Ekphrasis and Avant-Garde Prose of 1920s Spain

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EKPHRASIS AND AVANT-GARDE
PROSE OF 1920s SPAIN

DISSERTATION

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Kentucky

By

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Director: Dr. Susan Larson, Professor of Hispanic Studies

Lexington, Kentucky

2015

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ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

EKPHRASIS AND AVANT-GARDE PROSE OF 1920s SPAIN

This dissertation analyzes the prose works of the “Nova Novorum,” a fiction series created and published by José Ortega y Gasset between 1926 and 1929. This collection included six works by four authors, five of which will be discussed in this dissertation. Pedro Salinas’ *Vispera del gozo* (1926) inaugurated the series. Benjamín Jarnés published two works: *El profesor inútil* (1926) and *Paula y Paulita* (1929). Antonio Espina is also responsible for two works: *Pájaro pinto* (1927) and *Luna de copas* (1929).

The dissertation is divided into five sections. The first chapter introduces the topic of avant-garde prose during the 1920s in Spain, and the concept of ekphrasis as a methodological approach. Prose authors of the avant-garde were prolific during the first third of the twentieth century in Spain. They produced a new aesthetic sensibility with their experimental narrations. All of the works analyzed are examined through the lens of ekphrasis, which is the verbal representation of visual representation. Chapter Two discusses three relational aspects of ekphrasis: word and image, time and space, and the hermeneutics of ekphrasis. The first section examines the difference between narration and description. The second explores the relationship between time and space and the implications of the fact that a visual object is normally associated with space, while a verbal representation is associated with time. This section examines how authors incorporate spatial techniques into their narrations in ways that are commonly employed by painters. The third section of Chapter Two examines iconology and the hermeneutics of ekphrasis and how the authors use the trope of mimesis not to imitate nature but rather to distort reality. Chapters Three, Four and Five closely examine the images described by each author.

This study draws on understanding of ekphrasis from literary studies and art history as well as theories of the literary avant-garde that stems both from Europe and from Spain in particular. Ortega y Gasset’s ideas about the novel and the avant-garde informed the basic assumptions of the authors of the “Nova Novorum,” who often used ekphrasis as a means of avoiding narrative progress. In many cases of ekphrasis found in the “Nova Novorum” collection, the representations of art are deployed in the same way in which the authors utilize metaphor, as a means of digressing from the narrative. These ekphrastic moments allow each author to withdraw from or slow down the narration, providing the author with the opportunity to focus on the use of language itself.
KEYWORDS: Ekphrasis, Spanish Avant-Garde Prose, Benjamin Jarnés, Antonio Espina, Pedro Salinas.

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10/15/2015
EKPHRASIS AND AVANT-GARDE
PROSE OF 1920s SPAIN

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For my wife Amy,

and our daughter Caroline,

my two best girls
This project would not have been possible apart from the insights, direction and support of my dissertation director, Dr. Susan Larson. I am grateful for her meticulous editing of this project and constant encouragement. I also want to thank the members of my dissertation committee and outside reader, respectively, Dr. Aníbal Biglieri, Dr. Ana Rueda, Dr. Robert Jensen and Dr. Leon Sachs. I appreciate their time, effort and participation in this project.

I would like to recognize The Program for Cultural Cooperation between Spain’s Ministry of Culture and United States’ Universities for a dissertation research grant that enabled me to travel to Madrid during the summer of 2009. Researching the cultural magazines of 1920s and 1930s Spain at the Hemeroteca Nacional, the Biblioteca Nacional and the library at the Museo Nacional Reina Sofía was invaluable to the project’s completion.

During the writing of this project, I received academic and emotional support from many people. I would specifically like to thank Dr. Ted McVay for his encouragement and support. I also wish to extend my profound thanks to Dr. Jeff Sibley and his family. I am grateful for their prayers and encouragement as well as their friendship.

I cannot adequately express my gratitude to my family, without whose support this project would not have been possible. I am thankful to my parents Kenneth and Barbara Cole. I am indebted to my father- and mother-in-law Kenneth and Patty Chance. I am grateful for my brother and sister-in-law David and Robin Cole, my brothers- and sisters-in-law Josh and
Susan Chance, Josh and Anna Brown, and to my nieces and nephews: Elijah, Isaac, Samuel and Daniel Chance; Ayden, Audrey Anna and Anderson Brown; Olivia, Caleb and Ivy Cole.

Finally, I wish to extend my deepest appreciation to my wife, Amy, and our daughter, Caroline. Your love and support sustained me during every step of this project. I love and cherish you both.

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ
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CHAPTER 1: EKPHRASIS AND SPANISH AVANT-GARDE NARRATIVE

INTRODUCTION: THE "NOVA NOVORUM" AND THE LITERARY AVANT-GARDE IN SPAIN

In issue number 83 of *La Gaceta Literaria*, dated June 1, 1930, Miguel Pérez Ferrero initiated a dialogue about the avant-garde in the form of a survey entitled “¿Qué es la vanguardia?” He posed the following four questions:

1. ¿Existe o ha existido la vanguardia? 2. ¿Cómo la ha entendido usted? 3. A su juicio, ¿qué postulados literarios presenta o presentó en su día? 4. ¿Cómo la juzgó y la juzga ahora desde su punto de vista político?

A number of responses were received from prominent intellectuals of the era, many of whom had written or would write works of avant-garde prose that would appear in subsequent issues of the magazine. One response in particular provides an excellent point

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1 The following is a translation of Pérez Ferrero’s questions.
1. Does or has the avant-garde existed? 2. How have you understood it? 3. In your judgment, what literary postulations does it present or did it present in its day? 4. How did you judge or how do you judge the avant-garde now from your political point of view? [translation mine]

2 Issues 83 through 86 include responses from Gregorio Marañón, Ernesto Giménez Caballero, José Bergamín, José Moreno Villa, Rosa Chacel, Valentín Andrés Álvarez, Jaime Ibarra, Melchor Fernández Almagro, Antonio Marichalar, César M. Arconada, Jaime Torres Bodet, Ernestina de Champoucin, Enrique González Rojo, Ramón Gómez de la Serna, Benjamín Jarnés, E. Salazar y Chapela, R. Ledesma Ramos, Mauricio Bacarisse, Agustín Espinosa, Samuel Ros, Luis Gómez Mesa, Eugenio Montes, José María Cossio, José Emilio Herrerá, Claudio de la Torre, Teófilo Ortega, Felipe Ximénez de Sandoval, Rafael Laffón, Guillermo Díaz Plaja, José María Alfaro, Aparicio [sic], Eduardo de Ontañón and Francisco Vighi. Pérez Ferrero’s summary of the survey appears on page 3 of issue 87 (August 1, 1930).
of departure to introduce the avant-garde, both in its broad historical context as well as its particularly Spanish manifestation. One of the respondents, Luis Gómez Mesa,\(^3\) alludes to what he considers to be a principal characteristic of the avant-garde, namely its activist nature.\(^4\)

Vanguardia para mí, significa avanzada. Estar en primera línea. Destacarse. Y esto no se consigue porque sí. Es preciso demostrar un valor efectivo, traer al campo literario inquietudes o aportar novedades y modalidades nada sencillas, que luego, una vez aceptadas y consolidadas, son simples realidades.\(^5\)

The term “avant-garde” has a military origin, referring to the front line offensive of an attack. Etymologically, the word avant-garde implies discovery, innovation, and invention. Gómez Mesa’s descriptions of “advancement,” “being on the front line,” and “contributing innovations or novelties” are echoed later by critics such as Renato Poggioli, who identifies a militaristic activism as the first of four moments of the avant-garde.

\(^3\) Gómez Mesa was an avant-garde film critic who contributed reviews to La Gaceta Literaria. Robert Hershberger mentions that Gómez Mesa was a member of Grupo de Escritores Cinematográficos Independientes. See The Visual Arts in the Novels of Benjamín Jarnés, 18, 43n.

\(^4\) Renato Poggioli equates avant-garde with “activism,” both in its desire for militaristic zeal and for activity in and of itself. “But often a movement takes shape and agitates for no other end than its own self, out of the sheer joy of dynamism, a taste for action, a sportive enthusiasm, and the emotional fascination of adventure. This is the first aspect of the avant-garde movements to be discussed here, and we shall define it as activism or the activisic moment” (emphasis belongs to Poggioli) (25).

\(^5\) Gómez Mesa, Luis. GL 85 (1 July 1930): 5.
Indeed, the very metaphor of ‘avant-garde’ points precisely to the activist moment (rather than to the antagonistic). Within the military connotations of the image, the implication is not so much of an advance against an enemy as a marching toward, a reconnoitering or exploring of that difficult and unknown territory called no-man’s land. Spearhead action, the deployment of forces, maneuvering and formation rather than mass action and open fire…

(27-8)

The association of spear-head action linked with the avant-garde stems from the First World War, which had a notable impact on artists, and is undoubtedly a factor in the avant-garde sensibility in art and literature. Ernesto Giménez Caballero’s post-war comments on the definition of the avant-garde, for example, demonstrate their connection:

Pocos términos han sufrido tantas definiciones como la palabra vanguardia. Su origen se remonta a la Gran Guerra. Se refería a las fuerzas de choque que marchaban en cabeza y abrían camino, tanto en la guerra como en el arte. Después cobró otro significado: ‘literatura libre’, ‘deseo vital’,

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6 Other studies of note on the historical avant-garde include Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde* and Matei Calinescu, *Five Faces of Modernity*, in particular Chapter Two of Calinescu, “The Idea of the Avant-Garde,” pages 93-148. Of the three, Poggioli’s study is most aware of the Spanish avant-garde and of Ortega y Gasset’s philosophy, in particular. The four “moments” of avant-gardism presented by Poggioli are activism (27-30), antagonism (30-40), nihilism (61-5), and agonism (65-8).
‘Internacionalismo’. La vanguardia se movía en la dirección de la solidaridad humana, rompiendo viejas cadenas y buscando un nuevo romanticismo.7

For Poggioli, activism includes a sense of progress, or what he calls “psychological dynamism,” as well as speed, or “physical dynamism.” But more than just mere forward progress and motion, the etymology of the avant-garde is associated with the idea of hostility. Antagonism, Poggioli’s second moment of avant-gardism, expresses itself both against the public and against tradition. The avant-garde, in art and in literature, displays hostility both toward the public and the art of the past. That hostility is mutual as José Ortega y Gasset (1883-1955) explains in his essay 1925 “La deshumanización del arte:”8

En cambio, el arte nuevo tiene a la masa en contra suya, y la tendrá siempre.
Es impopular por esencia: más aún: es antipopular. Una obra cualquiera por él engendrada produce en el público automáticamente un curioso efecto

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Few literary movements have been so variously defined as has the one known as Advance-Guard. ‘Advance-Guard’ was a term applied to literature by the literary minds of the Great War. ‘Advance-Guard’ seeks to describe in direct fashion the shock troops, that literature which goes ahead and opens up the way. Secondarily, however, ‘advance-guard’ has a less precise signification: ‘free literature’; ‘vital urge’; ‘internationalism.’ The ‘advance-guard’ was essentially a movement in the direction of human solidarity, a casting off of shackles and a quest of the infinite, a new romanticism. (302)

8 The first edition of the essay was published in 1925, but parts of the essay were published in 1924 in El Sol. Garagorri explains the publication of the essay in the “Nota preliminar” of Valeriano Bozal’s edition of the essay:

La primera edición del ensayo La deshumanización del arte se publicó en 1925, en la biblioteca de la Revista de Occidente (el libro contenía, además, el ensayo ‘Ideas sobre la novela’ que ulteriormente se ha incluido en el libro Meditaciones del Quijote). Previamente, una primera mitad del ensayo había sido anticipada en las páginas de el diario El Sol, los días 1, 16 y 23 de enero, y 1 de febrero, de 1924. (43)
sociológico. Lo divide en dos porciones, una, mínima, formada por reducido
número de personas que le son favorables; otra, mayoritaria, innumerable,
que le es hostil.\(^9\)

This anti-popularity has less to do with aesthetic taste or preference than to the
avant-garde being misunderstood by the public. Ortega y Gasset goes on to state that “a mi
juicio, lo característico del arte nuevo, ‘desde el punto de vista sociológico’, es que divide al
público en estas dos clases de hombres: los que lo entienden y los que no lo entienden”
(355).\(^{10}\) The avant-garde expresses hostility toward the tradition that precedes it, namely
Realism. In distinguishing avant-garde writers from their predecessors, Ortega y Gasset
labels them “young artists.” For young avant-garde authors, then, their mission was to
separate their narrative style from that of Realism, resulting in a novel with a lack of plot and
character development.\(^{11}\) This sentiment of breaking with the past can also be categorized
under the umbrella of experimentalism.\(^{12}\) In breaking with previous traditions, avant-garde

\(^9\) Ortega y Gasset, \textit{Obras completas} III, 354. All translations from “La deshumanización del
arte” are from Helene Weyl’s, \textit{The Dehumanization of Art}.

Modern art, on the other hand, will always have the masses against it. It is
essentially unpopular; moreover, it is antipopular [sic] … It divides the public
into two groups: one very small, formed by those who are favorably inclined
towards it; another very large – the hostile majority. (5)

\(^{10}\) “The characteristic feature of the new art is, in my judgment, that it divides the public into
the two classes of those who understand it and those who do not” (6).

\(^{11}\) Gustavo Pérez Firmat mentions these two characteristics on pp. 30, 42-6 of \textit{Idle Fictions}.

\(^{12}\) Poggioli also mentions this characteristic of the avant-garde.

One of the most important aspects of avant-garde poetics is what is referred
to as experimentalism; for this, one easily recognizes an immediate precedent
in romantic aesthetic experimentation, the anxious search for new and virgin
forms, with the aim not only of destroying the barbed wire of rules, the
gilded cage of classical poetics, but also of creating a new morphology of art,
a new spiritual language. (57)
authors sought to produce a new style for the novel, to be innovative and inventive with the
genre, which also includes grafting techniques from other genres into their narratives.  

