appalling situation many people in Barcelona gleefully rubbed their hands. Now anyone who had something to sell could get rich overnight, become a millionaire in the twinkling of an eye, one glorious instant. The city seethed: twenty-four hours a day, with never a pause in the markets of La Lonja and El Borne, in consulates and legations, in commercial offices and banks, in clubs and restaurants, in salons, dressing rooms, foyers, casinos, cabarets, hotels and inns, in sinister back alleys, in a deserted church cloister, in the bedroom of a perfumed and panting prostitute, offers and counteroffers were made, prices snatched out of thin air, bids made, bribes hinted at, threats hurled, and the seven deadly sins all harnessed to the making of money. Over this appalling situation many people in Barcelona gleefully rubbed their hands" (Mendoza, *The City* 276).

treated just as scornfully in *La verdad sobre el caso Savolta*, through a fictionalized quote from the newspaper *La Voz de la Justicia* (*The Voice of Justice*), which supplies one of the many narrative voices in the novel:

> La empresa Savolta cuyas actividades se han desarrollado de manera colosal e increíble durante los últimos años al amparo y a costa de la sangrienta guerra que asola a Europa, como la mosca engorda y se nutre de la repugnante carroña. Y así es sabido que la ya citada empresa pasó en pocos meses de ser una pequeña industria que abastecía un reducido mercado nacional o local a proveer de sus productos a las naciones en armas logrando con ello, merced a la extorsión y al abuso de la situación comprometida de estas últimas, beneficios considerables y fabuloso lucro para aquélla a costa de éstas (31).[140]

Although the Savolta factory is a fictional invention, this sudden boom experienced by the business occurred within many factories in Barcelona at the time. Even in 1913, Onofre Bouvila of *La ciudad de los prodigios* knows a war is coming and smuggles in weapons to be able to sell them later and make a fortune. He has seemingly no qualms about doing so and in fact is eager to take advantage of the situation to line his own pockets: "Ahora varios millones de hombres se disponían a matarse en las trincheras de Verdún y el Marne y él procuraba que no les faltasen los medios para hacerlo" (350).[141] Mendoza's novels do not portray the sale of arms as a politically motivated endeavor supporting one side of the war or another, but rather as a purely financial decision to maximize profits from the situation. The characters seldom discuss politics directly,

[140] "The Savolta factory, a company whose activities have developed in a colossal and incredible way during the past few years aided by and at the expense of the bloody war devastating Europe, just as flies fatten and feed on repugnant carrion. Everyone knows how the aforementioned company went in a few months from being a small industry that supplied a limited national or local market to supplying all nations under arms with its products, capturing in this way, thanks to its extortion and its abuse of the compromised situation of those nations, considerable benefits and fabulous profits for itself at the expense of those nations" (Mendoza *The Truth* 13-14).
[141] "Now several million men were preparing to slaughter one another in the trenches at Verdun and Marne and Onofre was doing his best to make sure they would have the means to do so" (Mendoza *The City* 275).

and only the narrator (which varies in *La verdad*) makes political commentary on the context of these sales.

Furthermore, the sale and smuggling of arms is a focal point of the first quarter of the film *Victòria!*, and it is exposed from the perspective of Spanish politicians, industrialists, and the proletariat in addition to foreign spies from a variety of European countries, including Germany. Although we do not know the industrial affiliations of the wealthy manufacturers portrayed in the scene, their placement in the film would suggest a relationship between their accumulated capital and the demand for weapons. Furthermore, in reality, there were indeed spies present in great numbers in Barcelona, in addition to German submarines found in the harbor (Kaplan 129). Lepprince, owner and investor in the Savolta factory, takes advantage of this exact situation as well, and he works with spies to position the company to smuggle arms without other shareholders knowing: "La guerra europea proporcionó la oportunidad que buscaba. Se puso en contacto con un espía alemán, llamado Víctor Pratz, y concertó con los Imperios Centrales un envío regular de armas que aquéllos le pagarían directamente a él, a Lepprince, a través de Pratz. Ni Savolta ni ningún otro miembro de la empresa debían enterarse del negocio" (Mendoza, *La verdad* 429).[142] Of course, none of these financial agreements and political activities were happening in a vacuum, and in fact they had a great impact on the rest of the economy, as we shall see now.

Effects on the Working Class

[142] "The European war gave him the chance he was looking for. He made contact with a German spy named Víctor Pratz. Neither Savolta nor any other officer in the company would find out about the business" (Mendoza, *The Truth* 357).

Proprietors, industrialists, and financiers all rejoiced over the sudden boom in profits, which they subsequently spent on gambling, property, leisurely activities, and the like (Romero Salvadó 47). The working class did not experience the same benefits. On the contrary, they suffered to a large degree due to the actions of those middle- and upper-class businessmen. During the First World War, the financial conditions revealed large socioeconomic disparities within the country, and particularly so in Barcelona. One of the many causes of the working class plight was due to inflation and subsequent lowered purchasing power among lower-class families (48). Prices in Spain rapidly rose during the war (Kaplan 136). Investors turned their money from industry and agriculture to wartime production. The decrease in production of luxury goods and other high value items led to an increase in unemployment, as workers in those sectors were laid off (Martorell Linares 22). What other countries did urgently need and purchase at a higher price were basic goods such as cereal and rice. Given Spain's neutrality, businesses were able to trade with powers on opposing sides of the war, which led to the Allied countries buying great quantities of food from Spain, and in turn led to price increases in food products for the citizens of the country. In larger cities, there were even protests and ransacking of grocery stores to acquire food products (Termes 10). As industrial profits grew, wages increased slightly, but "the cost of living climbed even more rapidly. Between 1914 and 1920, the buying power of a working family in Barcelona diminished by 17 percent" (Kaplan 129). Even if families could afford to purchase the food they needed, they were often limited as a result of food shortages including staples like wheat.

Unemployment rose and working conditions also suffered significantly even as factories and their owners increased their profits. Barcelona also quickly became overcrowded as people flocked from all over the country in search of work (Romero Salvadó 48). Immigrants, many of

whom were poor, came to work in the industrial city. In what is a very strong statement on the wave of immigration, Termes writes: "un allau d'aventurers i de trotamons queia damunt dels medis econòmics del país i sorgien com per una explosió dels baixos fons de les finances els noms desconeguts" (10).[143] Those who did manage to find jobs in factories worked in miserable conditions, with longer hours and little if any raise in wages. Mendoza critiques this point in his novel, as Lepprince's primary obstacle to his profitable plan is the discontentment of the workers: "Los obreros estaban quejosos: se veían obligados a trabajar en ínfimas condiciones un número muy elevado de horas a fin de producir el ingente volumen de armamento que los acuerdos secretos de Lepprince exigían sin que sus emolumentos experimentaran el alza correspondiente. En suma: querían trabajar menos o cobrar más" (*La verdad* 429).[144] To quiet the workers who complained about these conditions, Lepprince hired "dos matones que sembraron el terror entre los líderes obreristas" (429).[145] Thus, power and economic capital positioned the factory owners and financiers for success while they, in turn, positioned the working class in a state of misery. In summary, "la escasez, el desabastecimiento y la miseria condujeron a que este período de auge económico fuese también una época de crisis y escasez para un sector mayoritario de la población española" (Fuentes Codera y García Sanz 114-115).[146]

[143] "An avalanche of adventurers and scoundrels collapsed onto the country's economic resources and as if by an explosion from the lower depths of the world of finance, anonymous newcomers surged forth" (my translation).
[144] "The workers were restive: they had to work under awful conditions a very high number of hours in order to produce the huge quantity of weapons that Lepprince's secret arrangements required without a corresponding rise in salary. In sum: they either wanted to work less or earn more" (Mendoza *The Truth* 357).
[145] "Two killers who spread terror among the labor leaders" (Mendoza *The Truth* 357).
[146] "Scarcity, shortages, and misery led this era of economic growth to also be a period of crisis and scarcity for a majority of the Spanish population" (my translation).

Connections

As it often does in periods of turmoil, the question of Madrid's central power and Barcelona's possible autonomy surged again as the industrial city suffered and in some parts thrived as a consequence of the colonial wars and First World War. In order to improve the worsening economic conditions at the turn of the century immediately following the loss of the last Spanish colonies in the Americas, Catalan organizations and politicians appealed to the central government in Madrid to approve economic regeneration plans, which were ultimately often rejected (Harrison, "Espanya catalana" 150). This policy rejection was also accompanied by a growing fear of Catalan separatism and general "Catalanophobia" (150). Later, during the Hispano-Moroccan conflicts some Catalan politicians and military officers favored the autonomy of Catalunya given the extended periods of time they had to wait for decisions to come from Madrid. This is expressed through the voice of Francesc Cambó in the film *La ciutat cremada*:

> Barcelona, con ser ciudad grande y rica, quiere serlo mucho más y se siente con fuerzas para conseguirlo y para ello no pide más que libertad. Libertad para dar expansión a sus energías creativas… para administrar los recursos que paga el pueblo para el fomento de la ciudad… ¿Cómo no haber 'problema catalán'? Todo, todo lo esencial para nuestra vida ciudadana ha de resolverse en Madrid, y en Madrid, señor, no se tiene mucha prisa. (*La ciutat* 121-122).[147]

Likewise, decades later, as Franco's power diminished and the transition appeared on the horizon, there was a growing desire for autonomy in Catalunya among some populations. When Spain's central government's politics were seemingly unresponsive or unclear in regards to the

[147] "Barcelona, already a large and rich country, wants to be even more and has the strength to achieve it and for that it asks nothing more than freedom. Freedom to expand its creative energy… to administer its resources that the people pay in order to develop the city… How could there not be a 'Catalan problem?' Everything, everything that is essential for our lives has to be resolved in Madrid, and in Madrid, sir, nobody is in a hurry" (my translation).

needs of the Catalan industry, the desire for autonomy grew, as we will consider in further detail in Chapter 4.

Furthermore, in the years of the transition, considerations of Spain's military and civic history surfaced. Conscription was an enormous source of outrage in the beginning of the twentieth century, and it still existed in the period of the transition, not being abolished until 2001. Moreover, the period of the transition was also a moment for Spain to redefine the military's role within its political system. Daniel Headrick suggests that looking into the past is precisely the way to consider the military's future direction: "¿Qué signos podemos leer en los 40 años pasados acerca del futuro de las relaciones entre civiles y militares? … Si algo nos enseña el pasado es que el futuro siempre nos sorprende. Pero entre las sorpresas, esperemos que las futuras relaciones entre el pueblo español y el ejército sean menos tormentosas y menos peligrosas que lo fueron en el pasado" (262).[148] This history of the military also became more accessible to all when the records were made publicly available in the 1970s (Pennell 805).

What is more, in the last five years of Franco's dictatorship and the first five of the transition, "los estudios [sobre la primera guerra mundial] se multiplicaron y, siguiendo las líneas teóricas y metodológicas del conjunto de la disciplina, se concentraron especialmente en el movimiento obrero y los aspectos económicos" (Fuentes Codera y García Sanz 99).[149] In the same way, Mendoza, Ribas, and Verdaguer look back at the history of World War I and specifically at how the working class experienced that political event that had repercussions in so many aspects of society. The working class was on the verge of having freedom in its critique of

[148] "What signs can we read in the past 40 years regarding the future of the relationship between civilians and the military? … If the past teaches us anything it is that the future always surprises us. But among surprises, we hope that the future relationships between the Spanish civilians and military are less tempestuous and dangerous than they were in the past" (my translation).
[149] "Studies [about the First World War] multiplied and, following the theoretical and methodological lines of the discipline, they especially concentrated on the working-class movement and the economic aspects" (my translation).

the economic and social circumstances through movements and organizations, and the economy was changing rapidly during the period of the Transition as well. Antonio Lara García explains the importance of the cinematic eye which reflects the current changes by analyzing the working-class past and brings to light considerations worth taking into account as Spain transforms itself into a democracy:

> ...vale la pena insistir en la necesidad de no perder de vista el nuevo marco político, económico y social que se va creando en estos años, si queremos entender el cine que se hace paralelamente al desarrollo de estos nuevos supuestos de la convivencia. El arte de las imágenes en movimiento ha estado siempre estrechamente ligado a la vida real y a las circunstancias que la afectan, pero esa relación, si cabe, se acentúa en el periodo que estamos analizando, gracias a la confrontación ideológica que tiene lugar entonces y al entusiasmo despertado por los primeros cambios (131).[150]

In fact, the "nuevo cine catalán" in the period of the transition had as one of its defining characteristics "una tradición industrial importante pero absolutamente desmantelada por el franquismo"[151] in addition to considerations of an autonomous state and "una lengua y una cultura ansiosas de recuperar su identidad como motor inicial para el resurgimiento de ese cine catalán" (Romaguera i Romio 4).[152]

Just as the Expo in 1888 and the process of industrialization in the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century did, these wars also defined Spain's place in the international

[150] "It is worth insisting on the need to not lose sight of the new political, economic, and social framework that has come into creation in these years, if we want to understand the film that has been created in parallel to the development of these new hypotheses of coexistence. The art of images in movement has always been closely connected to real life and the circumstances that effect it, but that relationship is accentuated in the period that we are analyzing, thanks to the ideological confrontation that occurs and the awakened enthusiasm for the first changes" (my translation).
[151] "An important industrial tradition but one that was completely dismantled by Francoism" (my translation).
[152] "A language and culture anxious to recuperate its identity as an initial driving force for the resurgence of Catalan cinema" (my translation).

scene. Some considered defending the colonial interests in Morocco a question of pride and honor, others deemed it a problem of borders, and still others attempted to determine how Spain's involvement in Morocco could relate or become a precursor to any involvement in the First World War (Bachoud 127-128). Spain had already lost to the United States in the Spanish-American War, it had lost ground to Germany and France in Africa, and then found itself in no position to formally participate in World War I. The conflicts discussed in this chapter place Spain within the global imperial scene at the same time that they bring to the fore the question of the country's political future. The role of the military varied throughout the time period at hand, but the question of the troubled relationship between it, civilians, and the larger government never disappeared, an interaction we will look at in relation to strikes in Chapter 4. Likewise, in post-Franco Spain, the military struggled to find its place within a new democracy. It had been an essential component of Franco's regime, and its role in maintaining "order" was quite strong. A failed attempt at insurrection on what is now commonly referred to as 23-F (February 23, 1981) illustrated this point. While Congress was convened to determine the vote for the next President of Spain, Lieutenant Colonel Antonio Tejero and his following of Civil Guard officers marched into the building armed with guns. The coup ended after King Juan Carlos I appeared on television asking for the continuation of a peaceful democratic process of elections, which would replace Adolfo Suárez. While 1981 falls in the middle of the composition and release dates of the films and novels analyzed, the place of the military within the newly formed democratic system was surely on the minds of these artists as well as the general public.

Conclusion

The declining working conditions, insufficient wages, unemployment, and conscription that most strongly affected the working class were not met with pacifism in the first quarter of

the twentieth century. Amidst his arm sales and increased profits, even Onofre is aware of the rise in anarchy and demonstrations that would follow World War I: "Le dio por pensar que él estaba llamado a impedir que sucediera algo semejante. Creía que le estaba reservado este destino histórico singular. No puede ser que mi vida haya sido una sucesión de cosas extraordinarias para nada, se decía" (Mendoza, *La ciudad* 352).[153] After this realization, he "dedicaba los días y las noches a elaborar un plan para salvar del caos la faz de la tierra" (352),[154] although we know that his efforts did not prevent the inevitable. Meanwhile, Mendoza's other protagonist, Javier, comments that during the war, the Savolta factory made "beneficios que pudieran considerarse altos" (129)[155] but that after the United States became involved, profits slowed and eventually hard times fell upon the factories in the post-war period. This situation would only add to the already grim one that the working class experienced. In the end, as Martorell Linares confirms that historically, "la guerra obró como un catalizador que aceleró procesos políticos, económicos y sociales que ya estaban en marcha" (19).[156] The consequences of these processes and policies that came about during and after the colonial wars and First World War are precisely what we will discuss in Chapter 4.

[153] "But perhaps he was destined to prevent such a thing from occurring, perhaps he had been singled out to play that historic role. 'It is unthinkable that my life should have been a succession of remarkable events all for nothing,' he told himself" (Mendoza, *The City* 277).
[154] "Devoted his days and nights to forming a plan to save the face of the earth from chaos" (Mendoza, *The City* 277).
[155] "Profits that could be considered high" (Mendoza, *The Truth* 100).
[156] "The war acted as a catalyst that accelerated political, economic, and social processes that were already in progress" (my translation).

Chapter 4: Anarchy, Trade Unions, Organization

Downtown Barcelona became a political theater, a war zone.

Temma Kaplan, *Red City, Blue Period*, p. 29

El fang dels teus carrers, oh Barcelona!

es pastat amb sang.