The third moment, or attitude, of the avant-garde, for Poggioli:

finds joy not merely in the inebriation of movement, but even more in the
act of beating down barriers, razing obstacles, destroying whatever stands in
its way. The attitude thus constituted can be defined as a kind of
transcendental antagonism, and we can give it no better name than nihilism or
the nihilistic moment (26) ... If the essence of activism lies in acting for the sake
of acting; of antagonism, acting by negative reaction; then the essence of
nihilism lies in attaining nonaction [sic] by acting, lies in destructive, not
constructive, labor. (61-2)

The nihilistic impulse implies destruction and denigration, and is expressed in Italian
and Russian Futurism, English Vorticism, but most especially in Dadaism. The founder of
Dadaism, Tristan Tzara (1896-1963), declared in his 1918 manifesto that “there is a great
destructive, negative work to be accomplished. Sweeping, cleaning” and that “Dada means
nothing.” He further asserted a nihilistic attitude in his manifesto with the desire to abolish
creation and to abolish the future: “The action of dada was a revolt against art, morality, and
society.” This attitude of destruction and revolt leads to a fourth moment, that of agonism,
which, as Poggioli explains, “ignores even its own catastrophe and perdition. It [the

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13 This “new sensibility” will be discussed further. It has been called a new narrative, a lyrical
narrative. The idea of blending of genre is also fundamental to this study and will be
discussed at length in other sections.
14 Poggioli gives an example for each on p. 62.
15 See Caws, Manifesto: A Century of Isms, 300-1.
16 Quote of George Ribémont-Dessaignes in Poggioli, 63.
movement] even welcomes and accepts this self-ruin as an obscure or unknown sacrifice to the success of future movements” (26). Agonism, therefore, is associated with sacrifice and consecration.  

In addition to the four moments mentioned here, Poggioli proposes the following analogies for conceptualizing the avant-garde:

- futurism, antitraditionalism and modernism, obscurity and unpopularity,
- dehumanization and iconoclasm, voluntarism and cerebralism, abstract and pure art. Almost all have been summed up in the central formula of alienation, as reflected in one or another of the variants of that alienation: social and economic, cultural and stylistic, historical and ethical. (226)

The predominant characteristic, alienation, can also be understood as isolation or detachment, which the avant-garde achieves by its innovative use of language. Detachment is a concept discussed by several critics, including Ortega y Gasset. Many critics label this critic’s term “dehumanization” of art as a means of detaching art from life. Assessing the avant-garde as contemporary to the movement, he identified its tendency to avoid all living forms. This avoidance of living forms has often been linked with a detachment from social concerns in literary criticism. Pérez Firmat proposes this as a fundamental characteristic of

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17 The agonistic attitude encompasses the oxymoronic condition of the avant-garde. The paradox that exists within the discussion of the avant-garde is the question “is the avant-garde socially critical or not?” It proposes revolution but does so with novels read by a vast minority. Another paradox is that of consumption. The stylistic features do not appeal to a mass readership; therefore the works are not likely to endure, due to the lack of demand. Poggioli maneuvers this contradiction by examining the third and fourth moments from a psychological and sociological perspective. See Poggioli, 25-7. See also the section titled “The Negation of the Autonomy of Art by the Avant-Garde” in Bürger, 47-54.
the avant-garde; that avant-garde writing seeks to detach itself from any possible social context.

Bürger, taking a different approach, states that the process by which art becomes completely autonomous from society is a contradiction and, furthermore, is, in part, erroneous.\(^\text{18}\)

The relative dissociation of the work of art from the praxis of life in bourgeois society thus becomes transformed into the (erroneous) idea that the work of art is totally independent of society. In the strict meaning of the term, ‘autonomy’ is thus an ideological category that joins an element of truth (the apartness of art from the praxis of life) and an element of untruth (the hypostatization of this fact, which is a result of historical development as the ‘essence’ of art). (46)

The fact that the avant-garde becomes part of institutional art and, as a result, becomes part of life, is an observation by Bürger which Ortega y Gasset was not able to establish in 1925 when his essay was written. Furthermore, Ortega y Gasset’s use of “dehumanization” is central to this dissertation because, as we will see shortly, it has such a strong visual component both in its theorization as well as its consequences for visual and written cultural forms in Spain.

\(^{18}\) This phenomenon is discussed in the chapter titled “On the Problem of Autonomy of Art in Bourgeois Society,” Bürger, 35-54.
Gómez de la Serna, Ortega y Gasset, Giménez Caballero, and the Avant-Garde in Spain

During the 1920s and early 1930s in Spain, avant-garde writers created a “new sensibility” or aesthetic. The literary avant-garde movement in Spain did not begin with the production of novels, but rather with poetry, and can be best characterized by a convergence of multiple tendencies, or “isms,” at once. One of the main explanations for their convergence is the relatively late arrival of many of these “isms” to the Iberian Peninsula, which, therefore, coexisted at the same moment. Spanish writers encountered at the same time Futurism, Cubism, Dadaism, Creationism, Ultraism and Surrealism. Harris describes this convergence as a period of confusion and of hybrid creation. Rather than a fusion of these tendencies, authors would choose to employ certain elements in their writing over others.

Three main influences on the development of the “new aesthetic” in novelistic production were Ramón Gómez de la Serna, Ortega y Gasset and Giménez Caballero. Any discussion of avant-garde prose in Spain must begin with Gómez de la Serna (1888-1963)

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19 Pérez Firmat locates the most important period of Spanish avant-garde prose production from 1926-34, with the publication of the series “Nova Novorum.” Buckley and Crispin chose 1925-35 as the dates for the works selected in their anthology, with 1925 as a starting date due to the publication of Ortega y Gasset’s essay, “La deshumanización del arte.” Francisco Javier Diez de Revenga examines publications from the Revista de Occidente during a period from 1923-31, 1923 being the first year of the periodical’s existence, but which also runs congruent to the Dictatorship of Primo de Rivera. While there are many possible ranges for the production of avant-garde prose in Spain, what is certain is that it flourished during the Dictatorship of Primo de Rivera and was certainly suppressed by that of Franco. There is debate about the beginning date, but an ending date of 1936 is more concrete due to the suppression of avant-garde voices at the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War. On delineating a range for the movement, see Ana Rodríguez Fischer, Prosa española de vanguardia, 9-10.

20 For a comprehensive list and detailed account of the many “ismos” of the first third of the twentieth century, see Guillermo de Torre. The Torre’s study includes chapters on futurismo, expresionismo, cubismo, dadaísmo, superrealismo, ultraísmo, among others.

21 See “Squared Horizons: The Hybridisation of the Avant-Garde in Spain,” 3-4. This is the introductory article to his book The Spanish Avant-Garde.
because it was he who in 1909 began to distribute a Spanish translation of Marinetti’s futurist manifesto, and who in 1915 also issued “one of the earliest avant-garde manifestos in Spain” with his “First Proclamation from Pombo.” A prolific writer in his own right, in addition to influencing the trajectory of the avant-garde movement, Gómez de la Serna would make contributions to the avant-garde in the form of several novels. One of his most important contributions to the avant-garde, however, was his founding of the tertulia in the Café Pombo. Initiated in 1917, the tertulia became an important place for young writers to gather and exchange ideas.

Giménez Caballero (1899-1988) first contributed to the Spanish avant-garde by his founding of the Cineclub Español, as well as his participation in various tertulias. In addition to his early interest in film, Gecé, as he is commonly called, was also a writer of avant-garde fiction. His most notable contribution to the avant-garde, however, was La Gaceta Literaria, which he founded in 1927 and published until 1932. The magazine included reviews of art, 22 See Andrew A. Anderson, 19-31. Anderson tells us that rather than translating the manifesto from a French or Italian newspaper, a copy was sent directly to Ramón from Marinetti.
24 Most notable among his avant-garde novels are La viuda blanca y negra (1922), La quinta de Palmyra (1923) and El novelista (1923). Another publication of note is his Greguerías, a genre of its own which combines metaphor and humor. For more on Gómez de la Serna, or simply Ramón, as he was called, see Alan Hoyle, 7-18.
25 Rita Gardiol mentions that Ramón set up headquarters in the café Pombo, and there “met friends, exchanged ideas, read manuscripts, wrote novels, and even received mail” (21).
26 Founded in 1928, Cineclub served to debut many avant-garde films, including those by Luis Buñuel.
27 For more on Giménez Caballero’s interest in film, see C.B. Morris’s This Loving Darkness and Surrealism and Spain.
28 Yo, inspector de alcantarillas (1925) is a work of fiction that incorporates surrealist techniques, for example.
29 The first issue was printed on January 1, 1927. The last issue (number 123) is from May 1, 1932. The magazine was printed twice monthly, on the first and the fifteenth day of each month, each year of its existence until 1932, when 3 issues were published (January 15, February 15 and May 1). In 1931, 23 issues were published (the magazine missed the
film, and music, as well as avant-garde literature. This magazine provided a place for discussion of avant-garde works by their very authors.

As I have already noted, Spanish avant-garde prose was also championed by Ortega y Gasset. The philosopher and publisher began to plant the seeds of an inevitably small avant-garde readership and authorship by bringing ideas from other parts of Europe into Spain during the years after the First World War. His work in spear-heading the translation of European masterpieces of literature as well as scientific scholarly documents contributed to keeping Spain in step with international intellectual developments. Thanks in large part to the *Revista de Occidente*, Spanish authors were able to stay abreast of French symbolist literature by authors such as Marcel Proust (1871-1922) and Stéphane Mallarmé (1842-98), as well as with other modernist writers such as James Joyce (1882-1941) and William Faulkner (1897-1962). In addition to publishing their works, he met regularly in the tertulias with young writers to discuss and share his opinions about literary, artistic, and intellectual matters. He also organized and delivered lectures at the Residencia de Estudiantes, the importance of which is stressed by Harris:

February 1 printing). Toward the end of the magazine’s existence, Giménez Caballero began to call himself El Robinsón Literario. Six of the final issues carry this title. Issue number 1 of “El Robinsón Literario” (*GL* 112) was published on August 15, 1931; Issue 2 (*GL* 115) on October 1, 1931; Issue 3 (*GL* 117) on November 1, 1931; Issue 4 (*GL* 119) on December 1, 1931; Issue 5 (*GL* 121) on January 15, 1932; Issue 6 (*GL* 122) on February 15, 1932.

Benjamín Jarnés and Antonio Espina, authors whose prose will be closely studies here, were important contributors, as well as many of the other major players in the avant-garde scene. For more on the magazine see Miguel Ángel Hernando and Soria Olmedo, “La Gaceta Literaria” in *Vanguardismo y crítica literaria en España*, 263-308 and Mainer, “La significación de La Gaceta Literaria,” in *La edad de plata*, 147-52.

The *Revista de Occidente* not only included original works by its contributors, but also published aesthetic, artistic, scientific, and sociological articles about Europe and the Americas. See Evelyne López Campillo. For more on the availability of foreign novels in Spain, see Luis Fernández Cifuentes.
The Europeanising [sic] intellectual attitudes exemplified by Ortega were reflected in the foundation in Madrid of the Residencia de Estudiantes, deliberately modelled [sic] on the colleges of Oxford University to provide accommodation and a meeting place for the flower of the country’s intelligentsia. This student residence, undoubtedly the most influential location in Spain for the dissemination of new ideas, would later be home for many of the young avantgardists, including Dalí, Lorca and Buñuel.32

Rockwell Gray also discusses the influence Ortega y Gasset had over the young writers of the period. Gray identifies him as:

a man frankly acknowledged by the young writers of the 1920s as the outstanding mentor for their work. They heeded his dicta, attended his lectures, hoped to be asked to his tertulias, and delighted in publishing their work under his auspices … Ortega counseled the young Spanish prose writers of the period to downplay the older narrative in favor of free invention and fantasy.33

In addition to his lectures and tertulias, as well as his mentoring and publication of their work, Ortega y Gasset’s awareness and interest in the avant-garde novel was perhaps best expressed in his essay “The Dehumanization of Art.” Published in 1925, this aesthetic commentary describes the polarizing effects and presents seven tendencies of the avant-garde. According to Ortega y Gasset, the avant-garde:

33 See Gray, The Imperative of Modernity, 160-1.
tiende: 1.°, a la deshumanización del arte; 2.°, a evitar las formas vivas; 3.°, a hacer que la obra de arte no sea sino obra de arte; 4.°, a considerar el arte como juego, y nada más; 5.°, a una esencial ironía; 6.°, a claudir toda falsedad, y, por tanto, a una escrupulosa realización. En fin, 7.°, el arte, según los artistas jóvenes, es una cosa sin trascendencia alguna. (Obras completas III, 360)34

These are the very characteristics linked with the avant-garde novel in Spain, which Ortega y Gasset had also observed in the production of avant-garde poetry. How much influence, then, did the essay have on the young writers of the period? Was this essay intended to be an invitation for young authors to experiment with narrative and to publish in Ortega y Gasset’s publishing house? Can it be considered a manifesto? Or is this simply an extension of his many lectures and tertulias, where the young writers in attendance would most likely have been of the same opinion?

In retrospect, we can see that Ortega’s delineation of the norms of the new art is remarkably accurate in relation to Spanish art (and in particular, poetry) as it was in 1924, and as it was to be in the poetry produced by the Generation of ’27. The status of the essay was, however, prophetic rather than prescriptive. (Sinclair 223)

34 Weyl’s translation (14):
tends (1) to dehumanize art, (2) to avoid living forms, (3) to see to it that the work of art is nothing but a work of art, (4) to consider art as play and nothing else, (5) to be essentially ironical, (6) to beware of sham and hence to aspire to scrupulous realization, (7) to regard art as a thing of no transcending consequence.
Alison Sinclair accurately affirms here that “The Dehumanization of Art” prophesies the direction of avant-garde literature according to its tendencies more than prescribes a set of characteristics that it must incorporate in order to be considered for publication. It is more likely that the avant-garde authors whose work was published by Ortega y Gasset would have heard and agreed with his assessment of the novel, the direction in which it should proceed, and its break with the nineteenth-century Realist novel. Although a strong presence of this critic’s theories is evident in the experimental novels, one cannot conclude that it is prescribed as a prerequisite for publication, however. Rodríguez Fischer reaches a similar conclusion when she asserts that Ortega y Gasset’s observations and reflections provided a guide for young writers.35 Ignacio Soldevila-Durante and José M. del Pino agree that Ortega y Gasset served as an “inciter” of avant-garde fiction between 1923 and 1931.36

While all three of these individuals – Gómez de la Serna, Giménez Caballero and Ortega y Gasset – were primary influences over and/or participated to a certain extent in the

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35 Rodríguez Fischer quotes Ortega y Gasset in “Introducción crítica,” Prosa española de vanguardia, 39n.