Joan Maragall, *Oda nova a Barcelona*, 1909, p. 176, lines 62-63.[157]

The political and economic consequences discussed in Chapter 3 were not met with passivism, and Barcelona quickly became the central stage for a number of protests and demonstrations. On top of the government making decisions that were unpopular among the lower classes, there was also significant instability and fracturing within the overall system. Although the governmental system "tenía una apariencia de democracia",[158] the so-called *turno pacífico* was beginning to break down (Bachoud 36). Prime ministers were coming and going at an alarming rate, with one even lasting a mere four days. At the same time, Alfonso XIII was attempting to claim more power for himself, which included power over the military (37). The political left and right became more divided as the question of religion gained importance, with the former upholding anticlericalism and the latter supporting the church and its teachings (37). This political turbulence continued through the first quarter of the twentieth century, culminating in a military coup and the start of Miguel Primo de Rivera's dictatorship.

[157] "The mud of your streets, Oh Barcelona! / is kneaded with blood" (my translation).
[158] "Was democratic in appearance" (my translation).

The public also criticized the government's decisions regarding the colonial wars and economic policies. As I mentioned in Chapter 3, Catalan industrialists, who were often part of the FTN and later the Lliga Regionalista, did not think that the central government had done enough to protect Catalunya's economic interests. In fact at this time, "the state and the police cannot even protect the interests of the upper class due to their lack of sound policy, which occasioned the rise of labor movements and anarchist riots, resulting in the destruction of lives and property of all classes" (Oswald 45). While this statement is lacking some nuance – after all, even if the state had guaranteed the economic interests of the upper class, that would not have necessarily entailed any policy that would appease or trickle down to benefit the working class – it shows just how volatile the entire social structure of Barcelona was becoming.

A number of labor movements arose during this time period, and given that it is not possible to describe them all in detail within this project, we will focus on the Tragic Week in 1909, the Crisis of 1917, with a brief mention of the strike at "La Canadenca" in 1919. Underlying each of these events was a general surge in anarcho-syndicalism in Barcelona, as well as more widely in Spain and Europe. The Tragic Week and the 1917 general strike will serve as the two primary historical events of rebellion and violence that define the unrest within the overall time period in question, 1888-1923. Within the detailed analysis of each of those events, we will examine the formation and impact of trade unions. Finally, I will consider how the overwhelming unrest shapes the relationship between the industrial and official political capitals of Spain (Barcelona and Madrid, respectively). The chapter concludes with a look toward the future, considering relationships between the time period of 1888-1923 and the time of production and/or publication of the following works: *La verdad sobre el caso Savolta* (1975),

La ciutat cremada (1976), *Victòria! La gran aventura d'un poble* (1983), *La ciudad de los prodigios* (1986), and the film *La teranyina* (1990).

Throughout all of the events that we will discuss in this chapter, the rise in anarchism is an essential and intricate thread. As anarchism was already declining by the beginning of the twentieth century in other European contexts, such as in France and Italy, support was growing in Spain among the working class (Woodcock 22). In fact, only in Spain "did it become a true mass movement, sinking its roots deeply into the industrial world of Barcelona" (23). Although Mikhail Bakunin is widely recognized for his role in Spanish anarchism, the ideas of Pierre-Joseph Proudhon took hold first in the 1840s, 1850s, and 1860s. Proudhon did not believe in violent revolution, but did seek social transformation with a federalist social structure (23). Later, up until about 1868, the anarchist party belonged to left-liberalism and Republican Federalism and was made up of "sobre todo aquellos que procedían del sector obrero, las orientaciones procuradas por los agitadores y el delegado de Miguel Bakunin, José Fanelli" (Comín Colomer 3).[159] Their ideas:

> permitieron la creación en España de la federación regional obrera, afecta a la Asociación Internacional de trabajadores destinada a cumplir la consigna de Carlos Marx que como lema cerraba el Manifiesto Comunista, de 1848. Esta divisa, sobradamente conocida por ser la del sovietismo internacional, comprendida en la frase 'proletarios de todos los países uníos', trataba de recoger a los obreros en general, sin perjuicio de que el citado Fanelli, ejecutor de las órdenes de Bakunin – a quien universalmente se considera 'padre

[159] "Above all, those that belonged to the working-class sector, the guidance provided by the agitators, and the delegate of Mikhail Bakunin, Giuseppe Fanelli" (my translation).

de anarquismo' –, colocara los jalones sobre los que edificar la entidad sucursal de la internacional. (Comín Colomer 3)[160]

As early as 1868, shortly after Queen Isabella had been ousted from the throne, Mikhail Bakunin had planned a trip to Spain, but he was ultimately unable to go and sent the Italian Giuseppe Fanelli in his place. The latter arrived in Barcelona and spoke to the laborers about the working conditions within the factories. Although in the beginning, Karl Marx, Bakunin, and Fanelli were mostly aligned in their doctrines, they began to separate and take anarchy in different directions. Marx saw industrial workers as the key emancipatory force, and his Marxist-socialism was the impulse for the PSOE founded in Madrid in 1879 (Smith 104-105). In Barcelona, Marx's following declined, and Spanish workers gave their loyalty to Bakunin, whose influence in the later CNT was undeniable. Bakunin included the poorest sectors of society – prostitutes and beggars, for example – in addition to the working class, and he believed that "the revolution would be the product of an insurrection by the working masses led by a revolutionary elite" (105). For him, the movement was less about trade union negotiations and was more focused on insurrections. Although many anarchists also belonged to trade unions, not all syndicalists were anarchists even though they were guided by and often acted upon anarcho-syndicalist propaganda. In fact, trade unions often worked, in theory, independently of political parties and held the goal of emancipation of the working class in order to form a more collectivist society (104). Nevertheless, the trade union members often did have anarchist or republican affiliations, especially as both anarchist and socialist groups worked to infiltrate the trade unions to garner

[160] "Allowed for the creation in Spain of the regional worker's federation, namely the International Worker's Association destined to carry out Karl Marx's slogan that enclosed the Communist Manifesto of 1848. That emblem, well-known for being that of international sovietism, contained in the phrase 'proletariat of all countries united', tried to gather workers in general, regardless of the fact that the aforementioned Fanelli, executor of the orders of Bakunin – who was universally considered 'the father of anarchy' – , made the landmark on which to build the organizational branch of the International" (my translation).

more support for their own causes. In 1888, the Unión General de Trabajadores (UGT; "General Workers' Union") was founded with its headquarters in Barcelona and 71 percent of its affiliates Catalan. Two years later, May Day (May 1) was established as an international day to promote the working-class cause, with socialists enacting work stoppages and anarchists launching general strikes. While the anarchists frequently wanted to launch strikes as revolutionary acts, the UGT and PSOE sought to reach negotiations and more peaceful solutions before turning to strikes (106-107). Although this distinction seems clear on paper, in reality, beyond the leadership of each organization, it was exceedingly difficult to classify unionizers as socialist, anarchist, or republican (125).

In the 1890s, terrorism in Barcelona grew, with attempted assassinations and larger scale bombings in public areas. In 1893, a bomb was thrown at Captain General Martínez Campos, and he was wounded when it landed at the feet of his horse. Following Martínez Campos' injury, Valeriano Weyler Nicolau became the Captain General and enacted even more brutal repression to control the terrorist attacks (Payne, *Politics* 61). Another bomb exploded in the Liceu Opera theater, killing twenty people. A *Brigada Social* ("Social Brigade") special police force was created, and it arrested anarchists, socialists, republicans, and Catalan nationalists alike after an 1896 bombing during Corpus Christi, whose perpetrator was never formally identified (Woodcock 27). Hundreds of anarchists were arrested and tortured in Montjuïc to extract false confessions of guilt (Smith 108). Brutal repression followed for any who were accused of involvement, even without proof, as Mendoza describes in *La ciudad de los prodigios*. In the novel, he describes officers that intend to force a confession from Pablo, who had already been in jail during the attack, and therefore could not have possibly committed the crime. To push him to confess, "lo colgaron por las muñecas de la puerta y lo tuvieron así ocho horas. De vez en

cuando un carcelero se le acercaba, le escupía en la cara y le retorcía los genitales salvajemente" (81).[161] After the prisoner gives in and signed the confession, he is shot on direct orders from Madrid. Thus, the punishment for these acts of anarchist terrorism were brutal, even without any proof of involvement.

Within the novel and historical reality, there existed a spectrum of anarchy. As has been mentioned, not everyone fully supported anarchy, but many did not support the governmental systems in place at the time either. What is more, within the anarchist groups, some favored direct action which was viewed as an act of terrorism, while others preferred more peaceful methods for sparking change. Some anarchists supported Lerroux's radical republicanism while others did not believe that it would effectively bring about greater freedom and improved living conditions (Smith 163). *La ciudad de los prodigios*' Pablo believed that the first thing that should be destroyed in Barcelona is the Liceu Theater, while at the same time he criticizes direct action through strikes that have the primary purpose of obtaining something in particular "porque en el fondo tiende a consolidar la situación injusta que prevalece en la sociedad" (Mendoza 117).[162] Pablo is not against *all* forms of strike, but specifically those that are not well-organized and only aim to change a particular thing instead of intending to change the entire established order. This same distinction of types of strikes is confirmed by the historian Andrée Bachoud, who states that "el anarquismo ha ido creciendo en España desde 1881, primero en Barcelona y después en el campo, sobre todo en Andalucía. Los anarquistas luchan con la misma eficacia en el terreno sindical – organizando huelgas en las empresas, a veces en colaboración con los socialistas –

[161] "They…hung him by his wrists from the door. He was left like that for eight hours. From time to time a jailer would come up to him, spit in his face, and savagely wring his genitals" (Mendoza, *The City* 57-58).
[162] "Because in the end it consolidates the prevailing unjust system in society" (Mendoza, *The City* 87).

como mediante la acción directa y el atentado terrorista" (36).[163] Although not everyone believed in direct action, the public view of anarchism was shaped by the acts of terrorism witnessed in the public arena.

La ciutat cremada also clearly displays some anarcho-syndicalist beliefs and practices through both Josep and his colleagues. The factory workers do not want to vote in the 1902 Cortes elections because to do so would entail involvement in the electoral system, and one worker states that "votar es col·laborar amb el sistema que ens explota!" (Ribas, *La ciutat* 87).[164] At the turn of the century, we also witness Josep's friends speaking in Esperanto, a universal language for all people, supposedly unmarked by politics and region. However, those who used the language were also typically anarchists, suggesting that there was in fact a political agenda behind the language. Josep attends a show at the Liceu Theater, a site of bourgeois entertainment. He and Remei sit where the bombs were dropped in the 1893 attack at the theater, presumably because those seats were cheaper given that nobody wanted to sit where the bombs had fallen, for superstitious reasons. Josep cannot avoid feeling on edge, and especially so when he sees one of his anarcho-syndicalist "companys" ("companions"). He and Remei become startled when cannons suddenly sound in the play and the theater owner says "¡Están sonando los cañonazos que anuncian la muerte del siglo XIX! ¡Viva el siglo XX!" (Ribas, *La ciutat* 81).[165] However, the scene change between this and what follows creates a clear parallel between the anarchy of the last century and the anarcho-syndicalist involvement of Josep's present. The following scene is that of the workers joining together in song on the horizon of the new century,

[163] "Anarchy had been growing in Spain since 1881, first in Barcelona and then later in the country, above all in Andalucía. The anarchists fight with the same efficacy in the unions – organizing strikes in companies, sometimes collaborating with the socialists – as with direct action and terrorist attacks" (my translation).
[164] "Voting is collaborating with the system that exploits us!" (my translation).
[165] "The cannons are sounding and announcing the death of the nineteenth century! Long live the twentieth century!" (my translation).

and Josep stands and sings in solidarity with them and their fight against the bourgeoisie. Two years later in 1902, Josep is supporting Alejandro Lerroux – a Radical Republican– at a gathering on Montaña Pelada (Carmel Hill).[166] Some young, bearded men climb to the bell tower of the church to hang a Republican flag from it and Lerroux states: "Cal encendre Barcelona pels quatre costats fins a purgar-la de burgesos i reaccionaris!" (Ribas, *La ciutat* 114).[167] Although Josep does not ever outwardly declare himself an anarchist, it is clear that his actions and beliefs have anarcho-syndicalist leanings. What is more, Josep's position frequently teeters between that of a working-class man standing in solidarity with his fellow laborers and that of a bourgeois gentleman who married into wealth and class.

The Role of the Bourgeoisie

In addition to the resistance put up by the working class, the bourgeoisie also rebelled against the central government in Madrid for its lack of sound economic policy benefitting Catalunya's industrial sector. As mentioned in Chapter 3, this was largely the result of the loss of the colonies in the Americas, which drove many of the export profits in the Catalan region. Industrialists and financiers sought protectionist measures from Madrid, such as embargoes, free ports, and tariffs. When the requests were consistently delayed or altogether ignored, business owners began to close their shops, stop paying taxes, and go on strike in 1899. Senyor Palau, of *La ciutat cremada*, even states "tot això ens fa recordar que la burgesia nasqué revolucionaria"

[166] Alejandro Lerroux was an Andalusian-born radical republican that believed in urban insurrections and military coups (pronunciamientos) as the solution to the current political crisis. He wanted to earn the support of Catalan socialists and anarchists. Lerroux claimed to fight for economic equality and social revolution, and he even published some anarchist writing in his newspaper *Progreso* (Smith 149-150). While in the early 1900s, he did not have faith in change through voting, he later formed his official Republican party in 1908 and, in turn, dismissed working class concerns and anarchist doctrines (167).

[167] "Barcelona must be lit on all four sides to purge it of the bourgeoisie and reactionaries!" (my translation).

(Ribas, *La ciutat* 59).[168] Ironically, they are proud of their strike and the resistance they show to not being protected as they requested, although the sentiment changes drastically when the working class attempts to stand up for their own economic interests.

Another aspect of bourgeois intervention that is worth mentioning is the relationship between the Catalan sector of this group and the Madrid government. As the economy improved in the decade following the loss of the colonies and into the second decade of the century, the protection that Madrid could offer outweighed the previous economic disagreements. As Joan Ramon Resina states in regards to *La ciudad de los prodigios*, "the historical event (or series of events) that the concept of the Faustian pact alludes to is the Catalan bourgeoisie's betrayal of the revolutionary impulse of Catalan nationalism in exchange for the Madrid government's guarantee of bourgeois class domination" (954). The bourgeoisie had feared that the nationalists could damage their link with Madrid, which they hoped would protect them from strikes and anarchy which were on the rise within the working class. Yet even as they worried about damaging ties, they also held regionalist, autonomous, and federalist sentiments. When we consider the name of the group, *Lliga Regionalista* (which translates literally to "Regionalist League"), the pro-Catalan support becomes more apparent. Although, for the *Lliga*, the social question often took precedence over the Catalan one, as they supported the *Juntas de Defensa* for their defense of the industrial employers in their lockouts and *pistolero* techniques (Brenan 103). The working class represented the greater immediate threat to the livelihood and lives of the bourgeoisie through strikes and terrorism, which pushed them into the arms of the central Madrid government. Finally, toward the end of the time period in question, the *Lliga* also supported Captain General

[168] "All this reminds us that the bourgeoisie was born revolutionary" (my translation).

of Catalunya Primo de Rivera's coup d'état, although they backed away from him as he issued an increasing number of anti-regionalist and anti-Catalan decrees by 1924.

Locally in Barcelona, "as in many other European urban contexts, the bourgeois, industrial city and its cultural hegemony sustained by the ideology of progress were confronted with popular values rooted in republican, working class, socialist and anarchist ideas" (Hochadel 13). At the same time, the lower classes were discontent with the exploitation, repression, and lack of rights imposed upon them by the bourgeoisie, a point that Mendoza shows us through the previously mentioned novel:

> Dentro de esta ficción, Mendoza nos muestra cómo la ciudad surge del esfuerzo de todos, incluidos los trabajadores inmigrantes que construirán los espacios de la Exposición en medio del hacinamiento y las esperanzas rotas, junto a la burguesía que decide por ellos y el sector anarquista que lucha por defender los derechos de los más débiles a veces con métodos violentos totalmente equivocados pero que son fruto de una brutal explotación y una arbitraria represión. (Saval 51)[169]

Thus, the events that we will discuss in the rest of this chapter transpired as a result of a long series of injustices inflicted upon the working class and immigrants by the bourgeoisie and the systems of power in place.

Setting the Scene

[169] "Within this fiction, Mendoza shows us how the city emerges from the efforts of every person, including the immigrant workers that will construct the Expo spaces amidst overcrowding and broken hopes, together with the bourgeoisie that decide for them, and the anarchist sector that fights to defend the rights of the weak sometimes with violent and completely equivocal methods but that are the fruit of brutal exploitation and arbitrary repression" (my translation).

The last twelve years of the nineteenth century saw several bombings, many of which occurred in public places and with some targeting specific individuals. On May 1, 1890, one year after May Day's official founding, anarchist workers led a strike to demand an eight hour workday (Kaplan 26). In the following days, they gathered more workers from metallurgical and textile factories, and the strike intensified, to which Captain General Ramón Blanco y Arenas responded by declaring martial law. By May 4, there were 20,000 people joined in strike in Barcelona, but three days later, shops were open again and business returned "as normal" in the city, although the strike did continue in some areas outside the city proper (27).

Two years later in February 1892, a bomb was set off in the Royal Plaza off the Rambla. In March, another bomb exploded in the Boquería Market. Two months later, yet another bomb exploded at an electric company near the Plaza de Catalunya. The following year, there was an assassination attempt during the Virgin of Mercy Celebration, and the home of a director of the Association of Wool Manufacturers was bombed. Yet again, martial law was declared in July 1893 (Kaplan 28-30). The Civil Guard and military attempted to round up the labor militants in Barcelona. Nevertheless, in September 1893, a bomb was thrown at Captain General Arsenio Martínez Campos (30). On November 7, 1893, an anarchist threw two bombs in the Liceu Opera Theater, killing nearly two dozen people. Significantly, the Liceu was a place where the bourgeois and upper classes gathered, and it was therefore symbolic of the upper-class privilege and excess in comparison to the laborers' plights. On June 7, 1896, the Corpus Christi celebration bombing occurred. As a result, 500 union dissidents were arrested, five were executed, and hundreds were jailed for years (35). Thus, the general unrest and violence was continuing to mount despite governmental attempts at quelling it.

On February 17, 1902, a general strike broke out in Barcelona and lasted for seven days until laborers returned to work on February 24. The strike had begun with the metal workers' union in 1901 shortly before the New Year. It was set into motion with the aim of asserting their right to unionize and also to alleviate unemployment plaguing the industrial sector. This movement quickly spread to the rest of Barcelona and became a general strike in which men and women participated, both those within and outside of formal trade unions. Kaplan defines why we use the term general strike to refer to this event: "unlike an economic strike, which addresses issues limited to wages and working conditions on the job, a general strike raises fundamental questions about the quality of life of the vast majority of the people" (61). On Monday, the first day of the strike, thousands took to the streets and factories closed, as even the trolleys could not move through the crowd. Martial law was quickly imposed, which in turn led to confrontations between the Civil Guard, the military, and the strikers (63). Tensions, violence, and concern escalated throughout the week, with food scarcity becoming an issue due to lack of transportation. Military reinforcements arrived from other regions of Spain, the death and hospitalization tolls rose, and the search to arrest the leaders of the unions intensified. Nonetheless, on Monday, February 24 – with a toll of between 60 and 100 people dead, hundreds wounded, and 500 in prison – laborers returned to work in the factories (65-67). Although this strike did not have the success anarcho-syndicalists would have desired, they would continue to renew their efforts over the next twenty years. In May 1906, Mateo Morral, a native of Sabadell (within the province of Barcelona), attacked Alfonso XIII and the queen in Madrid on their wedding day. He threw a bomb concealed within a floral bouquet to the car in which King Alfonso and his bride traveled. Although the King and Queen were unharmed, 24 people were killed and many more were wounded. Morral's family owned a textile factory in Sabadell, but

Morral had broken off from his family for ideological differences. He became close to Francisco Ferrer, a known anarchist and revolutionary, in the years leading up to this attack (Sanabria 101-102). There is also some evidence that suggests Lerroux was behind the attack, supporting Morral's decision to throw the bomb. If this is true, it shows the way radical republicans and anarchists worked together in a public attack (103).

The Tragic Week

The Tragic Week occurred in Barcelona, and to a lesser degree throughout several cities in Spain, from July 26 to 31, 1909. The unrest had continued to build throughout the month of July as decision after decision was made regarding the war with Morocco, none of which benefitted the working class. Prime Minister Antonio Maura agreed to send more troops into Morocco, even as the military campaigns there were largely unsuccessful. On July 9, 1909 draftees from Barcelona began to embark for Morocco to augment the troops who were quickly being reduced from casualties. Due to wealthy families such as the Comillas and Güell, the war became known as the "Banker's War" in Barcelona, one that benefitted the rich at the expense of the lives of the poor. *La ciutat cremada* poignantly displays an event in late July that fuels the fire. Josep accompanies his brother-in-law, who is being sent off to Morocco, to the port from which he will embark. Meanwhile, the young draftee's sister Roser approaches her mother-in-law to ask for help. The mother-in-law stands in a group of upper-class women, all dressed exquisitely, and hands out religious medallions to the men who are departing. Of course, her male relatives are spared the duty of fighting in the war because their family has paid the indemnity which freed them from doing so. In the end, Roser's mother-in-law declines the request, causing her daughter-in-law to run off upset. The scholar Temma Kaplan confirms that

in reality "this misguided bit of charity was the last straw" (94). That day, soldiers threw their medallions into the water, shouting that the rich should have to fight too, and finally the naval ship pulled out of the port to carry the men to Morocco (94).

In the days leading up to the Tragic Week, protests also intensified around the city, and Alfonso XIII failed in his attempts to subdue the working class anger by offering a daily wage – which provided less than fifteen percent of what a family needed to survive – to families of the men fighting (Kaplan 95). There were some strikes in the week of July 19, and despite Governor Ossorio's orders, police were unable to establish order (Ullman 303). Different groups also began to work together and separately to prepare a general strike during that time. The Catalan Socialist Federation leader Fabra Rivas wrote a proclamation that was read aloud during the Wednesday, July 21st meeting in Terrassa, a short distance outside Barcelona. The proclamation listed four reasons for protest, which it prefaced by stating: "Considering the fact that the war is a fatal consequence of the capitalist system of production; Considering, also, the fact that under the present Spanish system, only workers go to fight the war which the bourgeoisie declare" (Ullman 147). The four areas that the Assembly "protests energetically" included: the actions of the Spanish government in Morocco, the actions of the aristocratic ladies who insulted solders by giving them medallions and scapularies rather than providing their families with necessary food, sending productive workers to a war instead of sending priests who are of no service to the nation, republican deputies who have failed to use their positions in parliament to protest against the war (147-148). That same morning, the federation had also announced plans for a general strike in the newspaper *El Poble Català* (145).

One day later, Minister of the Interior Juan de la Cierva declared martial law that also suspended constitutional guarantees, to which Barcelona's Governor Ossorio added that police

would no longer show the restraint they had shown up to this point (Ullman 149). The Friday evening general meeting of the Solidaridad Obrera was canceled and its organizers were to be prosecuted by Governor Ossorio. Although the meeting did not occur, labor leaders of the Solidaridad Obrera ultimately opposed the general strike, citing fears of repression that could follow (153). On Saturday morning, July 24, Barcelonans read of the battles with Riffian tribes in which Spanish supply lines were broken and soldiers – ill-trained and physically ill – were marched into battle to a grim fate. A central committee for the general strike was formed, including some members of the Solidaridad Obrera, labor leaders from specific trade unions, socialists (with Fabra Rivas as their representative), syndicalists (with Miguel Villalobos Moreno as their representative), and anarchists (with Rodríguez Romero as their representative). Although none of the organizations were able to gather together a leadership team on their own, the combined committee quickly took action to recruit participants, plan a rally, and publicize the event (155-156). It was intended to be a general strike without any one specific political orientation, which would appeal to all classes. The Republicans under Lerroux were also prepared to join the general strike, and he had been laying the terrain for this kind of protest over the years.

In addition to a history of anticlericalism that had been on the rise, Lerroux also gave several speeches over the previous decade in which he incited his following toward violent acts against religious property and people, including nuns and priests (Kaplan 97). *La ciutat cremada* portrays Lerroux as a savior-like figure of the movement, with the workers venerating him, cheering him on, and helping him spread the anticlerical sentiment. Nonetheless, we first see Lerroux in the film when he is enjoying a nice bottle of champagne in a train car, an occurrence that is criticized by a newspaper journalist who believes Lerroux's followers would feel deceived

seeing him enjoy such a nice beverage. Moments later, he descends onto the steps of the train when it arrives at the station, and he recites for a crowd "¡Sois muchos los que quisierais ver tremolar la bandera radical y yo la levanto y emprendo la marcha!" (Ribas *La ciutat* 99).[170] However, the Civil Guard arrive and Lerroux is told that none of his supporters will dare show their faces anymore, but he is able to save his status by getting a civil servant to arrest him and drag him off the platform while he objects. His depiction in the film is one of constant hypocrisy in which he seemingly puts on a show for his radical supporters even while he lives a high-class lifestyle. Revealing the contradictions and hypocrisy of all classes – the laborers, bourgeois business owners, and politicians – is a recurrent theme in Ribas' films. At the same time, it is possible that the depiction of Lerroux in this film was influenced by what happens in his later political career in the 1930s, when he increasingly moved to the political right and repressed uprisings.

Returning to historical evidence, on Monday, July 26, the anarcho-syndicalists, Lerroux's republican following, and the socialists all joined together in a general strike. Fuses were first set in the suburbs, then the strike spread to central Barcelona. Many businesses closed because there were not enough police to protect their businesses from strikers. Governor Ossorio seized many of the morning's newspapers, and the failure of this campaign on which the Committee counted prevented the general public from knowing that the purpose of the strike was to show support for ending the fighting in Morocco (Ullman 167-168). Anarchists began to take advantage of the movement to encourage their followers to attack sources of power, namely, police stations. Meanwhile, metalworkers took to marching around Barcelona and gathering more workers in other factories to join the strike. Even as the numbers grew, Ossorio maintained that the strike

[170] "Many of you want to see the radical flag waving, and I raise it up and begin the march!" (my translation).

was only designed to be a work stoppage protesting the war in Morocco (171-172). The Civil Guard was sent to the streetcars to defend the ability to travel and get to work, but this resulted in clashes with the protestors. By the middle of the first day, martial law was declared, General Santiago was in charge of restoring order in Barcelona, and Governor Ossorio resigned even against the pleas of the Juan de la Cierva, who was standing in for Antonio Maura during the Prime Minister's absence from Madrid (174-178). By the end of Monday night, Radicals were already discussing turning the strike into a revolt and culminating the week with the burning of convents and churches (185).

The textile factory Vapor Rigau in *La teranyina* is located in Terrassa, a city in the province of Barcelona, and within the factory, the workers make clothing for the Spanish soldiers in the war in Morocco. The film starts with a funeral, that of the previous Rigau factory owner, which appears shortly after the opening scene of textile machines running. Julià Rigau will now take over the business, but there are disagreements among the family about whether or not the factory should strike a deal with the military to produce army uniforms. The family knows that contributing to the war efforts in Morocco will fuel unrest among the workers, but Julià resolves to accept the deal and prepare the first shipment in just three days. Meanwhile, the factory workers are already talking about the war and the prospect of a general strike to stop it. Tonet Miseries appears as the voice of the working class, the man who intends to unite the socialists and anarchists together under the same goal. Julià defends the war, citing the production, raw materials, and labor that expansionism would bring, and immediately after, a scene change takes us back to the factory workers who state "la iniciativa es nostra" (Verdaguer). Yet another quick cut shows Julià stating that anyone who does not want to defend Spain's honor is a traitor. Finally, the scene changes once more to the factory workers who are becoming increasingly

angered because they are nourishing the war with their own hands and are making "shrouds" for the soldiers. It is in this kind of environment that the strikes early in the week began in the cities within provincial Barcelona. The strikes begin, workers stop showing up to their shifts, and on the wall of the factory they have written "aquí es fa roba militar" (Verdaguer). Although Julià requests that the lieutenant general stop the protests, there are simply not enough men to control the strike. The Rigau family factory begins to burn to the ground, and with it, all the uniforms that were destined for soldiers heading to Morocco. The last scene of the movie ends with a death, just as the film started. This time, it is the character Mercaderes, who they blame for all the unrest and destruction that has happened up to this point. In the last scene of the movie, a close shot reveals Mercaderes' face as he is shot by a firing squad. Thus, the film completes a full circle, but neither the workers nor the industrialist factory owners are content in the end.

After the strike and unrest around the outskirts of Barcelona in regions like Terrassa, the general strike began to gain strength in the city proper. Officials – on various political sides – called for peace and an end to the violence. The historical character Prat de la Riba[171] demands peace in *La ciutat cremada*: "Pau, pau i sempre pau! La protesta del poble és justa, però la pau és absolutament necessària per a ordenar aquesta terra nostra… (*I amb la fredor als ulls, mormola*) Em cal saber què passarà!" (Ribas *La ciutat* 128).[172] Although he understands *why* the working class is rebelling, he does not approve of the method for achieving their demands. Regardless of the calls for peace and attempts by city officials to calm the strikes, the movement only became bigger and more violent. The film provides a detailed account of the first three days of the strike

[171] Enric Prat de la Riba was a conservative Catalan politician who advocated for the autonomy of Catalunya; he is primarily associated with the Noucentisme movement.
[172] "Peace, peace, and always peace! The people's protest is just, but peace is absolutely necessary to bring order to this land of ours… (*and with a coldness in his eyes, he mumbles*) I need to know what is going to happen!" (my translation).

– from Monday, July 26 to Wednesday, July 28. On day one, Josep accompanies his brother-in-law to the port where he boards a ship for Morocco. Men and women on strike rush into a church, spit on the priest, and give the churchgoers a few minutes to escape before burning it to the ground. On Tuesday, another church burns as people show up in greater strength and numbers. While churches are burning, the Palau family stands together and watches it from their balcony, safely removed from the violence happening below. At first, Josep stands with them, seeming to have picked his side with the bourgeoisie instead of the working class. While *La teranyina* portrays firm social standings where factory owners and factory workers have established power relations, in *La ciutat cremada*, Josep's position frequently shifts. Josep returns to work in a factory on Wednesday, but when Senyor Palau wonders aloud when the laborers will return to their positions and stop making citizens pay for the strike against the government, Josep reminds his father-in-law that the government is not all that they are fighting against. In a perfect juxtaposition of class and consciousness, the Palau family spends their Wednesday evening dancing and listening to music, while the city burns, police and strikers clash, and bodies are piled up in the street below.

While Josep's position during the Tragic Week is dubious, somewhere between sympathetic and sheltered, that is certainly not the case for Onofre Bouvila of *La ciudad de los prodigios*. Although he once bore witness to the horrible working conditions of laborers as they built structures for the Expo, he seems to have forgotten their plight entirely by 1909. He spends that week smoking cigars, drinking brandy, and gossiping with the marquis, which he recounts as having been "una semana muy grata; en ella Onofre creyó haber recuperado los lazos incomparables de la amistad masculina" (335).[173] Four years later, he attends a dinner with the

[173] "A pleasant week… Onofre thought he had found a friend" (Mendoza *The City* 263-264).

Tsar and as he is surrounded by the upper class and sights of silk and luxury, he is reminded of the week he spent with the marquis. The lavish setting reminds him of the pleasant way he had spent a week that was so terrible for people in the working class, an irony that escapes him but certainly not Mendoza's reader.

In the end, the historic general strike of the Tragic Week largely failed due to lack of organization. J.A. González Casanova writes that, "sense una ideologia clara, sense una organització disciplinada, sense aliances fermes, el poble barceloní viu un episodi més de la seva llarga història insurreccional sense èxit" (*La ciutat cremada* 7).[174] As we have seen, the films *La teranyina* and *La ciutat cremada* end with scenes of death of those involved in the general strike that week, and there is no hope for a positive outcome on the horizon. Failure of the movement is evident from the number of bodies seen in the final scenes of both films. In reality, the anarcho-syndicalist groups suffered great losses of life that July week in 1909, and the persecution, led by the Civil Guard and the military, that followed only added to the tolls of death and imprisonment. What is more, Francesc Ferrer, who was a leader and advocate for the anarchist cause, was convicted and executed after the Tragic Week on primarily invented evidence. Catalan elites proposed a theory that he had been behind the events of the week, especially given that they believed him to be involved in the previous 1906 attempted assassination of King Alfonso XIII, but the information regarding the Tragic Week was largely fabricated. Thousands of other anarchists were similarly arrested, tortured, imprisoned for life, exiled, and five were executed (Smith 181).

[174] "Without a clear ideology, without disciplined organization, without firm alliances, the Barcelonan working class saw another unsuccessful episode in its long history of insurrection" (my translation).

Strategizing and Silencing

After the Tragic Week, laborers' concerns, anger, and organization certainly did not disappear, and nor did their bourgeois counterparts attempting to maintain control. *La verdad sobre el caso Savolta* demonstrates one way in which the factory owners "dealt with" their contriving and discontent workers (64). The *capataces* would hire *pistoleros* ("hitmen") that would track down the leaders of protests and unions and either violently threaten or kill them as a way of warning other workers to stop resisting. However, it was not only *pistoleros* that apprehended potential threats and troublemakers, but police officers were also involved. They arrested workers often without formal proof of any wrongdoing, which fueled the already raging fire. This point is also strongly criticized by Ribas in his film *Victòria!* when the character Canals says that the syndicalists have not done anything serious yet, but that the police would arrest them anyways, without reasons "cuando os sale de las narices" (35).[175] Furthermore, one year after the Tragic Week, the anarcho-syndicalist CNT was founded and by 1915, it already had 15,000 members. Just three years later in 1918, the organization had increased its numbers nearly fivefold to 73,860 (Kaplan 65). This organization would remain active through the end of the Spanish Civil War in 1939, and although it operated clandestinely during the dictatorship, it re-emerged in the public eye during the transition.