Que la claridad y certeza de su análisis eximiera a otros de mayores indagaciones y fueran de referencia obligada o ineludible no debe conducirnos a perder de vista cuál fue el propósito e intención que movió a Ortega, ya desde sus primeros escritos. Cuando iniciaba su trayectoria intelectual y la hacía pública… escribía sobre el propósito que guiaba su pluma: ‘Son sencillamente incitaciones dirigidas, por el conducto de usted, a algunos muchachos celtíberos que hoy comienzan a adquirir métodos espirituales. Y no es otra su intención que ofrecerles un compás y una dignidad frente a algunos dogmas incontinentes que dominan la conciencia actual española’ (2 de diciembre de 1907).

trajectory of the avant-garde novel in Spain, Ortega y Gasset remains the most important figure for the present study, for two reasons: (1) because he commissioned and edited the series of novels which will be analyzed in detail and (2) because his essay, “The Dehumanization of Art,” provides the most important point of contact between a discussion of the avant-garde and the concept explored in this dissertation: ekphrasis.

The Avant-Garde Novel in Spain and the “Nova Novorum”

The avant-garde novel enjoyed a period of publication in Spain beginning with the “Nova Novorum” series in 1926, which laid the groundwork and served as a model for subsequent avant-garde texts published in Spain until 1934. Several other novels were published from 1930 to 1931 in the Colección Valores Actuales series of the Ediciones Ulises. The authors of these novels had collaborated in various cultural magazines since the middle of the 1920s, publishing their own fiction works along with reviews of works by their peers. Most notable among the authors of the collection are Valentín Andrés Álvarez, who published a work of theater in the “Nova Novorum,” Benjamín Jarnés, and Rosa Chacel.

Born of an awareness of the currents of the transnational avant-garde and of a desire for national participation in that conversation, Spanish avant-garde prose was manifested most publicly in the collection “Nova Novorum.” Between 1926 and 1929, the publishing

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37 There have been a number of anthologies of Spanish avant-garde prose published, the introductions of which provide excellent background information. See Rodríguez Fischer (1999), Buckley and Crispin (1973), Ródenas de Moya (1997, 2000) and Putnam (1931).

38 The novels published in this collection were Naufragio en la sombra (1930) by Valentín Andrés Álvarez, Cazador en el alba (1930) by Francisco Ayala, Pasión y muerte. Apocalipsis (1930) by Corpus Barga, Agor sin fin (1930) by Juan Chabás, Estación de ida y vuelta (1930) by Rosa Chacel, Viviana y Merlin (1930) by Benjamín Jarnés, Tres mujeres más equis (1930) by Felipe Ximénez de Sandoval, and Efectos navales (1931) by Antonio de Obregón.

39 Rosa Chacel, writing in the wake of the publication of “La deshumanización del arte,” intended for her novel, Estación. Ida y vuelta, to be published in the series “Nova Novorum” but when Ortega y Gasset was only interested in the first chapter, publication of the novel was delayed until 1930. See Rosa Chacel, Estación. Ida y vuelta, 26.
house of the *Revista de Occidente* published a series of six works by four authors. The project was organized by Ortega y Gasset, who hailed the collection as a series of “dehumanized narrations.” The only work not categorized as prose fiction is a play, ¡Tararí, written by Andrés Álvarez. The other works are either novels or interwoven collections of short stories, though there has been critical debate surrounding the genre of these works of fiction. One reason why it is difficult to establish the genre of these texts is due to their fragmentary nature.

Even with *El profesor inútil*, a work easily identified as novelistic, a chapter that appears in the first edition (1926) is retracted and incorporated into a totally different novel. “Una papeleta” appears as part of *Escenas junto a la muerte* (1931). This chapter does not appear in the second edition of *El profesor inútil* (1934). In the edition by Ródenas de Moya (1999), this phenomenon is noted in the appendix (253).

Pérez Firmat identifies this collection as the first moment of avant-garde fiction in

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40 The publication of the collection “Nova Novorum” was a project of the publishing house of the *R de O*, also controlled by Ortega y Gasset.

41 On page 276, López Campillo gives the following publication dates for the collection:

I. SALINAS, Pedro: *Víspera del gozo*, 31-V-1926.
II. JARNÉS, Benjamín: *El profesor inútil*, 1-IX-1926.
IV. ESPINA, Antonio: *Luna de copas*, 12-V-1929.

42 The only two works whose authors identify them as novels are Antonio Espina’s *Luna de copas* and Benjamín Jarnés’ *Paula y Paulita*. Of the three remaining works Jarnés’ *El profesor inútil* most closely resembles a novel, while Espina’s *Pájaro pinto* and Pedro Salinas’ *Víspera del gozo* more accurately constitute a series of short stories.

43 The ambiguity of genre is a theme found in the reviews of these works by their contemporaries and one taken up by Pérez Firmat in his book *Idle Fictions* (10).

44 Even with *El profesor inútil*, a work easily identified as novelistic, a chapter that appears in the first edition (1926) is retracted and incorporated into a totally different novel. “Una papeleta” appears as part of *Escenas junto a la muerte* (1931). This chapter does not appear in the second edition of *El profesor inútil* (1934). In the edition by Ródenas de Moya (1999), this phenomenon is noted in the appendix (253).

Spain, which provided “the initial stimulus and occasion for a general awareness of the new fictional form” (7). Though the collection contains only six publications, it served as a springboard for other avant-garde prose works, both in Spain and Latin America.46

The work which inaugurated the “Nova Novorum” was *Vispera del gozo* (1926) by Pedro Salinas (1891-1951). At first glance, Salinas’s novel is a collection of unrelated short stories. However, as Roberta Johnson points out in her book *Crossfire: Philosophy and the Novel in Spain, 1900-1934*, “the segments of the work have different protagonists, but the recurring theme of each character’s relation to reality provides a sense of unity, which, if not what we typically expect of a novel, makes it more than a collection of unrelated stories” (175). Del Pino corroborates Johnson’s claims in his book *Montajes y fragmentos: una aproximación a la narrativa española de vanguardia* (1995):

Pese a su autonomía, los relatos se articulan en torno a unos temas centrales.

interpretable como una reflexión sobre la naturaleza de la práctica literaria y sobre la importancia de la forma artística en el nuevo arte. (103)

Apart from *Vispera del gozo*, Salinas, who is most recognized for his poetry, published only two other works of prose fiction – a novel, *La bomba increíble* (1950) and a short story collection, *El desnudo impecable y otras narraciones* (1951).

Benjamín Jarnés (1888-1949) published the second and fifth works of the series, *El profesor inútil* (1926) and *Paula y Paulita* (1929), respectively. The first work recounts a series of three episodes, united by a single protagonist, the useless professor of the title. The reader is introduced to three separate vignettes, which are unified neither in time, nor in space. The second work, *Paula y Paulita*, more closely imitates novelistic techniques and patterns. It is comprised of a prologue and two parts, and follows the story of a few protagonists. The first part titled “El número 479,” tells of a trip to a resort by a first person narrator, who identifies himself with his room number, 479. This part includes his encounters with a mother and a daughter staying in room adjacent to his, whom he initially refers to as number 478 and number 477. The protagonist in the second part, titled “Petronio,” is Mr. Brook. The reader also learns that the first-person narrator from the first part is named Julio. He figures as a secondary character in the second part of *Paula y Paulita*.

Antonio Espina (1894-1972) abandoned his studies of medicine in order to dedicate himself to a career in literature and journalism. He is the author of two of the texts published in the series, *Pájaro pinto* (1927) and *Luna de copas* (1929). The first work, *Pájaro pinto*, is a combination of six texts with a preface (Antelación). Each text resembles a short story, one of which is even divided by chapters. Espina himself admits the difficulty of situating a work within one determined genre, especially a work of literature that is influenced by cinematic
and painterly techniques. The second work, *Luna de copas*, more closely resembles a novel, divided into two parts.

Valentín Andrés Álvarez (1891-1982), as previously mentioned, is the author of the play, *¡Tararí!* (1929). Andrés Álvarez had academic training in various scientific disciplines before publishing works of literature. In addition to his literary career, in which he published novels and contributed to magazines, he served as a university professor of Political Economy. Apart from this theater work, Andrés Álvarez is most notably responsible for two novels, *Sentimental Dancing* (1925) and *Naufragio en la sombra* (1930), and a short story, “Telarañas en el cielo” (1925). He also wrote a number of essays, some of which are written on the subject of Economics and Astronomy.

**Avant-Garde Criticism**

The Spanish avant-garde has experienced a renewed academic vigor over the last two decades, with the publication of anthologies of avant-garde prose, collections of critical essays, book length studies and a number of articles. Many of these studies focus on the aspects and characteristics distinguishing the avant-garde novel from its predecessors. Pérez Firmat’s 1993 book *Idle Fictions* takes into account the reaction of contemporary critics to the publication of avant-garde fiction. Del Pino’s book *Montajes y fragmentos* is another important and frequently cited study on avant-garde prose. Del Pino claims that the principal objective of the avant-garde novel in Spain, in addition to the renovation of the novel, was to

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47 For anthologies of Spanish avant-garde prose, see a previous note. 1988 was the Centenary Anniversary of the birth of Benjamín Jarnés. The Institución Fernando el Católico (Zaragoza) published the proceedings of a conference held from September 27-30, 1988, as well as a series titled “Cuadernos Jarnesianos,” a collection of unedited, previously unpublished, writings by Jarnés. See collections of critical essays on the Spanish avant-garde by Harris (1995, 1996), Francis Lough (2000), Fernando Burgos (1986), and María T. Pao and Rafael Hernández-Rodríguez (2002).
substitute the novel that dominated publication at the time, and sought to do so primarily through two techniques: montage and fragmentation.

There are two critics in particular who explore the avant-garde and approximate a study of visuality: María Soledad Fernández Utrera and Robert Hershberger. While in *Visiones de estereoscopia: paradigma de hibridación en el arte y la narrativa de la vanguardia española* (2001), Fernández Utrera discusses both narrative and art, she does not discuss their interartistic comparison, but rather studies them separately in the context of their social commentary. Although Hershberger, in *The Visual Arts in the Novels of Benjamín Jarnés* (1999), does discuss the importance of painting in the novel *Paula y Paulita*, he does not link it to ekphrasis nor to the relationship between word and image. His study also relies heavily on cinematic modes which figure predominately in one of Jarnés’ novels, *Locura y muerte de Nadie* (1929), which is not discussed in this study.
EKPHRASIS: VERBALLY REPRESENTING VISUAL REPRESENTATION

Painting is a mute poetry and poetry a speaking picture [Simonides of Ceos]\(^{48}\)

*ut pictura poesis* [Horace]\(^{49}\)

The first and certainly most influential example of ekphrasis\(^{50}\) in Western literature can be attributed to Homer, with his description of the shield of Achilles. This passage, found in the eighteenth book of the *Iliad* (18.478-608), does not advance the narrative but does provide a vivid description of the object that infuses life and activity into an otherwise static object.\(^{51}\) Ekphrasis, therefore, is not a twentieth-century phenomenon. The interplay between word and image is, according to James A. W. Heffernan, “as old as writing itself in the western world” (9).\(^{52}\) Ekphrasis has, however, become the subject of much critical debate in recent years, a debate which manifests itself in the form of many book length studies and by the fact that there is not a standard definition accepted by all critics for the application

\(^{48}\) Quoted from Plutarch, *Moralia* (346 f) in Jean Hagstrum 10.

\(^{49}\) Quoted from Horace, *Ars poetica* (361) in Hagstrum 3. The translation Hagstrum uses is: “as a painting, so a poem.” Another common translation is “a poem is like a painting”. I find Cosgrove's translation “as with painting, so with poetry” (28n 5) to be superior in conveying the sense that one art form seeks to utilize the conventions of the other art form, in this case, poetry's imitation of painting. Cosgrove makes this distinction to prevent us from misunderstanding Horace's statement “to mean that, quite literally, poetry should be like a picture” (28).

\(^{50}\) It is no longer necessary to italicize the word because of its vast usage and inclusion in various dictionaries.

\(^{51}\) Since it is premature for a conversation on whether ekphrasis is categorized as narration or description, such a discussion will follow. But we can see from the outset of our discussion of ekphrasis that Homer's description is not static, but dynamic.


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and analysis of ekphrasis. What is certain, however, is that ekphrasis is the act of describing with words what is otherwise a strictly spatial, and visual object, and is derived from the inter-artistic comparison between painting and poetry, often referred to as the Sister Arts.

The Roots of Ekphrasis: The Painting-Poetry Analogy and Its Negation

The relationship between word and image that led to the theorizing of ekphrasis finds its genesis in statements by Simonides of Ceos (ca. 556-467 B.C.), as quoted by Plutarch (ca. 46-120), and by Horace (ca. 65-8 B.C.). Both phrases – Simonides’s “painting is a mute poetry and poetry a speaking picture” and Horace’s ut pictura poesis – imply the overlapping of characteristics from one artistic expression to the other. They emphasize poetry acting like painting, rather than the reverse, since ekphrasis is a rhetorical technique, often employed when writing literature. This element also existed in a type of oral tradition. The Greek sophist and rhetorician Himerius (ca. 315-86) explained ekphrasis with his quote “I will draw this for you with words and will make your ears serve as eyes.”

Simonides, however, calls painting inarticulate poetry and poetry articulate painting; for the actions which painters portray as taking place at the moment literature narrates and records after they have taken place. Even though artists with colour and design, and writers with words and phrases, represent the same subjects, they differ in the material and the manner of their imitation; and yet the underlying end and aim of both is one and the same; the most effective historian is he who, by a vivid representation of emotions and characters, makes his narration like a painting. (IV, 501)

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53 Those words can be in the form of spoken dialogue or written text. Many of the studies of ekphrasis begin discussing its manifestation in Ancient Greek Rhetoric, the society itself being characterized by a strong oral tradition. The more modern usage of the term ekphrasis deals with words in the context of written narrative. I will continue to use the phrase “verbal representation” but not in the context of speech delivery, but rather the written word.

54 This can be an actual or imaginary work of art. For imaginary ekphrasis, see John Hollander, “The Poetics of Ekphrasis.” Word and Image 4 (1988): 209-19.