From the start of the First World War in 1914, military officers also became very discontent with the government because, similarly to what occurred in the working classes, they did not receive any raise in salary even as the inflation levels increased drastically (Payne, *Politics* 124). Together with the overwhelming number of high-ranking military officers, this fueled resentment toward the King Alfonso XIII who "became bolder and more direct in his

[175] Idiomatic expression that means "whenever you feel like it."

fundamentally unconstitutional contacts with the Army… and officially encouraged generals to communicate with him directly, rather than through the constitutional channel of the Ministry of War" (125). However, not all soldiers and officers shared this frustration with the way the military was run. In *Victòria!* one officer states "el ejército debe ponerse de una vez al servicio del país real"[176] while another military officer adds under his breath: "Caiga quien caiga" "y que caiga el rey",[177] showing his support for a non-monarchic government (Ribas *Victòria!* 53). In any case, the military officers were unable to participate in or organize protests even though their salaries were not even sufficient to support a lower-middle-class family. As a result, the *Junta de Defensa Militar* ("Military Council") was formed in 1917, with the primary objectives of obtaining recognition for being "a corporate entity deserving of special perquisites, equitable rewards, and public recognition as the country's leading institution" (Payne, *Politics* 135).

Victòria! also portrays the continued misery in which the lower classes are living in the years between the Tragic Week and the subsequent strikes in 1917 and 1919, with a primary focus on the years between the start and end of World War I. Some of the military officers see immigrants sleeping in the street, for example, and this leads them to want to change the reality of citizens in Barcelona. Canals and his fellow unionizers approach the officers to offer their support and stand in solidarity with their cause and the Junta: "Queríamos hablar con ustedes, caballeros, que supieran que el pueblo, los sindicatos, reconocemos como justas las reclamaciones del movimiento de oficiales y que podrían contar con nuestro apoyo" (Ribas, *Victòria!* 40).[178] However, they are quickly rejected by the officers, who instead of embracing the support, threaten to arrest the men for sedition and espionage. In the film, the military officer

[176] "The military should be at the service of the royal country at once" (my translation).
[177] "Fall whoever may"; "and hopefully the king falls" (my translations).
[178] "We wanted to talk with you, gentlemen, to inform you that the proletariat, the unions, recognize your reclamations on the officers movement as just and that you can count on our support" (my translation).

Rodríguez Haro – played by the famous Austrian actor Helmut Berger – becomes more strongly invested in the trade union cause when Canals takes him to see how the lower classes are living. Some of these individuals later become involved in the general strike in 1917.

The Strike of 1917

In 1917, another general strike was proposed and carried out, again uniting a variety of political and trade organizations. The Northern Union proposed a general railway strike to happen on July 10 (Termes 7). Then, once moved to action, the UGT and the PSOE declared a general strike on August 13 because they sought a change in leadership. Similarly to the Tragic Week, the protesters blocked transportation, broke glass, and lit buildings on fire: "Se lanzó a la calle y como primera medida empezó a para tranvías, romper los cristales y pegar fuego a algunos. Luego se las tuvieron con el comercio, rompiendo las lunas de los escaparates y obligando a cerrar. Naturalmente, esto produjo pánico, y entonces los grupos de acción sindicalistas, recorriendo fábricas y talleres, consiguieron que la huelga fuera casi absoluta en las primeras horas de la tarde" (Bueso 78-79).[179] Although at first the strike became widespread, lack of clear planning and purpose ultimately became an issue.

In *Victòria!* during the general strike in July, the film quite clearly shows the disagreement among the military officers on the legitimacy of the *Junta* and resistance against the current order. Rodríguez Haro becomes completely invested in changing the reality of Spain – the poverty and misery of the lower classes, the military promotion system, the involvement of the king – and works with Canals to invade Montjuïc in order to rescue an anarcho-syndicalist

[179] "They took to the streets and as a first measure began to stop trains, break the glass, and set fire to some of them. Then they turned to businesses, breaking the store window glass and forcing them to close. Naturally, this produced panic, and then the action-oriented unions, running around factories and workshops, managed to make the strike widespread in the first few hours of the afternoon" (my translation).

who was imprisoned there and sentenced to death. He helps Canals' group dress in military uniforms to go undercover, an irony that does not escape any of the antimilitary syndicalists, some of whom had served time in prison for escaping the draft. Whereas the military uniform represents order and authority, the anarcho-syndicalists are driven by the concept of freedom and a world without authority and punishment driven by the State. At the end of the film, as we have seen in other historical strikes, a lack of solidarity brings the rebellion down. One of the anarcho-syndicalists decides that the prospect of power is more appealing than the revolution, and he invites Canals to join him, stating that their goals of taking down the systems of power are unrealistic. Canals of course declines, the fighting continues, and he and Rodríguez Haro eventually even turn on each other, a fractioning that the enemy sought. When they fail to blow up Montjuïc or create any change in power structures, Rodríguez Haro resigns from the military and Canals hides in his ex-wife's house with her new husband, Vinyes. The lack of unity and organization results in a failure and a missed opportunity for the anarcho-syndicalists to enact change during the general strike.

Other anarcho-syndicalist groups also went forward with the strike without the means to do so successfully, and for example "arreplegant dinamita, armes i bombes sense que ningú donés ordre de fer-les servir" (Termes 8).[180] In *Victòria!,* one month after the actions at Montjuïc described above, Canals comments on the failure to bring about a successful strike. In August 1917, he comments that "la huelga general llega tarde. Hemos dejado escapar una vez más la ocasión, que fue a primeros del mes pasado, cuando los militares estaban más divididos" (Ribas 95).[181] The results in parliament were even more moderate afterward: "la vaga d'agost desborda

[180] "They collected dynamite, arms, and bombs, without giving anyone orders to use them" (my translation).
[181] "The general strike is too late. We have let the right moment slip away once more, at the beginning of last month when the military was most divided" (my translation).

els reformistes polítics de l'assemblea de parlamentaris, que es veieren obligats a frenar el seu radicalisme i que des d'aleshores es mostraren més moderats" (Termes 9).[182] In addition to the problems the government faced with repressing the strikes, the *Junta* assured that it did not support the current government and wanted martial law to be lifted (Payne, *Politics* 139). The strike had occurred on a large scale in Barcelona, and even though it could be considered a failure, it exacerbated the problems and disagreements within the political order.

While the main action of *La verdad sobre el caso Savolta* begins in October 1917, that is, two months after the strike, it portrays the overall environment that existed in Barcelona between the general strike of that year and that of La Canadenca in 1919. On the one hand, factory workers were organizing and other sympathizers such as Domingo Pajarito Soto were attending anarchist meetings. On the other hand, the Savolta factory began using *pistoleros* to control the workers by threatening them or killing them. Their solution to the growing discontentment among workers was to silence them and thus prevent any efforts of organizing the unions to carry out strikes. In the narrative voice of the news article written by Pajarito Soto on October 6, 1917 in *La Voz de la Justicia*, the journalist defends the strike organized by the workers of the Savolta factory: "En la empresa Savolta, debo decirlo, señores, y entrar así en uno de los más oscuros y penosos pasajes de mi artículo y de la realidad social, se pensó, se planeó y se intentó lo único que podía planearse, pensarse e intentarse. Sí, señores, la huelga" (52-53).[183] What the article reports is not only planning, but also the hope and belief that a strike would bring a brighter future for them. Pajarito Soto uses words like "cerebros embrutecidos" to refer to their

[182] "The strike in August overwhelmed the political reformists in Parliament, who were obliged to restrain their radicalism and who have since become more moderate" (my translation).
[183] "In the Savolta company, I must say this, gentlemen, and thus enter into one of the darkest and most painful passages in my article and in our social reality, was thought, planned, and attempted the only thing that could be thought, planned, and attempted. Yes, gentlemen, a strike" (Mendoza, *The Truth* 32).

singular desire and desperation for a change for the better. He portrays the workers' hopes as if in a fairy tale: "nuestra desventura se trocará en victoria, nuestros males habrán cesado como desvanece y retrocede la angustiosa pesadilla" (60-61).[184] The rhetoric with which he describes their expectations of the strike leads the readers to infer what ultimately does result from this situation, a failed strike. Although he ironically states that he will describe the facts in the most "escueto, objetivo y desapasionado"[185] manner, his language certainly reveals both his support for the cause and his realistic vision of its failure (68). When one of the workers leaves a meeting about the strike, two men consult their list given to them by "los cobardes instigadores de aquel acto ruin",[186] confirm the worker's name, and proceed to take him forcefully to a dark corner (69). Thus, just as we have seen in the films, the scene quickly changes from one of hope to one of despair and violence. Moments before, the worker had been happy at the change he believed the strike would bring, and suddenly, a pair of *pistoleros* brutally torture him, and on successive nights, his coworkers suffer the same fate. This fact is mentioned in the affidavit included in the narration, in which it is confirmed that the victims were beaten "por orden expresa de los directivos de la empresa y por mediación de matones, a fin de abortar una supuesta huelga en germen" (74).[187] Ultimately, the strike is not carried out. However, the men who had been working together to make it happen included anarcho-syndicalists, socialists, and communists, confirming that workers of different parties came together to attempt strikes that would benefit the workers and lower classes more broadly.

[184] "Our misfortune will turn into victory, our troubles will cease just as an anguishing nightmare vanishes, retreats, and flows back into the night word whence it came" (Mendoza, *The Truth* 40).
[185] "Plainest, most objective, and dispassionate style" (Mendoza, *The Truth* 46).
[186] "Cowardly instigators of that vile act" (Mendoza, *The Truth* 47).
[187] "At the express order of company executives by thugs in order to stop a supposed strike before it took place" (Mendoza, *The Truth* 51).

La Canadenca, 1919

In 1919, laborers led a strike against the Riegos y Fuerza del Ebro (known as "La Canadenca" for its Canadian financiers) electrical plant, which yet again became a more general strike throughout the province of Barcelona and lasted over forty days in total. On February 5, 1919, laborers went on strike after eight workers had been fired due to their union associations. A few days later, the company fired 140 more people for defending the eight workers who had been fired. After many workers stopped showing up to their shifts in solidarity with the fired union workers, the company lost 400,000 pesetas in the first five days alone. As a result, the company tried to incentivize workers to come back by offering a monetary bonus, but this was to no avail (*Documentos y estudios* 93). The strike continued, and it spread throughout the surrounding area, with major consequences in Barcelona.

This strike is described in *La verdad sobre el caso Savolta* through the eyes of Javier Miranda, who traverses many of the areas in which the strike occurs on his journey back to Barcelona. He had ventured into the towns surrounding Barcelona in search of María Coral, his wife, but he was unable to use telephones or send telegrams due to the strike happening at La Canadenca electric plant, which is never mentioned by name in the novel. Javier recounts the activity in the area: "A la caída de la tarde se organizaban mítines en los cuales los socialistas y los anarquistas se insultaban recíprocamente. Al término de los mítines, los oradores y sus oyentes se congregaban ante la iglesia y apostrofaba al cura, acusándole de usurero corruptor de menores y soplón" (406).[188] Although this statement suggests a lack of ideological cohesion among the groups involved, he does add that "cómo lograron aquellas comunidades ancestrales y

[188] "At dusk, there were meetings in which the socialists and anarchists mutually insulted each other. When the meetings were over, the orators and their audiences would congregate outside the church and aunt the priest, accusing him of being a loan-shark, a corruptor of minors and an informer" (Savolta, *The Truth* 338-339).

aisladas sincronizar la puesta en marcha del conflicto es un misterio" (407).[189] This initial cohesion was working, and Javier claims it serves to "entorpecer mis planes" as roads were blocked and travel became more difficult (407).[190] Upon finally arriving in Barcelona, he sees that "lo que en el campo era liberación y alegría, en la ciudad era violencia y miedo,"[191] which was amplified by the blackout in the city "donde toda alevosía estaba encubierta y todo rencor podía saldarse impunemente" (412).[192] As Javier re-enters the city, his narration of the events becomes increasingly negative and culminates with the statement that the people who are participating in the events of the strikes, the ransacking of stores for foodstuffs, and those preaching equality were "la chusma" (413).[193] The entire account of this strike is seen through the eyes of a man who, by the end of the novel, belongs to the petite bourgeoisie, and the sympathy he had felt for the anarchists, trade union workers, and their supporters seems to have dissipated completely.

In the end, this and other strikes of the epoch did not achieve the success that the anarcho-syndicalist groups anticipated. In relation to *La verdad sobre el caso Savolta*, Oswald tells us:

> People want to fight against exploitation, but it doesn't work. These individuals, united by class, strive to work together to change their situation. Nevertheless, they encounter several difficulties in their attempted resistance. First, they never achieve true solidarity because they have different ideas about what they want and how to achieve it. Some want

[189] "How those ancestral, isolated communities managed to synchronize their activities at the beginnings of the conflict is a mystery" (Mendoza, *The Truth* 339).
[190] "Frustrated my plans" (Mendoza, *The Truth* 339).
[191] "What in the country had been liberation and joy became violence and fear in the city" (Mendoza, *The Truth* 344).
[192] "Where treachery was concealed and where all grudges could be settled without fear of punishment" (Mendoza, *The Truth* 344).
[193] "The scum of the earth" (Mendoza, *The Truth* 344).

> a revolution to dynamite the system, while others simply seek greater compensation and less exploitation within the existing capitalist order. Some individuals—like Pajarito de Soto, believe that by exposing the truth of the plight of the working class, the situation would then remedy itself. (47-48)

Historical responses to the strike illustrate the further challenges and violence brought about by the attempted movement. Following the strike at La Canadenca, an organization of employers from Barcelona called the *Federación Patronal* retaliated with systematic lockouts, "'scab' labor" and *pistoleros* (Harrison 154). Captain General Joaquín Miláns also imprisoned thousands of trade unionists who had possibly been involved. One positive result of this strike was Minister of Justice Romanones' April 1919 declaration of an eight-hour workday which would take effect in October 1919 (Kaplan 66). However, Prime Minister Dato appointed General Severiano Martínez Anido as Governor of Barcelona in 1920, and he subsequently arrested and deported trade unionists, outlawed the CNT, and enacted the *ley de fugas* ("fleeing law") which allowed the military and police to shoot anyone who tried to escape (67). As a result of Martínez Anido's support for the industrialists and his opposition to the working class, 200,000 textile industry workers were unemployed, another 50,000 laborers were only working part-time, and 50 percent of the labor force in the Catalan metallurgic industry was laid off (68).

Between the 1919 strike at La Canadenca through 1923, there was a near "permanent state of working-class militancy" led by the CNT anarchist group (Harrison 154). During that time, the Lliga Regionalista and Francesc Cambó struggled to keep their supporters at ease and were unable to meet many of the wishes of the Catalan industrial bourgeois (154). Following a general transport strike that occurred from May to June 1923 and was led by the CNT, Miguel Primo de Rivera staged a coup in Barcelona on September 23, 1923. He had served as the

Captain General of Catalunya and enjoyed strong support from the FTN – which included many Catalan business owners – prior to his dictatorship. Once in power, he went back on his promises, which led to disappointment from the FTN as well as the dissolution of the Mancomunitat (Kaplan 69).[194] Primo de Rivera makes his appearance in just one of the works we consider – Mendoza's *La ciudad de los prodigios*. Onofre Bouvila meets Primo de Rivera and speaks loudly about what he believes the working class wants and needs at that time:

> 'Lo que quieren es convertirse en burgueses. ¿Y eso qué tiene de malo? Los burgueses siempre han sido nuestros mejores clientes…' Hubo un murmullo de desaprobación. La suerte de la clase obrera le traía sin cuidado, pero no le gustaba que le contradijesen: decidió presentar batalla aunque sabía que la decisión estaba tomada irremisiblemente de antemano. 'Mirad,' dijo, 'vosotros pensáis que el obrero es un tigre sediento de sangre, agazapado en espera del momento de saltaros al cuello; una bestia a la que hay que mantener a distancia por todos los medios. Yo os digo, en cambio, que la realidad no es así: en el fondo son personas como nosotros. Si tuvieran un poco de dinero correrían a comprarse lo que ellos mismos fabrican, la producción aumentaría en espiral tremendamente.' (*La ciudad* 427-428)[195]

As Onofre scans the room after giving his speech, he sees the black military boots that Primo de Rivera is wearing, and at that moment, the protagonist realizes that war will be on the horizon.

[194] The Mancomunitat was created in 1914 primarily by members of the Lliga Regionalista. The organization of Catalan nationalists supported political autonomy. It operated throughout Catalunya, with representatives in the four main city councils (Kaplan 215).

[195] 'What they want is to become bourgeois. And what is wrong with that? The bourgeoisie have always been our best customers…' There was a disapproving rumble. Onofre did not care what happened to the working class, but he did not like being contradicted: he decided to make a stand, even though he knew that the decision had already been made. 'Look,' he said, 'you all think the worker is a tiger crouching to spring at your throats, a beast to be kept at bay by whatever means. But this is not so: the worker is a human being like us. Give him a little money, and he'll run to buy what he himself produces, and production will spiral upward at a tremendous rate.' (Mendoza, *The City* 335)

It is worth briefly noting that the strikes and labor unrest occurring in Barcelona over these years were not a situation unique to Spain. Similar movements were happening in Belgium, Russia, and Sweden, among others. In Belgium, for example, male laborers were finally given the right to vote after a series of strikes in 1893, 1903, and 1913 (Kaplan 61). The 1917 Russian Revolution was a highly significant event for its large local impact and its more global influences. In fact, the revolutionary groups and movements occurring in Russia created a sense of unease and nervousness in the upper classes in Spain as they feared similar uprisings at home (Payne, *Politics* 138).

As was the case for the discussions of Spain's involvement in the wars analyzed in Chapter 3, Madrid's central government often clashed with Barcelona's local one in the handling of the strikes and general unrest. At the same time, feelings of contempt toward Madrid also spurred the revolutionary ideas within the anarcho-syndicalist groups. The prologue to the script of *La ciutat cremada* opens with a declaration of support for Catalunya and rejection of Madrid: "al costat dels quadres de costums o de reproducció de moments històrics, tota la pel·lícula es una lliçó de política catalana, barcelonina. en aquest sentit, és clar que tots el seus protagonistes tenen un enemic comú: els governs madrilenys, artificis escleròtics incapaços de comprendre i d'atendre els catalans en llur puixant vitalitat conflictiva" (6-7).[196] Thus, the filmmakers make it quite clear from the beginning that they also share this contempt for the politics of the central government that is out of touch with or lacks concern for the everyday life of Catalan citizens.

Connections

[196] "Alongside vignettes of everyday life and historical representations, the entire film is a lesson in Catalan, Barcelonan, politics. In this sense, it is clear that all of the protagonists have a common enemy: the Madrid government, hardened deceiver, incapable of understanding or assisting the Catalans in their forceful and conflictive vitality" (my translation).

While the situations certainly differed in a number of ways, trade unions and anarcho-syndicalist groups reappeared in the post-Franco period after a nearly forty-year absence. During Franco's dictatorship, trade unions were outlawed and individuals with opposing political ideologies, such as anarchy, were persecuted. During the time period in which the filmmakers and authors were producing these artistic representations of the first quarter of the twentieth century, there was also a wave of union activity and resurgence of demonstrations in the streets. Thus, the works we have analyzed urge us to consider the history of groups such as the CNT, among others, through a lens of post-Franco Spain. Both of Mendoza's novels "resultan profundamente aperturistas ideológicamente puesto que ambos textos proponen al lector el análisis, entre otras cosas, del movimiento anarquista como partícipe, a su manera, de la construcción de la Barcelona moderna y por extensión de la España posfranquista" (Saval 34).[197] Similarly, the vivid cinematic portrayal of the actions and subsequent persecution of members of anarcho-syndicalist groups invites the viewer to consider the place of these groups within contemporary society in addition to the period between 1888 and 1923. The works open a conversation about the role of trade unions and worker's organizations in a newly formed democracy.

In the 1970s, Barcelona's population increased, which in turn created human labor for industrial expansion (Hughes 13). In the thirteen years between 1964 and 1977, more than 500 industrial companies settled in the growing peripheries of Barcelona, including automobile, metallurgic, chemical, and synthetic fiber plants. Naturally, these were not high-paying jobs and therefore the number of industrial slums to house the workers also grew (13). At the same time,

[197] "Are profoundly ideologically liberal given that both texts put forth to the reader the analysis, among other things, of the anarchist movement as a participant, in its own way, in the construction of modern Barcelona and by extension of post-Franco Spain" (my translation).

there was a large number of layoffs and unemployment was high. Between 1977 and 1979, there were various demonstrations in Barcelona at the Moritz brewery, Ossa automobile factory, Philips light bulb factory, SEAT automobile factory, and more. Both the CCOO and UGT were well-represented at the strikes. At the February 22, 1978 SEAT strike, workers protested against regulation and individuals held signs that read "que paguen los capitalistas"[198] and "contra regulación, nacionalización."[199] At the same time, membership was increasing within the trade unions that participated in the strikes. In 1978, the UGT and CCOO membership had increased by 60 percent in just one year, with a combined total of 1.6 million members (Jordana 216).

As the elections approached for syndical factory representatives, the journalist Jaime Aznar wrote an article titled "Un largo camino" ("A Long Journey") on January 15, 1978 on both the need to vote and also the issues faced by the CCOO with regards to the current national government. He states that although these elections mean progress toward democracy for all, including factory workers, they have not been able to get rid of all that "olía a dictadura de Franco"[200] because:

> aquí nos quedan – atadas y bien atadas – leyes laborales redactadas por los ministros Girón, Solís y Licinio de la Fuente; aquí nos estamos quedando sin el patrimonio sindical – muchos millones – levantado con las cuotas obligatorias al Vertical; aquí tenemos en la calle (y en las 'listas negras') a centenares de hombres y mujeres echados de sus puestos de trabajo por defender a sus compañeros; aquí tenemos ministros que hasta hace poco

[198] "Make the capitalists pay" (my translation).
[199] "Against regulation, nationalization" (my translation). The slogans were taken from an image of these signs on display at the exhibit in Barcelona from May 16 to September 15, 2019, titled "La democràcia al carrer: Fotografia política del col·lectiu, 1977-1980." https://elbornculturaimemoria.barcelona.cat/activitat/la-democracia-al-carrer/.
[200] "Reeked of Franco's dictatorship" (my translation).

> levantaban el brazo del saludo fascista que ahora nos vienen con denuncias contra Comisiones Obreras. (1)[201]

Thus, although the end of Franco's dictatorship certainly marked the beginning of a new day, there was still work to be done by and for the syndicalist groups. Individuals were still being persecuted and fired and/or imprisoned for their involvement with strikes against factories. Roughly three weeks later, on February 5, 1978, the same journalist compares the SEAT factory operations to Franco's government: "dentro de SEAT se intentó imponer por todos los medios la 'paz de Franco': sometidos sus trabajadores a un aberrante reglamento interior, al máximo de los ritmos y tiempos para mayor explotación, las oleadas de despedidos (por centenares)… cuando eso no fue suficiente, el recurso habitual: la represión" (Aznar, "La fiebre" 1).[202] The repression experienced so evidently under Franco's dictatorship remained in place within factories who punished their laborers. Another 1978 newspaper featured stories on worker repression, women's rights, and freedom more generally, as can be seen in Figure 4. The images recall scenes from the films previously discussed, and the motivations for the protests are certainly evidence that history can repeat itself, albeit in somewhat different circumstances.

[201] "Here we still have – very limiting – labor laws written by Ministers Girón, Solís, and Licinio de la Fuente; here we are still without official patrimony – many millions – raised up by the obligatory Vertical syndicate dues; here, in the streets, we have hundreds of men and women fired from their jobs for defending their colleagues; here we have ministers that until recently raised their arm in the fascist salute and now come to us with complaints against Comisiones Obreras" (my translation).

[202] Translation "At SEAT, they tried to impose in any way possible 'Franco's peace': subjecting their workers to an abnormal interior regulations, at the fastest rhythm and longest hours possible for the greatest exploitation, waves of layoffs (by the hundreds) … when this was not enough, the habitual means: repression" (my translation).

Lluita Obrera, número 4, 5 de març de 1978. Arxiu Històric de la Ciutat de Barcelona
Lluita Obrera, número 4, 5 de marzo de 1978. Archivo Histórico de la Ciudad de Barcelona
Lluita Obrera, *issue 4, 5 March 1978. Historical Archive of the City of Barcelona*

Figure 4. Newspaper from March 5, 1978, Lliuta Obrera[203]

Furthermore, the prologue to the script of *Victòria!* confirms that although "la crisi semblava resolta," in reality, "el sistema polític no era capaç de fer front als molts reptes que li plantejava la conflictiva societat espanyola de l'època" (Termes 9).[204] While this quotation refers to the period between 1914 and 1923, it is equally true of the time period during which the film was written and produced. In fact, on January 13, 1978, the Civil Guard responded to a SEAT worker's protest with tear gas to control the more than 2,000 strikers who marched down the street (Valls et al. 21). Demonstrations were occurring with such frequency in Barcelona during

[203] This image came from an exhibit from May 16 to September 15, 2019 in Barcelona titled "La democràcia al carrer: Fotografia política del col·lectiu, 1977-1980." https://elbornculturaimemoria.barcelona.cat/activitat/la-democracia-al-carrer/.
[204] Furthermore, the prologue to the script of *Victòria!* confirms that although "the crisis seemed to be resolved," in reality, "the political system was incapable of confronting the many challenges presented by the conflictive Spanish society of the time" (my translation).

the years of the transition that "no hay día sin manifestación"[205] came to be a popular slogan, and reporters would often say "me voy a ver lo que pasa"[206] because they anticipated that something would indeed happen (Torrents 12). The syndicalists were also very much aware of their antecedents from the first quarter of the century, and they even paid tribute by laying a ring of flowers around the place on Calle Cadena where 56 years prior the famous anarcho-syndicalist *cenetista* Noi del Sucre had been assassinated (12). Although many of the trade unions and worker's organizations changed greatly from 1923 to 1975, they were yet again very active, especially in Barcelona.

If in the beginnings of democracy the CCOO and UGT organizations operated independently, their ideas and aims converged by the late 1980s. From their reappearance in 1978 until 1986, the two groups disagreed on responses to Spain's unemployment crisis, with the CCOO proposing direct action through strikes and the UGT in favor of compromise and negotiation. In the 1978 syndical elections, the CCOO was victorious (Burgess 4-5). To demonstrate its role within the labor movement, the UGT signed five different pacts between 1979 and 1984, while the CCOO preferred not to and signed only two in the end (7). Some of the desired protections within the pacts were prohibiting the termination of workers' contracts when they were laid off due to industrial restructuring and using dismissal costs to reduce layoffs (7-8). By the December 1988 General Strike, the UGT and CCOO joined to organize a strike against the PSOE's labor policies. One of the primary policies under scrutiny was the Plan de Empleo Juvenil (PEJ; "Youth Employment Plan"), which would fix wages to allow for companies to hire younger workers. The two organizations perceived this as a threat to the

[205] "Not a day goes by without a protest" (my translation).
[206] "I'm going to go see what happens" (my translation).

employment of older workers and they called for a nonviolent strike, which ended up having huge success (13-14).

At the same time, the time of writing/production and the time frame represented connect the government systems and leaders of both eras. Both leaders, Alfonso XIII and Franco, were in decline in their final years, creating an air of uncertainty and great social unrest (Saval 11). Regardless of the decline in power and legitimacy, the societal repression under the two governments continued or indeed increased. That is, "se producía así (tanto en 1917-19 como en 1974-75) un vacío de poder político, vacío en el sentido de que el gobierno deja de ofrecer soluciones políticas y se limita a ejercer la pura y dura represión policial" (Buckley 117).[207] However, the concern was not only with the end of the current governments under Alfonso XIII and Franco, but also what the period of transition and future government would look like. This is precisely what seems to drive the cultural response of the novelists and filmmakers keen on representing a time period that recalled similar uncertainty and turmoil. As Oswald writes of *La ciudad de los prodigios*, "in terms of urban policy and social justice, the novel aligns the post-Franco democracy with such ineffective governments as Alfonso XIII's monarchy and the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera" (57). The implication for the future government in the post-Franco era is that the economic development, along with the geographic development, will continue to be unbalanced even if it promises to make socioeconomic reforms. In a time of future political instability, "Spain—and Barcelona in particular—anticipated political transformation that would have far reaching social, economic, geographical and cultural effects" (Oswald 45). Likewise, a series of concerns plagued the future of Barcelonan politics. Although there were

[207] "As much in 1917-19 as in 1974-75, a vacant political power emerged, vacant in the sense that the government stopped offering political solutions and limited itself to practicing pure and brutal political repression" (my translation).

particular international and political events that shaped the first twenty-some years of the century, many general economic and political concerns remained at the fore fifty-five years later.

Conclusion

Throughout the past four chapters, representations of the relationship between the working class and mega-events, industrialization, war, and anarcho-syndicalism have been analyzed with a focus on the period of 1888-1923 and its connections to the Transition and beyond (1975-1992). What is now clear is that the two novels and three films – *La verdad sobre el caso Savolta*, *La ciutat cremada*, *Victòria! La gran aventura d'un poble*, *La ciudad de los prodigios*, and *La teranyina* – all suggest an increased desire to look toward the past as a means for commenting on or understanding their contemporary moment and the future. Even though some critics, as I have mentioned in the Introduction, reference 1982, or even 1981, as the end date for the Transition, the newly democratic system was far from stable at that moment. While some areas of the Iberian Peninsula may have felt as though the Transition was complete, this process did not become fully realized in Barcelona until the conclusion of the 1992 Olympic Games. This feeling of uncertainty has been expressed through works written in the 1970s and 1980s in Spain during which time "predomina la ficción, la fabulación sobre el dato histórico; el pasado sirve como metáfora del presente al proyectarse sobre éste y por último, la utilización del pasado como contexto para la creación literaria" (Saval 39).[208] Given the in-depth analysis in Chapters 1 to 4 of the major underlying themes in the works that I have analyzed, I think it is worthwhile to look at each of the films and novels as an individual cultural representation. I begin this analysis with Eduardo Mendoza's two novels, proceed with Ribas' two films, and finally conclude with Verdaguer's film.

[208] "Fiction and fabulation about historical fact predominates; the past serves as a metaphor for the present when the past is projected on the present and lastly, utilizing the past as context for literary creation" (my translation).

La verdad sobre el caso Savolta

Mendoza's first novel of the Transition was published the same year as that of Franco's death. The company under which it was published, Seix Barral, was founded in 1911, significantly, in Barcelona. Seix Barral was also known for publishing many novels of the so-called Latin American "Boom," including *La casa verde* (1966) by Mario Vargas Llosa, which almost certainly influenced the style in which *La verdad sobre el caso Savolta* was written. When discussing the publication details of the novel, I would be remiss not to mention the language of composition. As I pointed out in the Introduction, Castilian is Mendoza's preferred literary language, but this in no way detracts from the significance of his work to Catalan culture or history. In fact, "there are a large number of significant Catalan writers in the 20th century who wrote exclusively in Castilian, and they are no less important when endeavouring to understand the entrenched and intimate relationships between the two cultures" (Dowling 4). Regardless of which language Mendoza used to write his novels, they mark important milestones in Spain's literary history for both the stylistic innovation and the historical exercise.

Javier Miranda, the protagonist of *La verdad sobre el caso Savolta*, is perhaps the character most representative of the time frame, 1917-1919, for his interactions with other characters in all social classes. He works for Cortabanyes in a law office, marries the cabaret dancer María Corral, is contracted by Lepprince who owns the Savolta Factory and finagles his way into the upper class through marrying María Rosa Savolta, becomes friends with the anarchist and working-class sympathizer Domingo Pajarito de Soto, and frequently communicates with police Inspector Vázquez. Thus, through Javier's personal and professional activities, we come to know characters who fall in different ranks within the social spectrum. He weaves his way fairly seamlessly through his web of vastly different friends and colleagues. It is

clear that he sympathizes with Pajarito de Soto, but he seems to view anarchy with more curiosity than any real interest in becoming involved. Javier is reticent about using a gun and completing tasks that he assumes are part of shady business practices, but he does not choose to walk away from Lepprince either. The lure of the upper-class social world is enough to keep him content with being aloof and unknowing of what is really happening around him. Despite any empathy he may feel for the working class, he turns a blind eye and instead becomes a part of the system of oppression by helping Lepprince, who in turn is hiring hitmen or *pistoleros* to silence any dissident factory workers.

Through this novel, Mendoza shows us the complex world of Barcelona at the end of World War I and beyond, and where the characters end up is quite indicative of the socioeconomic and political environment. Inspector Vázquez, Pajarito de Soto, and Lepprince all suffer suspicious deaths, which were likely murders, although the narrator never confirms this. Javier and María Corral – who scarcely escapes death herself – flee to New York to start a new life far from Barcelona. Ironically, though, the novel ends just before the stock market crash of 1929 in New York and thus signals an equally troublesome road ahead for Javier and María Corral in their new city. Javier starts in the lower class, looking for work within the promising city of Barcelona, and in the end, he climbs the social and economic ladder at the expense of those in the working class. Nevertheless, he is unable to find peace, happiness, or prosperity when he reaches the top, which ultimately leads to his decision to leave the city. While the working class undoubtedly lives and works under harsher conditions, faces more violence, and as a result, becomes more involved in anarcho-syndicalist movements, the bourgeoisie faces many challenges during the industrialization and post-war period. Mendoza's novel, therefore, suggests

that no social class was free of conflict in this period. As we will see shortly, Javier's trajectory also bares a strong resemblance with that of Onofre Bouvila in Mendoza's 1986 novel.