55 See Plutarch’s Moralia, translated from the Greek by Frank Cole Babbitt. The quote appears in the chapter on the glory of the Athenians, “Were the Athenians More Famous in War or in Wisdom?”

56 Quote from Himerius’ Orationes X in Baldwin (18).
proposed to accomplish with words what a painter would accomplish with his brush, bringing before the audience an audible description of an image. These phrases also suggest an antagonistic relationship established between the arts known as *paragone*. Each artistic expression attempted to represent reality through mimesis. The interartistic comparison brings to light a discussion about which art could do so more effectively: painting or poetry. Plato (ca. 428-348 B.C.) and Aristotle (ca. 384-322 B.C.) contribute to the association between these arts with comments in their respective works, the *Republic* and the *Poetics*. Plato states that “the poet is like a painter;” while Aristotle writes “it is the same with painting.” Of the preceding statements, those by Simonides and Horace are most fundamental and represent the point of departure for commentary on the relationship between painting and literature, which would spur discussion and debate through the ages.

The painting-poetry analogy has been a cause for concern for some scholars, chief among them Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729-81), who argued against Horace’s doctrine of *ut pictura poesis*, believing that the “artistic machinery” of painters should not be employed by poets. Lessing’s primary argument is that poetry and painting should apply the modes of representation whose properties are already among the properties of their media. Though he never explicitly uses the word “ekphrasis,” and while many scholars assert his position against ekphrasis, Heffernan notes that Lessing’s dispute is not with poetry about art, but against ekphrasis, Heffernan notes that Lessing’s dispute is not with poetry about art, but

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57 For more on *paragone*, see Hagstrum 66-70. See also 43-46 of this study.
58 Quoted from Plato’s *Republic* (605a) in Hagstrum 3.
59 Quoted from Aristotle’s *Poetics* (1448a, 5) in Hagstrum 3.
60 Though Hagstrum traces the evolution of literary pictorialism (a discussion which includes ekphrasis, *ut pictura poesis*, and iconic poetry) from Antiquity to modern literature, his focus is on English Neoclassical poetry. There are studies that focus on the manifestation of ekphrasis in Antiquity (see Byre, Webb), in medieval literature (see Barbetti, Chaffee), in 16th and 17th century literature (see Bergmann, de Armas, Slater), in 18th and 19th century literature (Spitzer, Mitchell, Heffernan, Krieger) and in modern literature (Frank, Scott, Persin, Klohe).
61 See Wendy Steiner, *Colors of Rhetoric*, 12. Steiner points out that Lessing’s assumption is based on mimesis, the imitation of nature or reality.
with poetry that imitates the style of art. In Chapter Seven of his essay “Laokoön: An Essay on the Limits of Painting and Poetry,” Lessing speaks of two types of imitation that represent two quite different meanings:

When we say that the artist imitates the poet or the poet the artist, we can mean one of two things: either that the one takes the other’s work as his model, or that both work from the same model and one borrows his manner of presentation from the other. (45)

The first type of imitation is acceptable because the artist or poet imitates a work of another art expression or nature. The second type of imitation, on the other hand, mirrors the “manner of presentation,” or the style, employed by the other art form, and “gives us lifeless reflections of the style of another man’s genius rather than his own” (45). Furthermore, it represents for Lessing an act of idolatry, in that the imitation of an imitation denigrates a higher being, or makes it a puppet. In ascribing the style of a painter to his poetry, or eliciting the act of giving voice to an object, the poet converts a superior being into a lifeless doll (60). This unacceptable imitation for Lessing stems from the statements of Horace and Simonides.

The Genesis of a Theory: Krieger, Mitchell, and Heffernan

In presenting a theory of the inter-artistic comparison between the visual object and the written word, some critics have ascribed a specific and restrictive set of characteristics to

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62 See Heffernan, Museum of Words, 192n 7.
63 All quotes of Lessing’s essay are from Edward Allen McCormick’s translation, reprinted in 1984.
define ekphrasis, while others have used the term simply to refer to a rhetorical device employed by authors from classical to modern literature. Tracing the etymological roots of the word leads us to the Greek word *ekphrazein*, which means to speak out or to tell in full. The Greek root of ekphrasis implies both giving voice to an otherwise mute object and to fully describing a visual object. Definitions of ekphrasis also vary from dictionary to dictionary, providing critics with flexibility in the application of the term. Some critics use the less exclusive *Oxford Classical Dictionary* definition, “the rhetorical description of a work of art.” According to this broader definition, the prosopopoeic function of ekphrasis becomes only one of its many characteristics. The most recent edition of the *OCD* defines ekphrasis as “an extended and detailed literary description of any object, real or imaginary.” This definition informs my understanding of ekphrasis because it offers the flexibility needed to better appreciate the avant-garde novels published during a time when authors as well as artists were experimenting with genre and approaches to their respective media.

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64 Hagstrom utilizes the Greek root of the work, ekphrazein, in which *ek* mean “out”, and *phrazein* means “to tell, declare, pronounce,” to distinguish between ekphrasis and pictorialism. His use of ekphrasis is, therefore, more limited, referring only to “that special quality of giving voice and language to the otherwise mute art object” (18n 34), than the one which I will employ. For example, I include iconicity and pictorialism in my definition of ekphrasis. We shall come to a discussion of these two important terms shortly.


66 Hagstrom represents an important influence in the theorization of ekphrasis, but uses the term in such a limited context that Krieger, Mitchell and Heffernan become the driving forces behind the development of the theories (or, in this case, applications) of ekphrasis which are highly regarded and frequently cited in other ekphrastic studies.

67 The *Concise Oxford Dictionary of Art Terms* offers another less restrictive definition: “a rhetoric manner devised in ancient Roman literature for the vivid description of works of art, whether real or imaginary.” The *Oxford English Dictionary* definition, “a plain declaration or interpretation of a thing,” is an example of a definition that reaches the opposite end of the spectrum in its unrestrictive nature, and therefore is not useful to my study. In the introduction of his *Patterns of Intention*, Michael Baxandall presents a description written by the fourth-century Greek Libanius that closely approximates the OED definition of ekphrasis. Libanius’ description represents “thought after seeing a picture” (4) and can be understood better as an interpretation than a description. For more about the various definitions of ekphrasis, see Heffernan 191n 2.
Saintsbury also provides a useful way of conceptualizing the objective of ekphrasis, which he defines as “a set description intended to bring person, place, picture, etc. before the mind’s eye” (qtd. in Hagstrum 18n 34).

One fundamental attempt to theorize the relationship between word and image can be attributed to Murray Krieger. In his 1967 essay “The Ekphrastic Principle and the Still Movement of Poetry; or Laokoön Revisited,” Krieger explains that ekphrasis is a stilling of the narration in order to describe an object. As the title suggests, Krieger re-examines Lessing’s fear of mixing what is natural to poetry and what is natural to painting by observing poets who imitate metaphors from the more “spatial arts.” Using Keats’s “Ode to a Grecian Urn” as his primary example, Krieger explains ekphrasis as the imitation in literature of a work of plastic art. The object of imitation, as spatial work, becomes the metaphor for the temporal work which seeks to capture it in that temporality. The spatial work freezes the temporal work even as the latter seeks to free it from space. *Ekphrasis* concerns me here, then, to the extent that I see it introduced in order to use a plastic object as a symbol of the frozen, stilled world of plastic relationships which must be superimposed upon literature’s turning world to ‘still’ it. (Krieger 265-6)

Wendy Steiner agrees with Krieger and his establishing of the stilling effects of ekphrasis, when she states that ekphrasis is derived from “the still-moment topos in the visual arts” (48) or, what she calls in other parts of her book, the pregnant moment in painting.

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68 The essay also appears in the Appendix of his 1992 book *Ekphrasis: The Illusion of the Natural Sign*, 263-88. I will quote from the book.
Dependent as it is on literary sources, the pregnant moment\(^9\) in painting has in turn generated a literary topos in which poetry is to imitate the visual arts by stopping time, or more precisely, by referring to an action through a still moment that implies it. The technical term for this is *ekphrasis*, the concentration of action in a single moment of energy, and it is borrowing from the visual arts. (*Colors of Rhetoric* 41)\(^{70}\)

The issue of time and space is as fundamental for Krieger as it is for Lessing. Ekphrastic description stands as a metaphor for the spatial work, i.e. a painting; and creates a “still movement,” or, stated another way, arrests the movement of the temporal work, i.e. a poem. Krieger further states that ekphrasis is no longer characterized as an imitation, or simply a kind of literary production, but can be understood as “a general principle of poetics, asserted by every poem in its assertion of integrity” (284).

Heffernan categorizes Krieger’s essay as “the single most influential attempt to articulate a theory of ekphrasis” (Heffernan 2) but he dismisses this ekphrastic principle as a new name for formalism. Instead, Heffernan proposes a definition of ekphrasis as “the

\(^9\) Steiner’s use of the term “pregnant moment,” comes from Lessing’s *Laokoön*, where he mentions that painting should choose the moment of action “which is most suggestive and from which the preceding and succeeding actions are most easily comprehensible” (78).

\(^{70}\) A similar quote is found in her *Pictures of Romance*.

This mode of representing temporal events as action stopped at its climatic moment, or at a moment that implies but does not show what preceded [sic] and what follows it, Lessing called the “pregnant moment.” It gave rise to the literary topos of *ekphrasis* in which a poem aspires to the atemporal ‘eternity’ of the stopped-action painting, or laments its inability to achieve it … ekphrastic painting and poetry refer to temporal events without being strongly narrative. (13-14)

In regards to this last statement in particular, I tend to agree more with Heffernan’s position that ekphrasis does has a strong narrative impulse.
verbal representation of graphic representation” (3) asserting that ekphrasis can only represent that which is representational. This viewpoint, Heffernan argues, posits ekphrasis as a distinguishable mode and provides an effective way of binding together ekphrastic literature from Homer to John Ashbery (4). So what Krieger establishes as a “principle” of poetics, Heffernan reduces to a mode and is therefore able to place ekphrasis in classical literature on the same level with modern literature.

Even though many critics have presented their views of ekphrasis, there is not one standard definition of the term. The broad scope of the term is problematic in that it creates discrepancies among studies of ekphrasis. The term has been revised and changed by modern critics.71 The term also has been approached from multiple disciplines, from the perspective of art history to literary theory, from rhetoric to that of semiotics and cognitive theory.72 All studies of ekphrasis cite the statements made by Horace, Simonides and Himerius, as well as those by Plato and Aristotle, however, thus providing the basis for the beginnings of a theorization of ekphrasis.

**Ekphrasis in Spanish Literature: Bergmann, De Armas, Klohe and Persin**

Ekphrasis is a rhetorical device studied not only by critics of English literature, semiotics and art history, but also has been treated by scholars in the field of Hispanic Studies. Margaret Persin, in her book *Getting the Picture: The Ekphrastic Principle in Twentieth-Century Spanish Poetry* (1997), establishes the necessity to broaden one’s definition of


ekphrasis, primarily because of what she calls “uncanonized forms” of the arts, to include references to cinematography, photography and other forms of mass culture and mass media. She leans heavily on Krieger’s theorization of ekphrasis, which one can infer from the title alone.

Emilie Bergmann’s book, Art Inscribed: Essays on Ekphrasis in Spanish Golden Age Poetry (1979), represents one of the first ekphrastic studies on Spanish literature. Bergmann’s approach to ekphrasis stems from Leo Spitzer’s work and also responds to that of Hagstrum. Bergmann employs the definition of ekphrasis used by Spitzer, “the poetic description of a pictorial or sculptural work of art” (1) which broadens Hagstrum’s narrowed scope of ekphrasis, which only refers to that text which gives voice to muted objects. While Hagstrum traces the etymology of ekphrasis to the term “giving voice,” Bergmann, like Spitzer before him, prefers “to report in detail” or “to elaborate upon.”

Frederick de Armas edited a collection of essays and also wrote a book-length study on ekphrasis in Early Modern Spanish literature, what he labels “The Age of Cervantes.” In his collection of edited essays, Ekphrasis in the Age of Cervantes, his introductory article serves to present the various types of ekphrasis, which he classifies according to their subject, form and function. This is particularly helpful because de Armas explains that “most literary ekphrases cannot be held to just one of the above categories” (23).

Persin contrasts these new forms of arts with the nine Muses of classical mythology (18), among them painting, sculpture, architecture, history, comedy, tragedy and music. She lists the Muses in an endnote (219).

The following passage includes the types of ekphrasis presented by de Armas and a brief description of each:

Perhaps the least important type and the most difficult to classify is ekphrasis according to subject. As such, it can be hagiographic, mythological, grotesque, historical, or based on a landscape, to name but a few. In terms of form and function, ekphrasis can be allegorical, emblematic, decorative, or veiled; and it can serve as a rhetorical or mnemonic devise (or both) … In terms of pictorial models and how these are used, ekphrasis can be notional
One final study of ekphrasis in Spanish literature to consider is *El imperativo ekfrástico en la prosa de Ramón Gómez de la Serna* by Carmen Fernández Klohe. In her book, adapted from her dissertation “Descripción y ékfrasis en la prosa de Ramón Gómez de la Serna,” Klohe also utilizes a generalized definition of ekphrasis, following that of Krieger and of ancient rhetoric, “una descripción vívida, enérgicamente expresiva y visualmente convincente de lo que llamaremos un motivo icónico – que puede ser una obra de arte o un objeto cotidiano” (85). This work in particular informs this study because Klohe analyzes ekphrasis in avant-garde prose, but while she takes her cue from Krieger, my use of ekphrasis stems from those of Heffernan and Mitchell.

These studies indicate that ekphrasis is neither a technique found exclusively in avant-garde texts, nor is invented by avant-garde authors. Ekphrasis has been studied within 16th and 17th century texts as well as modern literature. While ekphrasis is employed within the 16th century novel through the 19th century in order to faithfully represent a visual object, avant-garde authors, those within the “Nova Novorum” collection in particular, (based on an imagined work of art), or actual or true (based on a real work of art). It can be combinatorial (combining two or more works of art), transformative (changing some elements in the art work into others that can be connected to the original ones), metadescrptive [sic] (based on a textual description of a work of art which may or may not exist), or fragmented (using parts of a work). Ekphrasis can conform to the traditional pause in a narrative to describe an object (descriptive ekphrasis), or it can tell the story depicted in the art work [sic] – and even expand on the incidents (narrative ekphrasis). There is also the ekphrasis of an object that is being created, such as Vulcan’s forging of Achilles’ shield – a shaping ekphrasis. Finally, an ekphrasis can be contained within another ekphrasis, creating a meta-ekphrasis such as that drawing of the battle with the Basque within the description of the discovered manuscript of don Quixote in Chapter Nine of the novel. (21-2)

De Armas also goes on to mention four other types of ekphrasis: allusive, interpolated, dramatic, and collectionist (the last one being a set of ekphrases grouped together).