The structure in which Mendoza wrote his 1975 novel, as I have mentioned previously, is complex and requires an active reader who must piece together the narrative puzzle. As Mario Santana explains, there are two narrative modes within the novel. On the one hand, the crime novel is crafted through "el relato de huelgas, represalias y atentados en que se ven involucrados los líderes obreros y los directores de la fábrica Savolta" in order to examine the social conditions of Barcelona from 1917 to 1919 (25).[209] On the other hand, "la evocación de Miranda ofrece, tras un prisma picaresco, una visión personal, y en ocasiones marcadamente ingenua, de sus experiencias juveniles en Barcelona," which explains the chosen underlying thread of the novel, Javier Miranda's trial (25).[210] Within these broader narrative modes, there are multiple voices including: newspaper clippings often written by Pajarito de Soto, the transcription of Javier's trial in New York, various documents with proof of the characters' activities, Javier's own narration from the first person point of view, and a third-person narrator. In addition to narrative changes, there are also temporal leaps, which require the reader to constantly revise their understanding of new information based on what has already been presented in the novel. The experience of reading is complex and creates uncertainty for the reader as they grapple with the novel. In the same way, this challenge can be interpreted as a representation of the difficulties of the Transition to democracy. While there is certainly an element of remembering the "forgotten" past that has not been able to be fully processed through literature or otherwise, there is also "fragmentación discursiva, el *collage* de géneros y modelos [que] señala la dificultad de

[209] "The story of strikes, reprisals, and attacks that involve labor leaders and directors of the Savolta Factory" (my translation).
[210] "Miranda's evocation offers, through a picaresque prism, a personal and sometimes markedly naïve vision of his juvenile experiences in Barcelona" (my translation).

unificar o consensuar los discursos sociales en una única versión 'oficial' (la que vendría legitimada por el narrador)" (26).[211] His novel questions the idea of truth – after all it is one of the words in the title – and suggests the impossibility of finding it. Many details of the internal plot remain unknown to Javier and Inspector Vázquez, just as they do for the reader of the novel itself. At the same time, *La verdad sobre el caso Savolta* embarks on a journey to understand the identity of a city undergoing large-scale changes in the beginning of the twentieth century and in the Transition. The narrative complexity mirrors that of the cosmopolitan city of Barcelona. The pastiche format, questioning the dominant narrative or the existence of truth itself, the use of irony, sarcasm, and humor are all elements of the postmodern novel that was emerging in the years leading up to the Transition and beyond.[212]

La ciudad de los prodigios

In a 1988 interview, Mendoza stated: "yo sigo creyendo que, en estos momentos, lo verdaderamente atractivo para el ser humano no es el sexo, sino el poder. Ni siquiera el dinero. Es algo que siempre me ha parecido misterioso y por eso me interesa saber cómo es realmente. Yo no lo sé, y en las novelas lo que hago es crear un sistema a ver si aquél me convence totalmente, a ver si es así el poder" (Ribas and Vila-San-Juan 56).[213] It would seem that Mendoza carried out his experiment with the character of Onofre Bouvila, who by the end of the novel

[211] "Discursive fragmentation, the collage of genres and models [that] signal the difficulty of unifying or understanding the social discourses in the only 'official' version (that which is legitimized by the narrator)" (my translation).
[212] For a detailed analysis of the postmodern elements of the novel, see: Rodríguez-García, José María. "Gatsby Goes to Barcelona: On the Configuration of the Post-Modern Spanish Novel." *Letras Peninsulares*, vol. 5, 1992-93, pp. 407-424. Tocado Ortiz, Estefanía. "Pastiche, parodia e ironía en *La verdad sobre el caso Savolta* de Eduardo Mendoza." *Hispania*, vol. 100, no. 3, 2017, pp. 379-385.
[213] "I still think that, in these moments, what is truly attractive to humans is not sex but power. Not even money. It is something that has always struck me as mysterious and that's why I am interested in finding out what it is really like. I don't know, and in my novels, what I do is create a system to see if it fully convinces me, to see if that's what power is like" (my translation).

enjoys wealth but realizes that his power within society is still limited. Onofre goes to Barcelona seeking work, and after a brief stint distributing anarchist propaganda, he comes to the realization that what he really wants in life is to be rich. If at first he feels sorry for the laborers working at the Expo site where he hands out fliers, just a short time later he has no reservations about exploiting their ingenuity for his personal financial gain when he begins to sell what he describes as a magical hair growth cream. His undoubtedly shady maneuvers and business deals only increase in size and severity throughout the novel, and as he grows wealthier, the people whom he exploits find themselves in dire financial situations. In fact, money is so important to Onofre that it is:

> El objeto de una actuación que muestra a la pobreza y la bajeza social como sus desencadenantes y al enriquecimiento, el poder y el ascenso social como sus metas, y que se realiza con la oposición de la mayoría de personajes y con el auxilio de la situación socioeconómica de la propia ciudad, de ciertos factores externos y de tan solo dos actores: Braulio y, primordialmente, Castells, su más fiel acompañante. (Valles Calatrava 194)[214]

Thus, it is the socioeconomic situation within Barcelona that allows for his financial growth. For example, real estate is booming as housing development expands in response to the waves of immigration to the city. Therefore, he is able to easily take advantage of real estate speculation and trick unknowing individuals into buying properties that are priced well beyond their worth.

However, at the end of the novel, Onofre is still unhappy. One scene in particular marks his disappointment with his incomplete social status – he has financial but not social capital.

[214] The object of his actions that show poverty and social lowness as triggers and enrichment, power, and social ascent as the goals. These goals are realized through the opposition of the majority of the characters and with the aid of the socioeconomic circumstances of the city itself, of certain external factors, and of only two actors: Braulio and, fundamentally, Castells, his most faithful companion" (my translation).

Onofre is asked to finance a visit from the Tsar, which he agrees to do based on the assumption that paying for the visit would afford him certain privileges during the Tsar's trip, such as joining him at a dinner table. Despite his high hopes, he shows up to a party and sees that he is not, in fact, seated at the table with the Tsar. After all, his social standing – even with his vast amount of money – was not sufficiently high enough to dine with the Tsar. This moment marks a point in his life trajectory in which he begins to show a more bitter outlook toward the entrenched dominating social and political powers, precisely because power is what he is unable to access. In another book about Catalunya, Mendoza describes changing positions of wealth and power in the bourgeoisie during the period of industrialization, which could also be applied to characters such as Onofre and Javier who float between social classes: "Para mantener lo conquistado había que trabajar duro, invertir continuamente y rezar para que el viento no cambiara de dirección" (*¿Qué está pasando?* 45).[215] While the socioeconomic positions of characters like Onofre and Javier in the lower and petty bourgeois are fragile, those of the bourgeoisie and aristocratic upper class are less so.

Similarly, the fluctuation in Onofre's economic and social circumstances allows the reader insight into both the middle and upper classes in Barcelona between the two Expos in 1888 and 1929. What the novel reveals, then, is discontentment and corruption in all levels of society. While Mendoza certainly wrote this novel using an often playful tone and a narrative voice that is not without judgement of the excess of the upper classes of society, he also makes clear that even among the anarchists, for example, disagreements and corruption are rampant. Onofre feels just as exploited by the anarchists as the workers feel by the *capataces*. The narration is clearly sympathetic toward the working-class plight, but much as he did in his 1975

[215] "To maintain what has been conquered, one had to work hard, invest constantly, and pray that wind didn't change direction" (my translation).

novel, Mendoza focuses on a main character who interacts with all social classes, affording a broader view of the Barcelonan society of the time. Writing Javier and Onofre's stories allows for the telling of a possible version of history that accounts for the working-class *and* bourgeois experience of industrial Barcelona. As José Saval states, "Mendoza no deja de llamar la atención sobre un movimiento histórico derrotado como fue el pujante anarcosindicalismo, especialmente en la industrializada Cataluña, cuya historia fue escrita desde el lado de los vencedores" (*La ciudad* 26).[216] Although neither Javier nor Onofre belong to the lower class for long after their arrival in Barcelona, they both continue to interact with workers throughout the novels and, in turn, reveal an alternative historical reading of the time period that allows for the emergence of a nuanced narrative of the anarcho-syndicalist experience.

The structure and literary techniques that Mendoza uses in the novel also contribute to the way in which the historical narrative can be interpreted. After the very experimental *La verdad sobre el caso Savolta*, the author moves closer to a traditional novelistic form while still maintaining complexity, pastiche, and multiple narrative voices. *La ciudad de los prodigios* intercalates third-person historical and fictional narration, highlighting the important historical moments in Barcelona as well as protagonist Onofre's involvement with those events. José Saval states that while the postmodernist literature of the seventies was marked by pastiche, irony, playfulness, and the destruction of truth, in the eighties "se establece como movimiento y se impone definitivamente para convertirse en la forma artística del capitalismo tardío con su mentalidad neoconservadora" (*La ciudad* 33).[217] Saval later uses the term neomodernism to

[216] "Mendoza does not cease to call attention to a defeated historical movement, like the booming anarcho-syndicalism, especially in industrialized Catalunya, whose history was written from the point of view of the victors" (my translation).
[217] "Establishes itself as a movement and imposes itself definitively to become the artistic style of late capitalism with its neoconservative mentality" (my translation).

describe Mendoza's new kind of postmodernism that entails "una clara intención de recuperación del pasado" (35).[218] Thus, he is both undergoing a project of historical memory at the same time that the text itself recognizes the limits of truth and collective identity of a city. Regardless of the term we use to describe the author's work, and this novel in particular, his dedication to experimental form *and* exploration of a past that resists easy interpretation remains clear.

La ciutat cremada

Much like those in Mendoza's novels, the protagonist Josep undergoes a profound transition from the beginning to the end of the film. *La ciutat cremada*'s Josep is first introduced on a ship full of soldiers returning from the Spanish-American War in 1889. He is a first-class soldier who will soon be searching for work now that the war is over. With the money he is awarded for smuggling Frederic and Senyor Palau's money into Spain, he buys himself a nice suit and transforms his appearance into that of a bourgeois gentleman. However, this appearance is a façade, one that he uses to attract, seduce, and marry Senyor Palau's daughter, Remei. He then renews his solidarity with the proletariat, working at a factory in Barcelona. Nevertheless, there is a constant tension between the bourgeois way of life that the Palau family enjoys versus Josep's pride and political views. His association with the anarcho-syndicalist organizations and his familial ties pull him in two different directions. In the end, he appears to choose the bourgeois life and abandons his comrades who are being fired at during the Tragic Week. Through this film, Ribas shows the ways in which two starkly different social classes experienced the same time period. Josep is the mediator that allows a view into two worlds that

[218] "A clear intention of recuperating the past" (my translation).

suffer different impacts of the Spanish-American War, Rif War, and overall industrialization of Barcelona.

While there is some degree of sympathy shown for both sides, the proletariat are clearly portrayed with the support of the filmmakers. The emphasis lies on their suffering, working conditions, and resistance efforts at the same time that the bourgeoisie show hypocrisy and privilege. Although Josep Maria Caparrós Lera states that the film is "massa centrada en el conflicte interpersonal dels protagonistes, l'aspecte passional es menja una mica la crònica històrica" (418),[219] I disagree with this assertion. The relationships between and among social classes are important, for it is Josep's character that shows how someone in the lower class navigates his way through a society dominated by the bourgeoisie.

Unlike Mendoza's two novels, Ribas' *La ciutat cremada* follows a purely chronological order and focuses on a faithful – though not altogether objective – reconstruction of the historical period. While the film starts in 1898 with the return of the soldiers from the Spanish-American War, there are nods to the history of Barcelona in the opening credits. I have previously mentioned the significance of showing Montjuïc and the statue of Christopher Columbus, but the camera also briefly scans the statue of Count Ramon Berenguer III and "La dama del paraguas" ("Lady with Umbrella"), both of which were created for the 1888 Expo. In this way, the film dialogues with Barcelona's recent and more distant past and connects imperialism, colonial ventures, and the Expo with the events that *La ciutat cremada* depicts. Beginning with monuments also foreshadows the quite realistic form that the film adopts. Furthermore, many of the actors of the film were new to the screen, and therefore would not have been recognizable as stars. The relative anonymity of the actors in some ways serves to focus the film on the plot and

[219] "Too focused on the interpersonal conflict between the protagonists, the passionate parts eat up a bit of the historical chronicle" (my translation).

stylistic techniques rather than on the fame of the cast. The director leans heavily on editing as a technique to show the contrast between members of different socioeconomic status underscoring the disparity in their way of life. Ribas uses quick cuts to either connect two causal events or to show hypocrisy among the bourgeoisie in others. Compared to Mendoza's novels, the linear narrative draws the viewer to focus on the content of the historical film rather than its form. As we have seen and will discuss in relation to *Victòria!*, Ribas had a clear political commitment to the past and future of Catalunya, and the cinematic style serves that motive.

Rosenstone summarizes the premise of film in the following way: "The visual media are a legitimate way of doing history – of representing, interpreting, thinking about, and making meaning from the traces of the past" (3). This is certainly true of Ribas' (and Verdaguer's) films produced in the fifteen years following Franco's death. Just as Mendoza's novels offer alternative approaches to considering the history of late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century Barcelona, Ribas' films closely follow a member of the working class to document possible lived experiences of the period. The year that *La ciutat cremada* is released, 1976, is significant given that it is precisely one year after Franco died and the dictatorship came to an end.

While many films were still produced and released during the dictatorship, censorship "evitó que se realizaran otras y, desde luego, obligó a que muchos realizadores y guionistas adaptaran un lenguaje oblicuo y retorcido, con una simbología elemental, nacida de la necesidad de una expresión críptica y complicada, para aludir con muchos rodeos a lo que no se podía nombrar" (Lara 126-127).[220] *La ciutat cremada* surely would not have been allowed due to its themes of anarchism, Catalan nationalism, and military rebellion. Furthermore, the use of the

[220] "Prevented some from being produced, and, of course, forced many filmmakers and screenwriters to adapt an oblique and distorted vocabulary, with elementary symbolism born out of the necessity for a cryptic and complicated expression to allude to what could not been addressed explicitly" (my translation).

Catalan language in film and novels was prohibited under Franco (Higginbotham 8). Although there was an initial stern prohibition of Catalan language, in the latter half of the dictatorship, it was regarded more as an unspoken rule than actual law. Nevertheless, a film with antimonarchic and pro-Catalan perspectives would have been censored no matter the language used.

For film within the Transition, "la libertad, limitada y pequeña, si se quiere, será el primero logro de la época, como un reflejo de que la gente de este país quería equipararse a la de otros lugares civilizados" (Lara 128).[221] In addition to the political elements I have just mentioned, the film also features a rather risqué scene, especially after years of the prohibition of nudity in cinema. In the New Year's Eve scene described in Chapter 2, there are many naked women who fill a room and dance around while men wearing blindfolds try to catch them. This is a blatant display of sexual freedom that would not have been permitted on screen prior to the Transition, and it marks an important change in post-Franco cinema. Although *La ciutat cremada* did ultimately escape censorship, it was initially blocked when filming began on March 10, 1975, during which time Spain was still ruled by Franco. In an interview regarding the censorship surrounding the film, Ribas stated "dicen… que es una película políticamente muy densa y sugiere que se 'descargue', pero yo me niego en redondo a introducir cortes y ellos lo saben" ("La película quemada" 52).[222] As we will see shortly, Ribas' political engagement with his film was quite evident.

By its release in 1976, the film industry was changing rapidly, and *La ciutat cremada* marked a critical moment in the debut of post-Franco Spanish cinema. Nevertheless, for Ribas, the new style of film he wanted to see was one that demonstrated political commitment: "Espero

[221] "Freedom, albeit limited and small, was the first achievement of the era, as a reflection of how the people in this country wanted to be on the same level as other civilized places" (my translation).
[222] "They say… that it is a very politically dense film and suggest that I 'unload' it, but I flatly refuse to make cuts and they know it" (my translation).

que *La ciutat cremada* sigui l'inici d'un nou cinema català que estigui per la llibertat, l'amnistia sense exclusions i l'Estatut d'Autonomia" (Caparrós Lera 418).[223] In particular, Ribas believed that *La ciutat cremada* had an important role within Catalan cinema: "Va ser el desvetllament de la cinematografia catalana abans de la restauració de la Generalitat sota el Govern d'Adolfo Suárez" (Caparrós Lera 418).[224] One way that he accomplished the strong connection between politics and cinema was by casting local Catalan politicians, many of whom had spent time in prison under the dictatorship, in the film, including Jordi Solé Tura, Alfonso Carlos Comín and Jordi Borja.[225] Other actors involved in the film volunteered their acting services free of charge, demonstrating the commitment to a renewed Catalan cinema (Besas 92). Ribas' political commitment is so apparent in the film that it nearly borders on propaganda for Catalan autonomy at several moments.

The release of the film made the news not just in Spain but around the world both before and after it won the Special Grand Prix of the Jury award at the Montreal International Film Festival in 1977. It was featured on the front page of New York-based *Variety* newspaper on October 27, 1976, which stated that the film "may point to a resurgence of Catalan cinema" (Besas 1). In Montreal, Canada, *La Presse* focused on the Catalan separatist ideologies represented within the film, and journalist Serge Dussault published an interview with Antoni Ribas in which the latter comments that "longtemps la Catalone a été indépendante de l'Espagne et elle a mème eu son parlement bien avant Angleterre" (n.p.).[226] It was also presented at the

[223] "I hope that *La ciutat cremada* follows the initiative of a new Catalan cinema that is for freedom, amnesty without exceptions and a State of Autonomy" (my translation).
[224] "It will be the unveiling of Catalan cinematography before the restoration of the Generalitat under Adolfo Suárez's government" (my translation).
[225] Jordi Solé Tura, Alfonso Carlos Comín, and Jordi Borja Sebastià were members of the Partit Socialista Unificat de Catalunya (Unified Socialist Party of Spain).
[226] "Catalunya was independent from Spain for a long time, and it even had its own parliament well before England" (my translation).