Klohe defines ekphrasis as “a vivid, energetically expressive and visually convincing description of what we would call an iconic motif, which could be a work of art or an everyday object.” [translation mine]
employ the technique to different ends, namely to manipulate the images and to activate them within the narrative.

The Avant-Garde Notion of Ekphrasis: Skillful Deception

This study analyzes the interaction between literature and the visual arts in novels whose authors were entertaining and experimenting with drastic changes to earlier approaches to writing fiction, during a time when painters were undergoing radical changes in their approach to the canvas, particularly in terms of perspective, mimesis and representation. For these reasons it will be necessary to utilize a rather overarching definition of ekphrasis. Therefore, I will employ a broader definition than that which either Hagstrum or Heffernan propose. Hagstrum limits his use of ekphrasis to “that special quality of giving voice and language to the otherwise mute art object” (18n 34), which stems from the Greek root of the word *ekphræzein* and Simonides’s assertion that poetry is a speaking picture. What Hagstrum labels as iconic, I will include as ekphrastic. Heffernan proposes a “verbal representation of graphic representation” (3), that includes *paragone*, pictorialism, and prosopopoeia. Heffernan places emphasis on “graphic” representation in order to “distinguish ekphrasis from two other ways of mingling literature and the visual arts – pictorialism and iconicity” (3). His use of ekphrasis is limited to that which is representational, or that which “explicitly represents representation itself” (4), and eliminates pictorialism and iconicity, claiming that each of them aim to “represent natural objects and artifacts rather than works of representational art” (3).

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76 I must express my thanks to Dr. Robert Jensen for the suggestion that these authors use ekphrasis to deceive rather than to describe.
77 I will include a more expanded usage of ekphrasis to include what Hagstrum calls “iconic,” or when the subject of a description is a work of art.
While Heffernan dismisses these two devices, in my study pictorialism and iconicity will play an important role in linking word and image. Pictorialism in literature imitates pictorial techniques and its roots can be traced to the doctrine of *ut pictura poesis*, the term first used by Horace to mean “as a painting, so a poem.” Pictorialism, which implicitly references the visual arts, is common in the novels I will analyze in this study. This implicit reference to a work of art is also called “allusive ekphrasis” by Frederick de Armas. “Here the work of art is not described, nor is a narrative created from its images. Instead, the poet, playwright or novelist simply refers to a painter, a work of art, or even to a feature that may apply to a work of art” (22). Allusive ekphrasis can be seen in Benjamín Jarnés’ novel, *Paula y Paulita*, in which the narrator evokes the art of Juan Gris (1887-1927), for example. The reader is not given a description of a work by Gris but ekphrasis takes place as the reader mentally envisions the artist’s works. Espina also alludes to a feature found within an artist’s work in his novel *Pájaro pinto*. The narrator of this novel mentions colors characteristic of the work of two painters, Paolo Veronese and Giambattista Tiepolo. Espina also mentions the technique of chiaroscuro typical of paintings by Eugène Carrière. I propose a definition of ekphrasis that includes pictorialism, or allusive ekphrasis, which occurs as the reader mentally conjures up the image, color, style or technique, to which the authors allude.

I also approach ekphrasis in terms of its commentary on genre. Avant-garde authors turn to this rhetorical device, which is traditionally linked to poetry, in order to suture two genres, poetry and prose, or in order to create an ambiguity of genre characteristic of the “new fiction.” I will explore the ekphrastic moments found in these narrations in terms of the relationship between word and image, time and space, and the hermeneutics of ekphrasis. I will observe the descriptions of visual representations, with a focus on the

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78 See de Armas, “Simple Magic: Ekphrasis from Antiquity to the Age of Cervantes” in *Ekphrasis in the Age of Cervantes.*
philosophical aspect of ekphrasis. I will also examine the temporal and spatial dimensions of the ekphrastic description, in terms of both the object and the discourse in which the description appears. Finally, I will explore the moment in terms of its interpretation and the implications on the reception of the work of art.

The novels published in the “Nova Novorum” provide many intersections between verbal and visual representations, in which the author seizes the opportunity to present his views of art. These ekphrastic moments afford young avant-garde authors the ability either to reject or to incorporate their own national artistic traditions, during a period of intense Europeanization of art. Allusions to the work of even the most well known artists in Spain, such as Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), Diego Velázquez (1599-1660) and Francisco Goya (1747-1828), do not necessarily figure as prominently in these texts as do references to artists from outside of the peninsula.
“LA DESHUMANIZACIÓN DEL ARTE”: VISION, PERSPECTIVE, AND THE ARTS

Pero luego, haciendo un esfuerzo, podemos desentendernos del jardín y, retractando el rayo ocular, detenerlo en el vidrio.

[Ortega y Gasset, “La deshumanización del arte” (1925)]

Ortega y Gasset’s Essay and Mitchell’s Concept of Ekphrasis

One aim of this dissertation is to make connections between ekphrasis and the thought of Ortega y Gasset. Certain elements of Ortega y Gasset’s essay serve to create points of connection with the theories of ekphrasis, primarily the one proposed by Mitchell. Vision, perspective and a link to the arts are themes that resonate in both Ortega y Gasset’s essay and in theories of ekphrasis.

The first and most obvious connection between “The Dehumanization of Art” and ekphrasis is found in the metaphor that explains the goals of “new” or avant-garde art in regards to language and visual culture: that of viewing a garden through a windowpane. Ortega y Gasset contrasts the human element and the aesthetic element, and explains that new art avoids the human in search of the aesthetic. The human is represented by the garden and the aesthetic is the windowpane, or the language used to describe the garden. In this case the windowpane provides the means by which the viewer/reader can see the visual representation. The essay proposes that to focus on the language the viewer must

79 Obras completas III, 358. Weyl’s translation is as follows: “But we can also deliberately disregard the garden and, withdrawing the ray of vision, detain it at the window” (10).
accommodate his or her perception. Ortega y Gasset suggests that if the ocular accommodation is inadequate then the viewer won’t see or will partly see the object, which leads to misunderstanding. One can either see the object or the windowpane; but perception of the reality (the garden) and the artistic form (language) are incompatible for most people because they require a different accommodation of our receptor apparatus. In Realist narrative, language seemingly becomes invisible in order to create the image, but Ortega y Gasset argues that the artists of the avant-garde have shifted their focus from the visual object (the human) to the language and their works reflect a subsequent “ocular accommodation.”

If ekphrasis is the verbal representation of a visual representation, or in Orteguian terms the windowpane which offers a view of the garden; how, then, does this ocular accommodation alter the reader’s perception of the visual object in his/her re-inscription of words into image? Is the reader then able to picture a mimetic virtuosity or a distortion of reality? What difference is there between the ekphrastic experience provided by avant-garde authors and other previous implementations of ekphrasis?

A second point of connection between ekphrasis and “The Dehumanization of Art” is in Ortega y Gasset’s explanation of perspective. In another section of the essay, the example of a man on his deathbed introduces multiple points of view, or multiple realities, which are distinguished by the spiritual distance of each person from the tragic event. The wife of the dying man described in this essay represents a minimal spiritual distance and a maximum sentimental intervention; she doesn’t contemplate but rather lives the experience. The doctor attending to the dying man is at a little distance from the reality. He lives the experience and intervenes not out of a motivation from personal emotion but rather due to his professional obligation. The reporter is remote from the reality; he experiences pure spectacle. He contemplates, rather than lives the experience. Furthermore, he pretends to
have lived it in order to report the event. Finally, the artist is indifferent to the event. His perspective of the reality is purely contemplative; he represents the maximum of spiritual distance and the minimum of sentimental intervention. In establishing the opposition of lived reality and contemplative reality Ortega y Gasset shows that avant-garde artists achieve dehumanization by avoiding the lived, or human, perspective. Mitchell introduces a similar condition produced by ekphrasis by suggesting not a binary opposition between subject and object, but rather a triangle between subject, object and audience. This triangle establishes multiple viewpoints in approximating ekphrasis. The visual object is converted by the author into a verbal representation which then must be reconverted back to a visual object by the reader. Mitchell explains that “the ekphrastic poet typically stands in a middle position between the object described or addressed and a listening subject who (if ekphrastic hope is fulfilled) will be made to ‘see’ the object through the medium of the poet’s voice” (164).

Ortega y Gasset’s mention of iconoclasm and Mitchell’s moment of “ekphrastic fear” provide a third connection between the two texts. Ortega y Gasset cites Porphyry’s sentiment that “Everything bodily should be avoided” (“Omne corpus fugiendum est”) as

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80 Mitchell describes three “moments” or phases of realization produced by ekphrasis: “ekphrastic indifference,” “ekphrastic hope” and “ekphrastic fear.” The first phase of ekphrasis is “ekphrastic indifference,” a belief that verbally representing pictures is impossible. This phase conveys the belief that language is incapable of making images present in the same way as pictures. The inability of verbal representations to reach the level of visual representation transforms ekphrasis into a minor, obscure literary genre or a general topic of little importance.

In the second phase, “ekphrastic hope,” language is able to make the viewer visualize the object described. The doctrines of *ut pictura poesis* and the Sister Arts provide descriptions that bring images to the mind’s eye. Mitchell explains that these doctrines “are mobilized to put language at the service of vision” (153). This phase represents the endless possibilities of ekphrastic literature. The gulf between image and text (image/text) is overcome and sutured into a synthetic form, or verbal icon, that he calls “imagetext.”

The third and final phase, “ekphrastic fear,” represents a counter-desire to ekphrasis and has its roots in the sentiment of Lessing expressed in the *Laokoön*. In this phase the success of words to paint a picture is seen as idolatry and there is a desire to contain visual and verbal arts in pre-established, strict parameters. See Mitchell 152-6.
the inspiration for the iconoclastic sentiment and slogan of the avant-garde. This desire to destroy visual objects, in many cases religious icons, is motivated by a reaction against idolatry and can be related to one of Mitchell’s reactions to ekphrasis. The belief that words can stand in for images quickly ushers in a third phase, “ekphrastic fear,” or rather, a counter-desire to ekphrasis. The realization that verbal representation may literally represent the visual triggers a moral, aesthetic imperative. Mitchell provides Lessing’s *Laokoön* as the classic example of this ekphrastic moment. Lessing sees the literary emulation of the visual arts as an invitation to idolatry.

If ekphrastic hope involves what Françoise Meltzer has called a ‘reciprocity’ or free exchange and transference between visual and verbal art, ekphrastic fear perceives this reciprocity as a dangerous promiscuity and tries to regulate the borders with firm distinctions between the senses, modes of representation, and the objects proper to each. (155)

Fourthly, “Deshumanización” and Mitchell’s concept of ekphrasis are connected in their use of metaphor, which Ortega y Gasset explains as “probablemente la potencia más fértil que el hombre posee. Su eficiencia llega a tocar los confines de la taumaturgia … Sólo la metáfora nos facilita la evasión y crea entre las cosas reales arrecifes imaginarios, florecimiento de islas” (372). For Ortega y Gasset, metaphor allows for the dehumanization of art not only in that it avoids the natural, but also that it is hostile towards it. “El arma
lírica se revuelve contra las cosas naturales y las vulnera o asesina” (374). While the Spanish philosopher sees metaphor in terms of its evasiveness, Mitchell explains that metaphor is one of the means by which ekphrasis is able to overcome the chasm between word and image. These two concepts stand in opposition of each other and ekphrasis is the means of bridging the gap between them.

In his chapter on ekphrasis, “Ekphrasis and the Other,” Mitchell explores the idea of otherness in respect to ekphrasis. The goal of ekphrastic hope is the overcoming of this otherness. Mitchell establishes the semiotic “other” to textuality as the visual, graphic, plastic, or “spatial” arts. Seen from the opposing standpoint, the “other” to the visual representation is the textual one, thus developed into a relationship “in which ‘self’ is understood to be an active, speaking, seeing subject, while the ‘other’ is projected as a passive, seen, and (usually) silent object” (157). The encounter of ekphrasis with literature is a purely figurative relationship where the “other” must remain absent, or alien. Ekphrasis becomes a conjuring up of the visual image, requiring a special or magical quality of language. Some would argue that textual descriptions of visual representations do not differ from descriptions of narrations.

Mitchell suggests that there is confusion between differences in medium and differences in meaning, but also an assumption that the medium is the message. He points out that the visual arts, in addition to possessing spatial, static, corporeal and shapely characteristics can also narrate, argue, and signify abstract ideas; just like verbal representations not only provide arguments, ideas, and narratives but can “embody static,

81 Both quotes are from Ortega y Gasset’s Obras completas III. Weyl’s translation reads: “The metaphor is perhaps one of man’s most fruitful potentialities. Its efficacy verges on magic … The metaphor alone furnishes an escape; between the real things, it lets emerge imaginary reefs, a crop of floating islands” (33) and “The weapon of poetry turns against natural things and wounds or murders them” (35).

82 Imagination aids metaphor in overcoming the impossibility of ekphrasis. See Mitchell 152.
spatial states of affairs, and achieve all of the effects of ekphrasis without any deformation of their ‘natural’ vocation” (160). This multidimensionality of both visual and verbal representations leads to the notion in general semiotics that there is, semantically speaking, essentially no difference between texts and images. Another lesson from semiotics is “that there are important differences between visual and verbal media at the level of sign-types, forms, materials of representation, and institutional traditions” (161). Why then, does ekphrasis exist, let alone become necessary? Mitchell uses the argument based on the relationship between the self and the other.

It isn’t just that the text/image difference ‘resembles’ the relation of self and other, but that the most basic pictures of epistemological and ethical encounters (knowledge of objects, acknowledgement of subjects) involve optical/discursive figures of knowledge and power that are embedded in essentialized categories like ‘the visual’ and ‘the verbal.’ (163)

Mitchell relates the otherness of ekphrasis to that of race relations and Western thought. He quotes Wlad Godzich, “Western thought has always thematized the other as a threat to be reduced, as a potential same-to-be, a yet-not-same” (163), to draw a parallel to the ekphrastic phases. Ekphrastic fear being the “threat to be reduced”, ekphrastic hope as the “potential same-to-be” and ekphrastic indifference as “yet-not-same.”

The concept of otherness is found in the philosophy of Ortega y Gasset as well. For the Spanish philosopher, modern art has a polarizing effect on the public. The new art creates a division between those who understand it and those who do not, creating a hostile relationship between two classes of people, similar to that of Mitchell’s notion of ekphrastic
fear. An antagonistic attitude toward the other is a characteristic of both the avant-garde as well as ekphrasis.\footnote{In this section I have pointed to similarities between Ortega y Gasset’s essay about the avant-garde and one critic’s approach to ekphrasis. In Chapter 2 I will explore other connections between ekphrasis and the avant-garde, with antagonism (as defined by Poggioli) being one such link.}

**Conclusions and Chapters**

In discussing ekphrastic moments in the “Nova Novorum” collection, this dissertation will examine the visual objects described within the texts. What sorts of images do avant-garde authors choose to describe and incorporate into their narrations? What role does the rapid advance of technological innovations play in the framing of the visual objects described by the authors of the “Nova Novorum” collection? The second chapter will explore the relationship between word and image as well as identify the framing devices used by the authors to set parameters around an ekphrastic moment. This dissertation will also explore the temporal and spatial aspect of ekphrasis. The ekphrastic description creates a pause in the narration of actions, a moment to which Krieger gives the antithetical label “still movement.” The second chapter will discuss the relationship of time and space in regard to narration and description. Can narrative be considered purely temporal? On the other hand, is an image strictly a spatial work? If narrative is restricted to temporal progress, how does the inclusion of detailed descriptions interrupt the passage of time in a narration? To what extent does an ekphrastic moment constitute a pause? I will argue that while it has been argued and illustrated in works from other literary movements that ekphrasis frustrates narrative progress; ekphrasis in the works of avant-garde authors involve a high level of activity. Additionally, the ekphrastic moment allows the author to initiate a meta-discourse in which to present their evaluations and judgments of the objects described. Their views on
the visual arts are particularly important to consider in determining if the authors uphold or challenge the conventional, art historical analysis of the objects. What is implicit, on the level of interpretation, in the choice of the artists and visual works of art referenced and subsequently manipulated by avant-garde texts? The hermeneutics of ekphrasis will be discussed in the second chapter as well. In the third, fourth and fifth chapters I will investigate ekphrastic moments within the works by the three authors respectively: Benjamín Jarnés, Antonio Espina and Pedro Salinas. The final chapter will serve to make general conclusions.
CHAPTER 2: THREE ASPECTS OF EKPHRASIS

The interplay between word and image, the relationship between time and space, and the concepts of hermeneutics and iconology are three ideas found consistently in studies of ekphrasis. These are also vital elements to the literary texts analyzed in this study. This chapter will explore those aspects of ekphrasis before dealing with the images described within the texts in the next three chapters.

EKPHRASIS: WORD AND IMAGE

Word and image are two terms that are indispensable when discussing ekphrasis. Reduced to a rudimentary explanation, ekphrasis is words about images. Upon further examination of this term, ekphrasis takes a central position between word and image, at times representing a central link to unify them and at other times a competition between the two. The two are integral because an ekphrastic passage cannot emerge without, first, the existence of an image and, second, the combination of words to verbally represent that image, whether spoken or written in a text.

A discussion of the analogy of word and image must begin with the two famous aphorisms mentioned in Chapter One: Simonides’s statement that “painting is a mute poetry, poetry a speaking picture” and Horace’s axiom of *ut pictura poesis*. These maxims suggest that the relationship between word and image has at times been so close that the two

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84 There are a number of studies on *ut pictura poesis*. The most important is by Rensselaer Lee. See also Alpers, “Ut Pictura Noesis? Criticism in Literary Studies and Art History” and Barkan, “Making Pictures Speak, Renaissance Art, Elizabethan Literature, Modern Scholarship.” In “The *Laokoon* Today, Interart Relations, Modern Projects and Projections,” Sternberg focuses on Lessing’s attack of the doctrine. See also Dolders for a bibliography of other studies of *ut pictura poesis*.
are labeled the Sister Arts.\textsuperscript{85} By examining treatises on art and literature, Rensselaer Lee observes that the relationship between painting and poetry is so intimate that, in fact, though they differ in means and manner of expression, are “considered almost identical in fundamental nature, in content, and in purpose” (197).\textsuperscript{86} The comparison between the two arts is strong enough that painters have been referred to as poets and poets as painters.\textsuperscript{87}

However, the interplay between word and image has not always been well received. Both poets (representing with words) and painters (representing with images) have taken exception to having their respective artistic expressions compared with one another. The Sister Arts comparison has led to competition, with each art seeking to supplant the other as a superior expression. During the Italian Renaissance, for example, the term \textit{paragone} referred to the rivalry that existed primarily among painting, poetry and sculpture, with each artistic expression seeking to emerge as preeminent.\textsuperscript{88} Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519), for example,

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\item For more see Hagstrum, \textit{The Sister Arts}. In this important study, he traces the tradition of literary pictorialism through the traditions of Antiquity, the Christian Era, the Renaissance, the Baroque and in English Neoclassicism. The second part of the book focuses on English poets John Dryden, Alexander Pope, James Thomson, William Collins and Thomas Gray.
\item See Lee, “\textit{Ut Pictura Poesis: The Humanistic Theory of Painting}.” Lee’s article, published in 1967 in book format, remains one of the fundamental studies on the doctrine of \textit{ut pictura poesis}. He begins by examining treatises written about art and literature in the middle of the sixteenth century and middle of the eighteenth century, focusing on the points of intersection with the analogy of painting and poetry. He credits two ancient treatises in particular with the establishment of a deep connection between the Sister Arts in the Renaissance in particular: Aristotle’s \textit{Poetics} and Horace’s \textit{Ars Poetica}. He then goes on to examine, in 9 sections, doctrines common both to humanistic painters as well as those found in the doctrine of \textit{ut pictura poesis}. Those characteristics, and by extension the section titles, include Imitation, Invention, Expression, Instruction and Delight, Decorum, The Learned Painter, Rinaldo and Armida, Virtu Visiva and The Unity of Action.
\item Lee cites comments made by Ludovico Dulce, Lomazzo and Sir Joshua Reynolds. Reynolds in particular refers to Shakespeare as a painter and Michelangelo as a poet.
\item For more on \textit{paragone}, see also Hagstrum, \textit{The Sister Arts}, 66-70; Mitchell, \textit{Iconology}, 47-9; and Belsey, “Invocation of the Visual Image: Ekphrasis in \textit{Lucrece} and Beyond,” 185-8. In his \textit{Museum of Words}, Heffernan affirms that “the most promising line of inquiry in the field of Sister Arts studies in the one drawn by Mitchell’s \textit{Iconology}, which treats the relation between literature and the visual arts as essentially \textit{paragonal}, a struggle for dominance between the image and the word” (1).
\end{thebibliography}
pitted historians, poets and mathematicians against painters, predictably favoring his own artistic expression.

If you, historians or poets or mathematicians, had not seen things through your eyes, you would only be able to report them feebly in your writings. And you, poet, should you wish to depict a story as if painting with your pen, the painter with his brush will more likely succeed. … The works of nature are far more worthy than words, which are the products of man, because there is the same relationship between the works of man and those of nature as between man and god. Therefore, it is nobler to imitate things in nature, which are in fact the real images, than to imitate, in words, the words and deeds of man.⁸⁹

Da Vinci argues that painting represents the highest form of expression because it imitates nature. The artist, through mimesis, is able to display his ability to create, or recreate nature. Leon Battiste Alberti (1404-72) also argues for the supremacy of the visual arts based on the painter’s creative abilities.

The virtues of painting, therefore, are that its masters see their works admired and feel themselves to be almost like the Creator. … So I would venture to assert that whatever beauty there is in things has been derived from painting.⁹⁰

In his argument for the supremacy of painting, da Vinci uses the link to the sense of sight to support his claim. According to da Vinci, painting is supreme because it correlates to the sense of sight, the noblest of the senses.

The imagination does not see as well as does the eye, because the eye receives the images or likenesses of objects, transmits them to the impressionable mind, and this in turn sends them to the community of the senses, where they are judged.\(^91\)

While Alberti argues that painting is the greatest expression of beauty, da Vinci makes the same argument for truth, equating vision with facts and hearing with words. His claim is that painting corresponds to an objective reality while poetry corresponds to a subjective one. “There is the same relationship between facts and words that there is between painting and poetry, because facts are subject to the eye and words are subject to the ear” (12). It is no surprise that da Vinci and Alberti prefer the visual arts to verbal expressions, but *paragone* can be observed from the literary perspective as well. Literature does not always have a mimetic aim. In addition to imitating nature, there are two other purposes of verbal expression, serving to link word and image: *prosopopoeia*\(^92\) and *enargeia*.\(^93\) The first figure of speech (*prosopopoeia*) means to give voice to an otherwise inanimate

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\(^92\) Some critics speak of the same term but have spelled it *prosopopeia*. See Bergmann, Riffatere, Rigolot and Yacobi. For more on *prosopopoeia*, see Alexander, Barkan, Heffernan and Sternberg.

\(^93\) Various definitions of ekphrasis incorporate these terms. Hagstrum uses only the function of *prosopopoeia* as his basis for ekphrasis, excluding descriptions of works of art, which he calls “iconic.” See Hagstrum 18n 34.
object. The potentialities of this concept, along with Simonides’s declaration, serve to support *paragone*, with poetry claiming the superior role. In his *Figures of Speech*, Fontanier also provides a helpful definition of the term.

Prosopopeia, that must not be confused with personification, apostrophe or dialogism, which however do almost always occur with it, consists in staging, as it were, absent, dead, supernatural or even inanimate beings. These are made to act, speak, answer as is our wont. At the very least these beings can be made into confidants, witnesses, accusers, avengers, judges, etc.

Words are able to give voice to the object, then, whereas painting is characterized by one-dimensional and silent communication. This ventriloquist-like ability of a verbal description, which both Simonides and Sidney call a “speaking picture,” elevates the status of verbal expression over that of visual expression.

Paragone is also championed by verbal representation through the achievement in literature of *enargeia*, a term used by Dionysius of Halicarnassus (ca. 60-7 B.C.) to denote a stylistic effect in which an object is described in such a way as to allow the listener (or

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94 This concept is similar to the statement made by Simonides, “painting is a mute poetry and poetry a speaking picture.” It should be also noted that da Vinci mocked this statement, saying: “if painting is mute poetry, poetry is blind painting” in his *Paragone* (55, 59).
95 Quoted from Fontanier (404 ff.), in Riffaterre, “Prosopopeia,” 107. Riffaterre points out that Fontanier’s definition summarized 9.2.31 of Quintilian’s *Institutio oratoria*.
96 Sir Phillip Sidney (1554-1586) echoed Simonides’s sentiment in his *An Apology for Poetry (or The Defense of Poetry)*.

Poesy therefore is an art of imitation, for so Aristotle termeth it in his work *mimesis*, that is to say, a representing, counterfeiting, or figuring forth – to speak metaphorically, a speaking picture – with this end, to teach and delight. (86 lines 17-20).

Sidney’s statement, like Simonides’s before him, points to the effect of *prosopopoeia* in mimetic or ekphrastic poetry.
reader) to become an eyewitness.\(^{97}\) The term has also been equated with “pictorial vividness” or verisimilitude. \(\textit{Enargeia,}\) likewise, points to the superiority of verbal expression (whether through rhetoric, poetry or prose) in the interartistic comparison with visual representation.\(^ {98}\)

The link between word and image mentioned in many studies of ekphrasis and outlined previously can be traced to Antiquity. \(\textit{Eikones, Imagines}\) and the exercise of \(\textit{Progymnasmata}\) are words about works of art, and have influenced the evolution of the notion of ekphrasis. In the dialogue entitled \(\textit{Eikones,}\) Lucian (ca. 125-80) provides the reader with a description of a woman, but uses allusions to well-known contemporary works of art to help the audience imagine her appearance. \(\textit{Imagines}\) by Philostratus the Elder (ca. 190-230) are “a series of descriptions of pictures regarded as exemplary exercises in the art of rhetorical description.”\(^ {99}\) In this text, Philostratus describes the works of art, which were said to exist in

\(^{97}\) Graham Zanker traces the usage of this term in Ancient criticism of poetry, derivatives of the Greek term used by Latin authors, such as “\(\textit{demonstratio, evidentia, illustratio, repraesentatio}\) and \(\textit{sub oculos subjectio.}\)” See Zanker, 298-304.

The ancient testimonia, therefore, demonstrate that \(\textit{enargeia}\) and its Latin equivalents denote that stylistic quality of descriptive representation which makes a vivid appeal to the senses, in particular to sight; a number add the consideration that it will be produced by detailed description of the attendant circumstances of an action. (299-300).

\(^{98}\) Hagstrum, in \textit{The Sister Arts}, makes the important distinction between \(\textit{enargeia}\) and \(\textit{energeia}.\)

The difference between the two is eloquent. \(\textit{Enargeia}\) implies the achievement in verbal discourse of a natural quality or of a pictorial quality that is highly natural. \(\textit{Energeia}\) refers to the actualization of potency, the realization of capacity or capability, the achievement in art and rhetoric of the dynamic and purposive life of nature. Poetry possesses \(\textit{energeia}\) when it has achieved its final form and produces its proper pleasure, when it has achieved its own independent being quite apart from its analogies with nature or another art, and when it operates as an autonomous form with an effectual working power of its own. But Plutarch, Horace, and the later Hellenistic and Roman critics found poetry effective when it achieved verisimilitude – when it resembled nature or a pictorial representation of nature. For Plutarchian \(\textit{enargeia,}\) the analogy with painting is important; for Aristotelian \(\textit{energeia,}\) it is not. (12)

\(^{99}\) See Rigolot 99n 1. For more on \(\textit{Imagines}\) see Shaffer, “Ekphrasis and the Rhetoric of Viewing in Philostratus’s Imaginary Museum,” and Kostopoulou, “Philostratus’ \textit{Imagines} 2.18:
a house in Naples. Two other works entitled *Imagines* by Philostratus the Younger and *Descriptions* by Callistratus also present prose descriptions of works of art, which Hagstrum labels as iconic. The *Progymnasmata*, attributed to Hermogenes, are ancient handbooks on rhetoric meant to teach students how to compose speeches. These exercises introduce an aspect of ekphrasis that enables the use of words to achieve pictorial vividness, related to the concept of *enargeia*, in the clear presentation of a description that allows the audience to visualize the object described. Hermogenes argued that “the special virtues of ekphrasis are clarity and visibility; the style should contrive to bring about seeing through hearing.”