International Film Festival in Rotterdam where it was well-received as one of the best films of the event ("Éxito de *La ciutat cremada*" 30).

At the same time, protests and scandals over the screenings of the film at home in Spain were frequently covered in the paper. When the film was first presented in Palma de Mallorca, the theater owners showed the Castilian version, stating to the public that the only copy they had in their possession was Castilian. However, Antoni Ribas showed up at the premiere in Mallorca with the Catalan copy in hand. Theater-goers protested and demanded to see the original Catalan version, despite police threatening to remove them. Finally, Ribas and the theater-goers were able to convince the owner to play the Catalan version that 100 percent of the audience had agreed to watch. In the end, it was reported that in Mallorca "va el doble de gente a la catalana que a la castellana" ("La ciutat cremada: 3 noticias" 13).[227] In Lérida, Catalunya, the scene that features a dialogue between King Alfonso XIII and Francesc Cambó, where the latter speaks in favor of Catalan autonomy, was received with a standing ovation ("*La ciutat cremada* de Antoni Ribas" 17).

The Generalitat began to promote the learning and use of the Catalan language in 1980s, particularly among younger groups, and by 1991, the census reflected the increasing importance of the language (Barrera González 118). Andrés Barrera González suggests that language is a major element in the construction of identities, and this is particularly true in Catalunya where language can, in fact, become a political weapon (118-120). What is clear through the reports of the screenings in Spain is that viewers respected and preferred the use of Catalan language in Ribas' film even prior to the 1980s.

[227] "Twice as many people go to see the Catalan movie than the Castilian one" (my translation).

In addition to commentary on the language, historical details, and overall success of the film, journalists and film critics applauded *La ciutat cremada* for the way it connected to the contemporary context. One journalist of *Triunfo* stated that it "es una reconstrucción histórica minuciosa, aunque – en absoluto – decadente. Por varias causas pero, sobre todo, porque llamativamente alude a situaciones actuales" (Basualdo 48). Another reporter from *La Mañana*, based in Lérida, suggests that this film offers us the chance to think about what Catalan history has been, is, and will be, because "la realidad histórico-política de entonces, conjugada con la naturalidad de vida de aquella época se entroncan perfectamente con los momentos actuales… Cambiando de fechas muchas de las escenas de la película tienen perfecta validez hoy" (Rosell Pujol 5).[228] Thus, Ribas' film garnered support and praise throughout the Iberian Peninsula, and its contemporary relevance was not overlooked.

In fact, the investment in the film itself is revealing of the support it earned. It had a budget of 40,000,000 pesetas, with over 100 investors contributing to the project. At the box office, it made 44,642,813 pesetas, with a net profit of over four and a half million (Caparrós Lera 418). This is significant given the scarcity of funding typically available for Catalan cinema:

> Efectivament, un dels grans reptes que té plantejats el cinema català és el de la seva forma de finançament. Avui, el cost mitjà d'una pel·lícula se xifra en bastants milions de pessetes i ni l'alt interès dels crèdits bancaris ni la poca confiança dels grans inversors privats fan fàcil les tasques productores. Una conseqüència directa d'aquest fet són els films fabricats amb una sabata i una espardenya i que, per aquesta mateixa raó,

[228] "The sociopolitical reality at the time and the nature of life in that era perfectly connect with current times… Changing the dates, many of the scenes are perfectly valid today" (my translation).

> difícilment poden assolir un nivell de qualitat tecnològica i tècnica equiparable al de les produccions normal d'altres països. (Porter i Moix 4)[229]

It seems that Catalan cinema often fell into a cycle of lack of funding which would lead to inadequate (in the technical sense) films, and therefore, less distribution and support for future cinematic ventures. Today, Ribas' film is featured on the Confederació General del Treball (CGT) YouTube channel, showing the union's platform and support for his work. Furthermore, if the director's support for unions was not clear from his statements regarding the film and its content, it becomes undeniable when we look at his own involvement. At the time of *La ciutat cremada*'s release, Ribas was the president of the *Asociación de Directores Cinematográficos* (ASDREC; "Association of Cinematographic Directors"), a union for film directors. Through his movies, work with the union, and international fame with *La ciutat cremada*, Ribas made efforts to improve the landscape of Catalan cinema and broaden the possibilities for Catalan-language films in particular.

Victòria! La gran aventura d'un poble

Given the overlap in director, screenwriter, and lead actor, it is no surprise that there are strong similarities between *Victòria! La gran aventura d'un poble* and *La ciutat cremada*, released just seven years apart. In the same way that protagonist Josep vacillates between two lifestyles and ultimately choses the bourgeoisie, Jaume Canals – begrudgingly so – ends up accepting help from and living in a house with a man whom he despises for having abandoned

[229] "In effect, one of the greatest challenges of Catalan cinema is its financing. Currently, the average cost of a film is several million pesetas and neither the high interest of the bank credits nor the timid confidence of the biggest private investors are able to facilitate the production work. A direct consequence of this fact is that films are made with such a low budget that it would be difficult to achieve a level of technological and technical quality comparable to the current productions in other countries" (my translation).

the working-class cause for the bourgeois lifestyle. Canals is a dedicated member of an anarcho-syndicalist organization, and from the very beginning of the film we see his efforts to smuggle arms to be used for protest. He and his comrades meet to organize strikes, attempt to win over new followers, including the military, and carry out a plan to break into Montjuïc castle to release prisoners who were being held for their anarcho-syndicalist associations. While inside Montjuïc, divisions within his own organization begin to manifest themselves at the same time that the military officers who had been helping Canals suddenly question which side they are on. It turns out that Arlandis, a fellow anarcho-syndicalist, decides to abandon the principals of anarchy and try to take down the current government only to proclaim himself a leader and offer Canals the second-in-command position if he abandons his mission.

When Canals stays true to his beliefs and refuses the offer, he knows the current government will come looking for him, as there were many local politicians and army officers present as witnesses. He shows up at the wedding between his ex-wife and his former comrade, Vinyes, at which point Vinyes steps up to protect him. Canals is left with two options – decline the protection and immediately be arrested and executed or accept the protection from a man he despises for his apparent lack of ideals. He opts for the latter, and although it would seem that he ends up in the same position as Josep, there is an important distinction. Canals makes the decision based on a last resort, an alternative to execution, whereas Josep stops defending and protecting his comrades who are being shot at below him in order to set down his rifle and commit adultery with his bourgeoisie sister-in-law. Let us not forget the time difference in the two films as well. *La ciutat* is set in the decade between 1899 and 1909, whereas *Victòria!* takes place during World War I.

In the same way that Ribas used a straightforward approach to historical film in *La ciutat cremada*, the 1983 film also follows a chronological timeline while it references the past through monuments and dialogue among the characters. One such example is the use of the real Liceu Opera Theater when shooting the film. A "true historical" reconstruction was so important to the director that when the theater initially rejected Ribas' request to film a scene there, he turned to Jordi Pujol, President of the Generalitat, and Narcís Serra, Mayor of Barcelona, who interceded on his behalf. At the request of such politicians, of course, the request was granted (Ribas, *Victòria!* 48-49). The scene that significantly runs parallel to that of the Liceu is when the character Canals is taking action to enter and blow up Montjuïc. That Canals is working on plans for a bombing at the same time that the bourgeois are watching an opera in the Liceu forges the connection to the history of the theater when in 1893 an anarchist bomb was thrown and killed 20 people. This kind of parallel scene as well as juxtaposed scenes that show the working class, the bourgeois, and the military highlight the contrast between the actions and ideologies of each group. In order to film the previously mentioned scene, yet another government-run organization was involved, namely the fire department in Barcelona. Firemen scaled the mountain of Montjuïc to take measurements and help the filmmakers plan the scene (51). Clearly, the Barcelonan and larger Catalan communities were invested in the film both financially but also culturally. Furthermore, Ribas spent an entire year working on the casting of each of the 800 actors that appear in the film, sometimes even seeing as many as 200 auditions for one role. In addition to acting skills, he wanted to cast actors who looked similar in appearance to the historical figures represented, such as Alfonso XIII (33-34). He chose to film the most important

scenes using a Super 8, which he says he did "un poco para llevar la contraria a la moda"[230] but also because it had superior photographic qualities.

The project to realize *Victòria!* was enormous, and in the end, there were over 100 hours and 150 kilometers of film. I have only focused on the first, most publicized and widely distributed installment of *Victòria!*, but there are two more films that continue the story I have discussed here, which merit analysis in another project. After the amount of foreign and domestic press and recognition that *La ciutat cremada* received, the support for the 1983 film was even greater, with more than 1,400 separate financial contributors (there were 132 for *La ciutat cremada*, which was considered abnormally high) (Ribas, *Victòria!* 68). For a film that received such dedicated support from the Generalitat, individual contributors, and the Catalan public at the time of its release, the scarce amount of academic attention it has received since is surprising.

La teranyina

Jaume Cabré's novel *La teranyina* won the Premio Sant Jordi in 1983, was published in 1985, and was adapted for film in 1990 by the screenwriters Antoni Verdaguer, Jaume Fuster, Vicenç Villatoro, and Jaume Cabré himself (Flores 55). Similarly to Mendoza, Cabré also lived in Barcelona for quite a long time, spending his first twenty-seven years of life in the city. However, when interviewed in 2007, he no longer found the same appeal in his home city: "Francament, m'atabala. Hi baixo poc. La Rambla no és el que era. La meva Barcelona, una part d'ella, encara hi és, però integrada dins la gran Barcelona orgànica" (Abrams n.p.).[231] Although Cabré suggests that despite the existence of some great novels, "potser és impossible fer *la* gran

[230] "Partially to go against the current trend" (my translation).
[231] "To be honest, I find it bewildering. I rarely go there. The Rambla isn't what it used to be. My Barcelona, part of it, is still there, but subsumed within the big organic Barcelona" (Abrams). https://www.barcelona.cat/bcnmetropolis/2007-2017/en/entrevista/jaume-cabre/. Accessed 2 March 2021.

novel·la perquè és una ciutat molt atomitzada" (Abrams),[232] his, along with the other films and novels analyzed here, shares a view of what Barcelona was like over a hundred years ago, at the turn of the twentieth century. It provides a counterpart to *La ciutat cremada* by focusing on the events in the larger province of Barcelona, which were interrelated with what happened during the Tragic Week within the city of Barcelona. The author tells us that what was most important to him was: "Los personajes, que son fácilmente trasladables a la actualidad, y me interesa lo que le pasa al personaje de Mercader (Ramón Madaula), un joven obrero fascinado por un anarquista de taberna (Rañé) que acabará siendo una víctima; él cree que lucha por una causa pero está siendo manipulado por el industrial" (Flores 55).[233] Perhaps, in part, the reason for which the characters can be so easily transported to the present day (that is, the author's present day in 1983) is that industrial Barcelona was experiencing a similar pattern of events, which has been examined throughout this project.

The film's central themes of "the use and abuse of power, how it is exercised, by whom, and to what ends" (Glenn 33) are indeed quite similar to those of Mendoza's two novels and Ribas' films. The ways in which power is acquired, used, and exerted over others is a recurring motif in the representations of the period at the turn of the twentieth century precisely because the political structure was so unstable at the same time that new economic opportunities emerged and industrialization expanded. Likewise, questions of power (im)balance surfaced during the Transition as a new constitution was enacted and democracy established. Thus, it seems that as new political systems were created, society began to question who would hold power and whose

[232] "Perhaps *the* great novel about Barcelona cannot be written because it's such a fragmented city" (Abrams).
[233] "The characters, who could be easily transferred to the present day, and I am interested in what happens to the character Mercader (Ramón Madaula), a young laborer fascinated by an anarchist (Rañé) who ends up being a victim; he thinks that he is fighting for that cause but in reality he is being manipulated by the industrial one" (my translation).

voices would be brought to the fore. The film reminds its contemporary viewers of the consequences that come as a result of oppression and political decisions that do not take into account the interests of members of all classes, and particularly those of the working class.

La teranyina takes a similar cinematic approach to Ribas' 1976 and 1983 film, prioritizing the historical narrative. One difference that stands out is this film's melodramatic scenes of love affairs and family drama. It also takes place in Terrassa, a smaller town in the province of Barcelona, but the events of the Tragic Week between the two cities are closely related, as we have seen. On a financial note, it is important to establish that the film also received financial support from the TV3 channel, the Generalitat de Catalunya, and the Ministeri de Cultura in Catalunya ("Ministry of Culture in Catalunya"), totaling a budget of 160 million pesetas (Flores 55), roughly four times that of *La ciutat cremada*. In addition to the novel's film adaptation, it was also made into a radio series on *Catalunya Rádio* in 1987 and 1988 (Glenn 33). The film was released fourteen years after *La ciutat cremada*, and although *La teranyina* did not receive the same global acclaim, it was strongly supported by Catalan political organizations.

Figure 5. Antoni Verdaguer. Filming of *La teranyina*.[234]

What is happening in Catalunya?

While the great majority of this project has focused on the connections between the time of composition (1975-1990) and the time of representation (1888-1923) for each of the films and novels mentioned, it is worthwhile to discuss briefly how the past relates to the current sociopolitical moment in Catalunya. While it would be well beyond the scope of this project to give a detailed analysis of the Spanish financial standing and the political context of Catalunya more specifically since the period of Transition, I have attempted to summarize the most critical information below.

Although each of the films and novels analyzed in this project feature characters with anarcho-syndicalist ties, they demonstrate varying degrees of anarchist, separatist, and Catalanist support. Canals is perhaps one of the more fervent anarchists, and Mercader is tricked by the anarchists more than he actually supported them. At the same, historically-based character Enric Prat de la Riba shows clear support for Catalan rights and autonomy, an opinion that he makes evident in front of King Alfonso XIII in *La ciutat cremada*. He is not arguing for separatism, but rather autonomy from the central government. The bourgeois business owners who formed the *Lliga Regionalista* are often Catalan nationalists, but they are not in favor of separatism either. In both historical terms and in the cultural representations, anarchism and Catalan nationalism existed separately, with different, but sometimes overlapping, support groups. While much of the

[234] Ajuntament de Girona, January 1990. Reproduction allowed under creative commons license. https://www.europeana.eu/en/item/2048008/Athena_Plus_ProvidedCHO_Ajuntament_de_Girona_382447?utm_source=api&utm_medium=api&utm_campaign=YuvuWBeCa%3F

middle and upper-classes supported Catalan nationalism, the working class spoke the regional language but were not strongly associated with the conservative Catalanists (Dowling 14).

In the post-Franco reality of the 1970s, many Barcelonans still advocated for Catalan nationalism with increased autonomy, but that did not include a strongly supported desire for independence. In 1977, the working-class movement and cultural Catalanist movements joined together to demand the restoration of Catalan autonomy. There had been a rise in strikes in the previous eight years, but the 1977 protests on Catalan national day were the first time both movements united under a common cause which demanded democratization and solutions to current problems in the region (Dowling 22). Even in the early 2000s, "Catalan nationalism, then, whilst seeking to deepen and extend the regional powers obtained in the late 1970s, was non-successionist, and the unwillingness to seek succession was deeply rooted in the territory and overwhelmingly shared across the political spectrum" (2).

If some stability was achieved at the conclusion of the Transition and the Olympic Games in 1992, Barcelona began to experience another sequence of difficult years starting around the 2008 financial crisis, which came to be known simply as the "la crisis" ("the crisis") in Spanish. The Crisis was not unique to Barcelona, as it had large-scale effects on the entire country, and beyond that, it was also related to an international recession that caused negative impacts for countries around the world. However, the financial crisis had specific repercussions in the industrial city that, even in the years leading up to 2008, "had lost its leading role in the political and economic development of Spain, which had been a central element to the narrative of political Catalanism since its emergence in the 1880s" (Dowling 3). In the 1970s, industrial workers in Barcelona experienced political and economic instability, but the repercussions for the middle class were masked by a strong economic upturn that lasted from the 1990s to about

2007. In fact, from 1996 to 2007, prices rose 188 percent (4), notably after Spain had joined the European Community in 1986. At that end of that boom, in 2008, the real estate market crashed, unemployment skyrocketed, and the instability expanded throughout all social classes. The 2008 economic crisis "arguably… became the largest single determinant of the turn to independence within Catalan society" (123). As economic concerns mounted, a growing list of grievances surfaced, particularly in Catalunya. Nonetheless, the working class remained largely uninvolved in the independence project, and while the proletariat has "declined in both importance and influence" in twenty-first-century Catalunya, the middle class has become increasingly significant as a major proponent of Catalan independence (136).