Elnser affirms that “at the heart of the rhetorical prescriptions for ekphrasis lie the twin qualities of clarity (sapheneia) and visibility (*enargeia*), which together form the means or strategy by which the art of bringing a described object to the mind’s eye is effected.” I will show that the avant-garde authors discussed in this dissertation employ this strategy of

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100 Kostopoulou mentions that the debate that existed as to whether Philostratus’s claims are accurate, whether he, indeed, was describing works of art that he was actually viewing. In *Art and the Roman Viewer*, Elnser has claimed that it is irrelevant whether the paintings relate to a real referent or not. “The truly triumphant ekphrasis was the one which brought to mind its subject so vividly that the subject was no longer necessary. Its effects had already been achieved” (24). If the works did not exist at the moment of their ekphrastic description, then these descriptions would fall under Hollander’s concept of “notional ekphrasis,” used also by de Armas for ekphrasis of an imaginary object. See Hollander 209 and de Armas 22.


102 Baldwin refers to the texts as “elementary exercises” in his *Medieval Rhetoric and Poetic*. He references *Progymnasmata* by Hermogenes. Webb, in her article, cites the instruction of ekphrasis in *Progymnasmata* by Theon (first century), Hermogenes (perhaps second century), Aphthonios (fourth century) and Niccolau (fifth century). In fact, many critics trace the etymology of the term ekphrasis to the *Progymnasmata*. See Webb, “Ekphrasis Ancient and Modern: The Invention of a Genre.”

103 Hermogenes, *Progymnasmata*, 10.49f.

enargia using the written word – bringing an object to the mind’s eye of the reader through allusive ekphrasis – allusions to artists and their works – and ekphrastic descriptions.

Narration and Description

Description is quite naturally ancilla narrationis, the ever-necessary, ever-submissive, never-emancipated slave.

[Gérard Genette, *Figures of Literary Discourse*, 134]

The relationship between word and image inevitably turns to a discussion of the relationship between narration and description. Some critics even use the difference between the two aspects as the very basis for their argument of ekphrasis. In order to discuss the relationship between the two terms, it is necessary first to distinguish between the various terminologies associated with the word narrative. Genette begins with a formal definition of narrative as a “representation of a real or fictitious event or series of events by language, and more specifically by written language” (127). But the term narrative itself presents confusion because it can also refer to (1) a genre of literature, (2) a technique used by an author within a work to tell a story and (3) the act of narrating. Genette deals with this ambiguity at the outset of his book *Narrative Discourse*. In order to avoid confusion, he distinguishes between the varying terms by referring to them as story, “the signified or narrative content”; narrative, “the signifier, statement, discourse or narrative text itself”; and

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105 In his *Figures of Literary Discourse*, Genette discusses the relationship between narration and description in a chapter titled “Frontiers of Narrative.”
narrating, “the producing narrative action and, by extension, the whole of the real or fictional situation in which the action takes place” (27). In this chapter I will also discuss the distinction between description and the descriptive, which is analyzed by Philippe Hamon. The first term opposes narration or, to use Genette’s terminology, story. The latter refers to a portion of text that autonomously seeks to distinguish itself from narrative. One example of this would be a digression, an attempt by a text to free itself from narration.

The first consideration must be whether these two terms – narration and description – are inextricably linked or if they can be separated from one other. Narrative fiction employs a number of techniques, tropes and figures of speech. Narration and description can be seen as two techniques which refer to two types of representation, one depicting actions and events (narration) and the other depicting objects and protagonists (description). In his article “What is a Description?” Hamon begins to analyze description by pointing to this referential criterion, as well as a morphological distinction between narration and description:

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106 The term that Genette uses, the French word récit, functions as the English word narrative (25n). Jane Lewin, who is responsible for the English translation, notes that “‘story’ is the French histoire (tell a story – raconter une histoire); the gerund ‘narrating’ is an English rendering of the French noun narration” (27n). She also notes that Genette uses the term diegesis for the term “story” as well. See the “Introduction” in Narrative Discourse, 25n and 27n.

107 Hamon develops his theory of the descriptive in his book Introduction à l’analyse du descriptif, which has been translated into Spanish. Before the publication of the book length study, Hamon published an article, which is translated into English as “Rhetorical Status of the Descriptive,” which doubles as the first chapter of his book. Another important work by Hamon is his article “What is a Description?” which appears in French Literary Theory Today: A Reader, edited by Tzvetan Todorov.

108 Lukács argued that narration is primary because it deals with people and description secondary because it deals with things. In his article “Narrate or Describe?” he states: “objects come to life poetically only to the extent they are related to men’s life, that is why the real epic poet does not describe objects but exposes their function in the mesh of human destinies, introducing things only as they play a part in their destinies, actions and passions of men” (137).
A reader recognizes and identifies a description without hesitation: it stands out against the narrative background, the story ‘comes to a standstill,’ the scenery ‘is foregrounded,’ etc. Nevertheless the reader is not able to define it as a specific unit, using precise formal and/or functional criteria, the only criterion appealed to being in general vaguely referential (a description describes things, a narrative describes acts) or morphological (the description is alleged to use adjectives, the narration, verbs: on this view Rimbaud’s *Départ*, a text which has hardly any verbs, would not be a narrative, and a sentence like ‘a tree stood there’ would be). (147)

Adding to the notion that narration is commonly linked with progress and motion, while description is associated with digression and stasis, is the assertion that the “story comes to a standstill.” Narration involves relating events in order to advance plot development, while description pauses narrative development, creating a “stilling” effect. However, neither the association of narration with events and description with things (referential distinction) nor stating that narration uses verbs while description uses adjectives (morphological distinction) is satisfactory in delineating a proper conception of the relationship between these two terms.

Genette establishes a functional distinction as well in his analysis of narration and description. This critic juxtaposes the two terms in order to study their limits within narrative discourse.

Every narrative in fact comprises two kinds of representations, which however are closely intermingled and in variable proportions: on the one
hand, those of actions and events, which constitute the narration in the strict
sense and, on the other hand, those of objects or characters that are the
result of what we now call description. (133)\(^{109}\)

These two kinds of representations mentioned by Genette – narration and
description – are inseparable from one another. They both serve the global narrative and
cannot establish autonomy as a particular genre. Genette explains that:

description might be conceived independently of narration, but in fact it is
never found in a so to speak free state; narration cannot exist without
description, but this dependence does not prevent it from constantly playing
the major role. Description is quite naturally ancilla narrationis, the ever-
necessary, ever-submissive, never-emancipated slave. There are narrative
genres, such as the epic, the tale, the novella, the novel, in which description
can occupy a very large place, even in terms of sheer quantity the larger place,
without ceasing to be, by its very vocation, a mere auxiliary of the narrative.
On the other hand, there are no descriptive genres, and one finds it difficult
to imagine, outside the didactic domain, a work in which narrative would
serve as an auxiliary to description. (134)

\(^{109}\) See Genette, “Frontiers of Narrative,” in *Figures of Literary Discourse*, 127-44. “Narration
and Description” is the second of three oppositions used by Genette in his chapter
“Frontiers of Narrative” to discuss the boundaries of narration and description in narrative
discourse. The first is “Diegesis and Mimesis” and the third is “Narrative and Discourse.”
Genette describes diegesis as narration and mimesis as poetic imitation. He points out that
for Aristotle there are two types of poetic imitation: diegesis and dialogue. This opposition
by Aristotle perpetuates the distinction established by Plato, namely between narrative
poetry and dramatic poetry. Emphasis in the original.
Genette asserts that narration and description are intertwined and cannot be easily separated. Description serves an ancillary, or auxiliary, purpose and is never completely free from the narrative and cannot be represented by its own genre. The difference between narration and description is a difference of context, with narration pertaining to temporal aspects of narrative and description being associated with spatial aspects. Narration is bound to sequences of actions while description can present simultaneous juxtapositions of objects in space. Therefore, Genette considers description to be an aspect of narrative fiction, rather than a mode of literary representation.

Instead of a difference of context asserted by Genette, Hamon distinguishes between narration and description based on the competence of the reader. Narration demands that the reader be competent in inferring logical conclusions, or binary prediction between certain outcomes. Description, on the other hand, demands lexical competence, or open-ended and limitless possibilities of prediction by the reader. In following the story, in many cases the reader anticipates certain outcomes. Because description appears often in the form of enumerated lists, the reader must be able to classify, to recognize, to give a hierarchical structure to, and to update varied lexical items. These two terms, whether they differ in

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110 The issue of time and space as it relates to narration and description will be discussed at length in the next section of this chapter.

111 Genette explains that “description does not distinguish itself sufficiently from narration, either by the autonomy of its ends, or by the originality of its means, for it to be necessary to break the narrative-descriptive (chiefly narrative) unity that Plato and Aristotle have called narrative” (137). Description does not imply a specific language that differentiates it from narration. As an aspect of narrative fiction, description employs similar language to that of narration. A mode of narrative differs in the resources of language – its mean – as well as in what it seeks to accomplish – its ends.

112 See Hamon, *Introducción al análisis de lo descriptivo*.
their context within the narrative or in the manner in which they require the reader approach the text, narration and description are inextricably linked to one another.

Hamon not only discusses the distinction between narration and description, but also between description and the descriptive. He outlines a theory of the descriptive, further defining the role of description within a literary work, while at the same time seeking to redefine basic intuitions of the average reader, who believes that description:

(a) forms an autonomous whole, a sort of ‘semantic unit’; (b) is more or less an appetizer, supplementary to the narrative; (c) can be freely inserted into a narration; (d) lacks any specific signs or marks; (e) is subject to no a priori constraints. (147)

Redefining these intuitions by readers is the starting point of Hamon’s development of the theory of the descriptive, further analyzed in his book translated into Spanish as *Introducción al análisis de lo descriptivo.*

Hamon presents a brief history of the role of description within narration, pointing out its auxiliary nature and affirming that there exists a manner of classifying descriptions based on their referent. In other words, descriptions have...
been categorized according to what they describe. Historically, then, description has not served as the focus of a particular work, but rather is viewed as a means to an end. Narration was primary and description secondary. Hamon provides examples of the purpose of various texts and shows how description serves as a means to an end. Citing examples from French literature from the middle of the 16th century through the 18th century, Hamon states that description remains secondary to economic ends (guides), to military ends (the geographic description of sites and landscapes is that of potential military fields), to history (“antiques”), to encyclopedic matters, and finally to a number of inter-semiological re-writings; a description is in fact nothing more than the marginal commentary upon an architectural drawing, upon an allegorical print that requires explanation (cf. the illustrated frontispieces of the great didactic pieces of the eighteenth century), upon a map (where the description becomes the ‘legend’), upon a painting whose story must be reactivated … (4-5)

Simply because description was considered to be subordinate is not to say that it remained submissive. On the contrary, many rhetoricians came to view description as threatening to narration, first distrusting it and later disparaging it. Hamon then traces the pejorative connotations associated with description beginning with classical discourse on literature from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. While always mistrusted, description became mocked for being purely ornamental, boring and monotonous,

114 See Introducción al análisis de lo descriptivo (16-7) for a listing of these categories. See also “Rhetorical Status of the Descriptive” (3).
according to certain French rhetoricians.\textsuperscript{115} Description posed for them the following threat to a literary work:

1) It might introduce into the text ‘foreign’ vocabularies, namely the specialized terminology of various professions which work on the described object; therefore it might introduce the trace of work into the literary text. Wherefrom, in addition, a problem of readability. 2) Becoming an end and no longer a means, description, by its very inflation, runs the risk of compromising the effectiveness of its proof (if we get into the legal genre – or into all highly ‘conative’ genres), or of compromising the global unity of the work, if we set this description into literary énoncés. The term ‘piece’ (morceau) that recurs so often in the writings of the rhetoricians, and the term ‘detail’ (with its necessary qualifier ‘useless’ – causing quasi-redundancy) always carries a negative charge. Description must always remain ‘auxiliary’ (P. Larousse). 3) The uncontrollable freedom of the descriptive (its emblematic sign could be that of the infinite, ‘etc.’) can work hand in hand with the impossibility of controlling the reader’s reactions. Excessive ‘freedom,’ which is symmetrical with the author’s amplification licence [sic], runs the risk of being turned over to the reader who then has the choice of absenting himself from the text, of ‘skipping’ it and who will no longer feel ruled and programmed by the very act of reading. (9-10)\textsuperscript{116}

\textsuperscript{115} Hamon cites Marmontel, Littré and Larousse.
\textsuperscript{116} See also Introducción (23-4).
Hamon explains how these very “details” of the story could hinder its narrative progress and confuse the reader, according to the rhetoricians. All control over the reader's response would be compromised if description were given too much freedom within a work. Therefore, rhetoricians believed that description should remain a subordinate means to narration and not constitute a digression:

The term ‘frame’ (as opposed to the subject of the work) that often metaphorically designates description, within the larger general metaphor ut *pictura poesis*, signifies these decorative, [sic] and accessory functions that theory assigns to description. And, particularly, description must (as all other components of discourse) remain subordinate to the highest hierarchical instances of discourse, to the narration [Récit] on one hand, and on the other to the highest existing subject, *the* Subject, the human being. (Hamon 13)

It is only when description seeks to remove itself from narration and assert its own autonomy that we begin to understand Hamon’s term “the descriptive.” He states that “the passage of description from the status of ‘frame,’ of ‘decor’ [sic] (subordinate to more important textual features) to a ‘decorative’ status, in the positive sense, is perhaps the first condition for description to be recognized as a specific textual technique” (24). The so-called threats imposed by description117 “contribute to the fact that description might be that place

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117 Hamon mentions the following: “the ‘useless detail’ (Boileau), the variable and the chancy (Valéry), the excess of ‘luxury’ (Lamy), the infinite proliferation and amplification of lexical material, the ‘skipping’ of the reader, the reader’s boredom, aesthetic heterogeneity, the excesses of erudition, the intrusion of work” (25).
in the text where the generative power of language might show itself most clearly and as quite unmanageable” (25).\textsuperscript{118}

To map out a theory of the descriptive would be therefore to avoid localising it as an \textit{anterior} practice (the ‘documents’ collected before writing) or reducing it to its transitivity by labeling it in such a way as to put it perpetually \textit{at the service} of hierarchically superior instances of narration. (Hamon 25-6)

The hierarchical classification of narration and description is inherent in both of these critics’ arguments. While Hamon seeks to avoid hierarchy altogether, in order to present a theory of the descriptive, the inferiority of description relative to narration is vital to Genette’s view of the relationship between the two terms. While neither can exist apart from the other in that there are no purely narrative, nor purely descriptive genres, they serve as parts of a whole. Narration garners consideration as a more integral role. Therefore, description can be seen as working toward subverting narration.