At the same time, the Catalan Statute of Autonomy from 1979 was replaced by a second Statute of 2006; this was contested and taken up by the Spanish Supreme Court. After four years of waiting, in 2010, the Court announced its judgment that the Statute was surpassing the regional independence allowed under the 1978 Spanish Constitution, and this in turn limited the federalist powers held by the region without an amendment of the constitution. In response to the decision, "in July 2010, over one million Catalans took to the streets of Barcelona to protest against the decision of Spain's Supreme Court, under the slogan of 'We are a Nation and we Decide'" (4). While the protest demanded sovereignty, Catalans were still not demanding full separatism at that point. Five years later, in 2015, the support for separatism and the creation of an independent Catalan State rose to 48 percent of the region's population. As a result of a strong growth in separatist sentiment, Catalunya has "experienced the largest series of popular mobilisations ever seen in modern Europe" (Dowling 5).

Under the central government in the post-Franco period, Catalunya had its own parliament and the Generalitat controlled education, health, and police. It had some fiscal

autonomy, but it was still bound to decisions made by Madrid. The Catalan language resurfaced, with street names and TV stations in Catalan (Frost 40). Following massive demonstrations on *L'onze de Setembre* (September eleventh) in 1977 in which 1.5 million people gathered in the streets to demand freedom and political autonomy for Catalunya, the Generalitat was re-established and Josep Tarradellas became its president (Barrera González 124). However, this phase of limited autonomy came to a close at the end of 2017. That year, the Catalan government held a referendum on independence from the central government, with the slogan "Catalonia is not Spain," among others. Carles Puigdemont was the Catalan President at the time, and he announced that with a simple majority, Catalunya would declare independence directly after the referendum. Meanwhile, the central government did not sit by idly, and Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy attempted to block the referendum from occurring by deploying the Civil Guard. Despite attempts to prevent Catalans from voting, 42 percent of eligible voters cast their ballot, with 90 percent of them voting in favor of independence. Civil Guard officers fired rubber bullets, used batons to hit protesters, and made international news for mishandling the election, although the media reports were often exaggerated (Frost 41). Weeks later on October 27, the Catalan Parliament passed a movement to declare independence, and Rajoy responded by invoking Article 155 of the Spanish Constitution, which enabled the suspension of the Catalan government and replaced Puigdemont with Soraya Sáenz Santamaría, the deputy Prime Minister of Spain (42). As a result, Puigdemont fled to Brussels along with four of his ministers, where he was told he could face charges of rebellion, sedition, and embezzlement. One of the arguments for succession was the economic imbalance between the profits that Catalunya earns for Spain and what the region gets back from the central government. While Catalan exports accounted for 25 percent of the country's overall exports and the region brought in roughly 20 percent of Spain's

Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Catalunya also owed the central government 52 billion euros. What is more, after the independence referendum, more than 1,000 companies moved their central headquarters from Barcelona and Catalunya more widely to relocate them to other regions of Spain (43).

In response to the political events of 2017, Eduardo Mendoza published a book, *¿Qué está pasando en Cataluña?*, in which he shares his thoughts on the then current political crisis and how it has been represented in a process that is also intended to help him "tratar de comprender lo que está pasando" (8).[235] He addresses many of the same topics that I have mentioned previously, including the propensity for independence among middle and upper classes rather than the working class (27). Mendoza describes the lack of homogeneity among Catalans and focuses in particular on the social barrier between the bourgeois and immigrant populations in the region. He makes connections between the near and distant past and the present day by referencing the social conflicts during Barcelona's industrialization, which occurred as a result of exploitation of the working class and which: "fue una guerra sucia y sin tregua, que duró décadas, alcanzó cimas de ferocidad durante la Guerra Civil y, si rascamos un poco, todavía colea" (43-44).[236] His opinion on independence is evident, and though he celebrates Catalan culture, language, and history, he also maintains that "no hay razón práctica que justifique el deseo de independizarse de España" (76).[237] Lastly, Mendoza clearly defines his reason for having written this short book on the situation: "cuestionar nuestras ideas, explicarnos las cosas a nosotros mismos y los unos a los otros, en lugar de encogernos de hombros ante el

[235] "Try to comprehend what is happening" (my translation).
[236] "It was a dirty and relentless war that lasted decades and reached its peak ferocity during the Civil War, and that, if we search a little, still carries repercussions" (my translation).
[237] "There is no practical reason that justifies the desire for independence from Spain" (my translation).

prejuicio, la negligencia y la incomprensión" (88-89).[238] This questioning of the past and present as a means for understanding prejudice and problems in society is precisely what his two novels have offered. After all, even *¿Qué está pasando en Cataluña?* returns to the early days of industrial Barcelona to make sense of the class distinctions, linguistic practices, and economic circumstances in 2017.

Concluding Remarks

Through this project, I hope to contribute to a growing, albeit still limited, body of research that considers the history of Barcelona through cultural representations produced in both Castilian and Catalan. Even the worldwide acclaim of Antoni Ribas' *La ciutat cremada* was not enough for the film to be included in any substantial number of academic studies, nor was the highly anticipated film he directed afterwards, *Victòria! La gran aventura d'un poble*. Eduardo Mendoza's *La verdad sobre el caso Savolta* and *La ciudad de los prodigios* have been analyzed in depth by many scholars, as I have mentioned throughout the project, from fields as diverse as urban planning, anthropology, economics, and literary and cultural studies. Nevertheless, I have endeavored to provide a more detailed analysis of the specific representation of the working-class experience in his novels, of which an in-depth study had been lacking. Likewise, *La teranyina* has been included to include a perspective on a more rural setting outside of the city of Barcelona, but still within the province. While the Restoration and the Transition periods have come to an end, the current political divisions in Catalunya are ongoing, with repercussions from the 2017 referendum still surfacing. Regardless of the result of the independence movement, there is still work to be done on the particular history of Barcelona's class differences, and

[238] "To question our ideas, explain things to ourselves and to others, instead of shrugging our shoulders in the face of prejudice, negligence and lack of understanding" (my translation).

studying cultural representations of the phenomena is one way of doing so, provided that both Catalan and Castilian creators are part of the conversation.

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Appendix

Acronyms:

CCOO: Comisiones Obreras - Communist trade union
CNT: Confederación Nacional de Trabajo (National Labor Confederation)
IOC: International Olympic Committee
FTN: Fomento Nacional de Treball (Federation to Promote National Development)
PP: Partido Popular (People's Party)
PSOE: Partido Socialista Obrero Español (Spanish Socialist Workers' Party)
UGT: Unión general de trabajadores, trade union linked to PSOE (General Workers' Union)

Timeline (of novels/films in italics; of historical events in standard font)

1859 – Hispano-Moroccan War, until 1860
1868 – Juan Prim y Prats leads a revolution that results in overthrowing the Bourbon monarchy
– Democratic monarchy established under the Carlists
– Amedeo of Savoy is king
– Cuban Rebellion
1869 – Progressive Constitution that made universal male suffrage legal
1873 – King Amedeo resigns; First Spanish Republic begins and is unsupportive of the military
1874 – End of First Spanish Republic
– Beginning of the monarchic Restoration, King Alfonso XII in power
– Antonio Cánovas del Castillo serves as Prime Minister (Conservative Party)
1877 – Spanish Association for the Exploration of Africa is founded
1879 – Unionists in Madrid form the Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE)
1887 – *Onofre arrives in Barcelona*
1888 – Universal Exposition in Barcelona, held at the Parc de la Ciutadella
– Unión General de Trabajadores (UGT) founded in Barcelona
1889 – Foment de Treball Nacional founded
1890 – First "May Day" celebrated on May 1 when European Socialists unite in favor of an eight-hour workday
1891 – Unió Catalanista (Catalanist Union) founded
1893 – Anarchist bomb thrown by Santiago Salvador at the Liceu Opera Theater
1896 – Bomb thrown in Corpus Christi celebration in Barcelona
1896 – Montjuïc trial for those arrested for the Corpus Christi bombing
1897 – Antonio Cánovas del Castillo is assassinated by an Italian anarchist, Michele Angiolillo
1898 – Spanish-American War from April 19 to August 12
– Treaty of Paris (December 10) and loss of last Spanish colonies: Puerto Rico, Guam, Cuba, the Philippines
– *Onofre starts working for don Humbert*
– *Josep returns from fighting in the Spanish-American War*
1899 – Doctor Bartomeu Robert becomes mayor of Barcelona (resigns in the same year)
– Tancament de Caixes in which Catalan industrialists, bourgeoisie, financiers refuse to pay taxes

1900 – *New Year's Eve scenes in* La ciutat cremada
– Some workforce protection measures put in place
1901 – Lliga Regionalista founded (conservative Catalanism)
– Alejandro Lerroux is elected as a representative
1902 – General strike in Barcelona
– Transition of power from Alfonso XII to Alfonso XIII
1903 – Former Prime Minister Práxedes Mateo Sagasta dies
– Antonio Maura becomes Prime Minister, until 1905
1904 – Unión Local de Societats Obrers (Local Labor Societies Union) founded in Barcelona
– Treaty with France grants Spain a protectorate in Morocco
– Attempted assassination of Antonio Maura
1905 – *Cu-Cut* headquarters in Barcelona stormed by the military
1906 – Solidaritat Catalana ("Catalan Solidarity") formed
– Enric Prat de la Riba publishes his *La Nacionalitat Catalana* (foundational text of *Noucentisme* movement);
– Algeciras Conference
– "Ley de jurisdicciones" is passed, which allows the military to punish acts of treason (law supported by Alfonso XIII)
1907 – Antonio Maura becomes Prime Minister until 1909
– Prat de la Riba elected to Diputació de Barcelona
– Solidaridad Obrera ("Worker's Solidarity") founded
– *Onofre's brother is sent to Morocco to fight*
1908 – Mining company - Compañía Española de las Minas del Rif - is established in July
– In August, the mines are attacked by local Riffians
1909 – Spanish railway workers attacked by tribes in Melilla
– July 9-December 4, Second Melillan Campaign
– July 11, Royal Decree orders reservists to fight
– July 27, Desastre del Barranco de Lobo
– Many working class men in Barcelona are sent to fight in Morocco due to the draft
– *Remei's brother is sent to Morocco to fight*
– La Setmana Tràgica ("The Tragic Week"), July 26-August 2
– Prime Minister Antonio Maura resigns
– *Josep bears arms and joins the worker's strike during the Tragic Week*
1910 – Confederación Nacional del Trabajo (CNT; "National Labor Confederation") founded, anarcho-syndicalist group
1911 – Kert Campaign in Morocco until 1912
1912 – Treaty of Fez makes Morocco a European protectorate with Spain gaining the protectorate of North Morocco, including Melilla and Ceuta, Ifni, and Cabo Juny
1914 – World War I begins, Spain declares neutrality
– July 30, the conversative Eduardo Dato declares Spain's neutrality in *la Gaceta*
– Mancomunitat is founded, with Enric Prat de la Riba as its president, and is made up of representatives from Catalan provinces to protect the economic interests of Catalunya
1917 – General strike, primarily in Barcelona
– Prat de la Riba dies and Josep Puig i Cadafalch becomes president of the Mancomunitat
– Legalization of the Juntas de Defensa Militar by Eduardo Dato
1918 – Spanish Flu

1919 – Strike at La Canadenca electric company, which becomes a general strike
– Romanones' government declares an eight-hour workday
– *Javier arrives in Barcelona and begins working for Cortabanyes and Lepprince*
1920 – Miguel Primo de Rivera becomes the Captain General of Barcelona
1921 – Battle of Annual (Desastre de Annual), July 22
– Eduardo Dato assassinated
– Martínez Anido enacts the Ley de fugas
1923 – Transport strike in Barcelona
– Coup d'état, Primo de Rivera rises as dictator until 1930
1925 – Catalanist societies prohibited
1927 – *Javier giving testimony of the events from 1917-1919 in Barcelona*
1929 – Second Universal Exposition in Barcelona, held at Montjüic mountain
1931 – Second Spanish Republic
– Generalitat de Catalunya is restored
1936-1939 – Spanish Civil War
1939-1975 – Franco in Power; Catalan exile; trade unions forbidden; strict censorship
1955 – Spain is admitted to the United Nations (UN)
1971 – Strike at SEAT factory
1973 – Luis Carrero Blanco is named as Prime Minister, assassinated the same year
1975 – Francisco Franco dies; Transition to Democracy begins
1976 – Series of strikes throughout the year in Barcelona; Carlos Arias Navarro resigns and Adolfo Suárez leads
1977 – March in favor of Catalan autonomy
– Law of Amnesty is passed;
– Moncloa Pacts attempt to create political unity
– Petroleum crisis, 26% inflation rate, 22% depreciation in value of the peseta
1978 – Spanish Constitution is passed
1980 – First elections in Catalunya after the dictatorship
– Olympic Committee president is Joan Antoni Samaranch
– Mossos d'esquadra Catalan police force created
1981 – Acuerdo Nacional sobre Empleo (ANE) - National Employment Accord signed by the UGT, CCOO, among other organizations, and it created job creation programs
– February 23 (known as 23F), failed coup d'état led by Lieutenant Colonel Antonio Tejero and members of the military
– Prime Minister Adolfo Suárez resigns and Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo is appointed
1982 – First successful transfer of power through democratic elections in Spain; Felipe González (PSOE) in power
– Spain joins NATO (permanent membership established in 1986)
1984 – Unemployment reaches 22% (up from 7% in 1977)
1986 – Spain admitted to European Community (which later becomes the European Union)
1992 – Olympic Games hosted in Barcelona; Universal Exposition in Sevilla

Key historical figures:

Alfonso XII: Named King of Spain in 1874 at the beginning of the Restoration, as part of the

Bourbon monarchy after the defeat of the Carlists; supporter of the military**;** dies 1885

Alfonso XIII: Becomes King of Spain in 1902, at the age of 16; supporter of the military and the Moroccan campaigns, so much so that he is referred to as *El Africano* ("The African")

Martínez Anido: Served as Captain-General and was then appointed to Civil Governor of Barcelona in 1920; known for harsh means of dealing with the terrorism in Barcelona, in favor of the *ley de fugas*

Francesc Cambó: intellectual and conservative politician in favor of Catalan autonomy, joins the *Lliga Regionalista* and becomes leader; becomes Development Minister; aimed to modernize the economic infrastructure; supports Primo de Rivera's coup d'état in 1923

Arsenio Martínez Campos: Key figure in the Restoration – proclaims Alfonso XII as king in 1874; Served as Minister of War under Sagasta's government; became Captain General of Barcelona; liberal ; during the war in Cuba, he tried to offer insurgents amnesty if they dropped their weapons

José Canalejas: Liberal deputy in the 1880s

Antonio Cánovas: architect of the Restoration; created the *turno pacífico* between liberals and conservatives; he was considered a liberal conservative; assassinated August 8, 1897

Eugenio Serrano de Casanova: responsible for the idea of the Exposition; proposes the idea in 1866

Juan de la Cierva: Acting Prime Minister during the Tragic Week

Eduardo Dato: Conservative politician; Prime Minister during World War I, declares state of neutrality; assassinated in Madrid in May 1921 as a result of the actions of Martínez Anido in Barcelona; legalizes the Juntas de Defensa in 1917

Manuel Duran i Bas: lawyer and politician; founder and president of the Círculo Conservador

Liberal de Barcelona in 1883; resigned in 1891 on charges of political corruption

Alejandro Lerroux: left-wing republican politician; anticlerical; wanted support from the socialists and anarchists; at first he believed in insurrection and later he became increasingly more in favor of progress through electoral and congressional means

Antonio Maura: conservative politician; Minister of Colonies; argued in favor of island autonomy in the Cuban campaign; supported by the FTN; served as Prime Minister; repression of anarchists and enforcement of martial law, detaining anarchists without court orders; Prime Minister during the Tragic Week, although he was out of the country

General Polvavieja: Served in the central government cabinet; supported the *concierto económico* that would give Catalunya power to collect and redistribute its own taxes, a proposal that was declined by Silvela's government in Madrid; resigned his post as Captain General in 1892 in protest of the corruption in Cuba

Enric Prat de la Riba: intellectual and politician, joins the Lliga Regionalista and becomes leader; known as the father of Catalan nationalism

Dr. Bartomeu Robert: president of the Sociedad Económica de Amigos del País, appointed as Mayor of Barcelona; elected to Cortes 1901

Francisco de Paula Rius y Taulet: the mayor of Barcelona during the exposition

Alberto Rusiñol y Prats: president of the FTN; elected to the Assembly of the Barcelona Chamber of Commerce; elected to the Cortes 1901

Práxedes Mateo Sagasta: Liberal politician; Prime Minister on October 2, 1897; his government issues an autonomy decree for Cuba in October 1897

Francisco Silvela: Prime Minister of Spain in 1899

Sebastià Torres: elected to Cortes 1901; president of the Liga de Defensa Industrial y

Comercial

Valeriano Weyler Nicolau: Fought the Carlists during the war of succession, the Cubans during the Spanish-American War, and later became the Captain-General of Barcelona in 1892; using forceful repression, he attempted to control the anarchist attacks of the 90s