\textbf{Narration, Description and Ekphrasis}

In light of the difficulty in distinguishing narration from description, and with a view of description as subordinate to narration in the hierarchy of literary discourse, the next

\textsuperscript{118} Hamon points to the power of description as a reason its being either rejected or ignored as an autonomous category by literary critics.

Which might explain why the descriptive, – whether as goal or category (in persuading-conative discourses), expelled from the realm of the poetic (and reserved for the didactic realm) or marginalized (blazon of a body, Rabelaisian catalogue), subordinated to the ‘important’ anthropomorphic instances of the narration, or reserved for ‘boring’ discourses (the discourse of knowledge, of science) – why the descriptive seems to be only partially accepted in the realm of discourse on literature. (25)
consideration is where to place ekphrasis in relation to description. If rhetoricians have found it difficult to establish concrete boundaries between narration and description, it will be equally difficult to demarcate description and ekphrasis. Does ekphrasis fall squarely into one category or the other? If this were the case, one would expect ekphrasis to be classified as description rather than narration. Furthermore, if description could be categorized by its subject matter, could ekphrasis be considered a specific type of description? If ekphrasis were a type of description, it would have to assimilate the form and function of description.

Etymologically, ekphrasis has been associated with description, a link that has been established based on the study of ancient Roman rhetoric. Critics have used a number of Latin words to synonymously signify description and ekphrasis, including amplificatio, descriptio, demonstratio, illustratio, evidentia, repraesentatio, sub oculos subiectio and enargeia.119 Amplificatio refers to the expansion of a topic, providing details to elaborate upon a subject. Baldwin includes many of these terms in a dictionary of stylistic terms based on sections found in Book IV of Rhetorica ad Herennium, and gives a translation of the word descriptio as a “descriptive detail” and demonstratio as “ekphrasis.”120 Many of these terms refer to a vivid description which also stirs the senses, especially that of sight. The unifying feature or purpose of these rhetorical figures and tropes is to use vivid description in such a way as to enable the audience to visualize the object that is being described by the orator.

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119 Baldwin cites a few of these terms in the Synoptic Index of his Medieval Rhetoric and Poetic, also in Ancient Rhetoric and Poetic. The term enargeia, cited by Hagstrum, has been discussed at length previously in this chapter. See also Zanker. The chief concern of these terms is sight, or what Hagstrum identifies as “pictorial vividness.” These terms are found within the ancient rhetorical works Institutio Oratoria (ca 100 AD) by Quintilian and Rhetorica ad Herennium (ca 100 BC).

120 The Rhetorica ad Herennium, dating to the first century BC, at one time was attributed to Cicero, but is now considered to be of unknown authorship.
In assessing the descriptive, Hamon traces the use of description in rhetoric from Antiquity, through the Middle Ages, and into the Renaissance. He analyzes various rhetorical treatises, concluding that most treatises are satisfied, on the basis of vague criteria about ‘contents,’ with distinguishing types of description according to the characteristics of the described referent: chronography (description of time), topography (description of landscapes and places), prosopography (description of the exterior appearance of a character), ethopoeia (moral description of a character), prosopopoeia (description of an imaginary or allegorical being),\textsuperscript{121} portrait (physical and moral description of a character), parallel (combination of two descriptions, by resemblance or antithesis, of objects or characters), tableau or hypotyposis (‘lively and animated’ description of actions, passions, physical or moral events).\textsuperscript{122}

Ekphrasis, as a type of description, would undoubtedly be a description of a work of art.\textsuperscript{123} Beyond these types of descriptions, Hamon finds that the function of description is at the service of a greater end.

\textsuperscript{121} The definition of \textit{prosopopoeia} as a description of an imaginary or allegorical being cited here by Hamon is common in Antiquity. I will employ the modern usage of \textit{prosopopoeia}, which means to give voice to an object.

\textsuperscript{122} These are the categories of description referred to earlier, quoted from “Rhetorical Status of the Descriptive” (3).

\textsuperscript{123} The \textit{Oxford Classical Dictionary} definition reduces ekphrasis to this type of description. While serving as a starting point to understand ekphrasis, it serves as a springboard to an understanding of ekphrasis as more complex than a type of description. It has been noted that ekphrasis provokes a narrative impulse; containing conventions which seek to break it from the bonds of mere description. Elements such as paragone, enargeia, prosopopoeia will be discussed within the context of word and image.
Certainly, in Antiquity and up to the Middle Ages, it seems that description, 
(*ekphrasis*, *description*) is part principally of the epideictic genre that requires 
systematic description, especially in the form of praise of certain individuals, 
places, times of the year, socially privileged monuments of objects. (3)

The function of description remains tied to a higher aim, leading rhetoricians to 
assert that it is not “free.” Hamon points out that many rhetoricians associate description 
with the epideictic genre, because of its affinity to praise, but affirms that description does 
not constitute its own genre. He goes on to explain that these passages within a text exist “to 
describe for,” tangentially mentioning ekphrasis as a practical activity of description.

To describe is, then, ‘to describe for’; it is a textual praxis, both coded and 
aimed, opening onto concrete, practical activities (pedagogical, military; 
drawing up lists, taking inventory of a stock, archives); or else it is a working 
between texts (re-writing, rhetorical models, the description of paintings or 
figurative works of art); or else it is to work in the realm of the verifiable (a 
description certified from the witness stand; or the traveler’s description); 
and not in the realm of the probable-credible [*vraisemblable*] of a fiction – it is 
therefore not to do literature. Inversely, to do literature will be to avoid, or to 
detour, or to divide the descriptive. (6)

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124 The three purposes, which Hamon cites from those rhetoricians who distrust description, 
support the contradiction that exists in the treatises with regards to description and its role in 
literature. Hamon proposes that these contradictions exist to attack the descriptive.
At the time intended as a condemning statement, description conceived as working between texts provides the most promising association given by rhetoricians for the present study. Descriptions of painting or works of art (ekphrasis) remain a means of working between texts suggested by rhetoricians, which also prevents description from freeing itself from narration. Rhetoricians rejected the notion that this type of description constituted literature in and of itself. The descriptive, for them, had to be sacrificed in order to produce literature.

While ekphrasis is most commonly associated with description, however, it also contains elements of narration, as both Heffernan and Genette affirm. The latter’s definitions of narration and description point to this sense of dynamism.

In spite of the narrative energy that repeatedly drives ekphrasis, it often looks like a form of description. If Gerard Genette is right to define narration as the depiction of objects or people in movement and description as the depiction of objects or people in stasis (Figures 57), ekphrasis would seem bound to the category of description, for it does indeed represent fixed forms. And as description, it would rank decisively below narrative in Genette’s rigorously stratified scheme, where narration delivers the ‘pure processes’ of dramatic temporality while description suspends time, spreads the narrative ‘in space,’ and thus serves as ‘a mere auxiliary of narrative,’ as ‘the ever-necessary, ever-submissive, never emancipated slave’ (Figures 136, 134).125

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125 Heffernan, Museum of Words, 5. Emphasis belongs to Heffernan.
But ekphrasis seeks to remove itself from the stasis of description and provide a narrative impulse. It is this narrative impulse that causes Heffernan to portray ekphrasis as “the unruly antagonist of narrative, the ornamental decoration that refuses to be merely ornamental” (5). Therefore, there is not an easy rubric to follow in the classification of ekphrasis. Because, as Genette himself admits, the boundary between narration and description is uncertain, the definition that pits the two terms as polar opposites would exclude many passages within a text. Ekphrasis further complicates this ambivalent delineation by oscillating between narration and description.

Therefore, it is as problematic to categorize ekphrasis as it is to distinguish between narration and description. Neither does a polarizing dichotomy between narration and description provide an adequate scheme to properly situate ekphrasis, since it is neither purely narrative nor purely descriptive. Ekphrasis can be seen as serving an intermediary role between narration and description, encompassing certain elements of each, but not pertaining exclusively to one technique or the other. In a similar manner, an ekphrastic passage situates itself centrally between visual expression and verbal expression. Ekphrasis seeks to establish a connection between word and image. It is precisely the interplay between

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126 Heffernan disagrees Genette in regards to description being “ever-submissive.” Citing Baldwin, Heffernan labels description as “anything but submissive” (5).
127 See Narrative Discourse, 99n.
128 Mosher approaches this problem by setting aside the dichotomy of narration and description, preferring instead a spectrum of four terms with which to situate a given text. Between narration and description, he inserts two intermediary terms “descriptized narration” and “narratized description.” See Mosher, “Toward a Poetics of ‘Descriptized’ Narration,” 426-7.

The new term appearing on this spectrum, ‘descriptized narration,’ characterizes a passage whose formal qualities are or seem to be predominately narrative, but whose ultimate function reveals itself to be descriptive. In contrast to the narratized description (‘pseudo-descriptions’ for Sternberg [1981: 76]), in which a description is disguised as a narration, descriptized narration (‘pseudo-narratives’ for Hamon [1981:184]) disguises a narration as a description.
word and image that make ekphrasis so appealing to both author and critic, and one of the reasons it has endured through the years.

**Ekphrasis and Avant-Garde Narrative**

As demonstrated in Chapter One, ekphrasis is a rhetorical device that is most commonly associated with poetry, dating back to Horace’s doctrine of *ut pictura poesis*. This study, however, will explore its use within the context of the narrative genre. This, then, begs the question: is ekphrasis particular only to one genre? Or is it possible to employ ekphrasis within other contexts, namely prose?

The interartistic comparison has often been labeled the painting-poetry analogy. But that in no way eliminates the application of ekphrasis to prose works, nor its manifestation within the genre. It would be equally erroneous to state that ekphrasis, bringing together the Sister Arts, could not include a comparison between poetry and sculpture, or architecture. Poetry does represent one of the earliest forms of literature, and throughout Antiquity was regarded with superior status among written expression. In Antiquity, it was primarily the poet who sought to invigorate the text by giving voice to objects. Simonides and Horace solidified the comparison between painting and poetry. Even though ekphrasis has been associated with poetry, it is not exclusive to poetic expression.¹²⁹

Not only is ekphrasis compatible with narrative: it occurs frequently within the genre. It is at this point necessary to examine the compatibility of ekphrasis with the

¹²⁹ There exist many studies on ekphrasis in other genres. The following deal with works by Spanish authors. Frederick de Armas has studied its manifestation in the novel *Don Quijote* and in other prose works by Miguel de Cervantes. John Slater explored its appearance in historiographical texts of Early Modern Spain. Jeffrey Bruner examines ekphrasis in the novels *Nada* by Carmen Laforet and *El jardín de las Hesperides* by Carlos Rojas. Janet Pérez finds ekphrastic passages in Miguel Delibes’s novel *Portrait of a Lady*. Gayana Jurkevich explores ekphrasis in Azorín’s *Carmen Fernández Klohe* studies ekphrasis in the prose works of Ramón Gómez de la Serna.
particular expression of narrative to which the works analyzed in this dissertation pertain, namely the avant-garde.

Ekphrasis and the avant-garde have many points of intersection, as my earlier discussion of Ortega y Gasset’s “La deshumanización del arte” in light of Mitchell, four-part definition of ekphrasis has demonstrated. One such point is antagonism. Poggioli describes the historical avant-garde as an antagonistic movement. Ortega y Gasset also describes these works as divisive, in that they divide the public into two groups, those that understand and those that do not. More than merely divisive, these authors and their works express an antagonism toward those who do not understand. At the same time, the relationship between word and image is not always amicable. As has been noted in the previous section, ekphrasis can be linked with *paragone*, a term used by da Vinci to describe the competition between painting and poetry. This competition creates antagonism between a verbal expression and a visual expression which both seek to represent reality, or the effect of reality, as well as to achieve the status of the preeminent expression.

Interruption is another commonality among the avant-garde and ekphrasis, which is also closely related to antagonism. Both seek to break with traditional conventions and practices. The avant-garde notion of interruption is to separate itself from the approaches of the nineteenth century Realist novel, in order to establish a new sensibility. This characteristic is evidenced by greater attention being paid to the manner in which the words are employed, rather than to the advancement of the story. Ekphrasis, likewise, seeks to break from tradition, in this case within the confines of narrative in order to become a focal point of the text. In the battle against narration, description seeks to constitute an end and not simply a means to a greater end. To achieve equal footing with narration, ekphrasis seeks
to “frustrate narrative movement” (Baldwin 19), further solidifying an antagonistic relationship between verbal and visual representation.

Another term similar to interruption that serves to link both avant-garde narrative in Spain and ekphrasis, is suspension. The fragmentary nature of the works of Spanish avant-garde fiction hinders the progress of plot. Pérez Firmat, therefore, labels these as “idle fictions,” fictions characterized by inactivity. Halting the progression of plot is one method by which the avant-garde seeks to break from the tradition of the nineteenth century novel. Similar impediments laid down by ekphrasis involve set piece descriptions, which serve to suspend narrative progress. The suspending of narrative progress has certain effects: it draws attention to the description over the story, and it complicates the readability of the work, suspending as well the momentum of reading. This characteristic in both the avant-garde and in ekphrasis serves to suspend momentum: either the momentum of activity or the momentum of reading.

The power of language is a theme present both in the avant-garde as well as ekphrasis. Ortega y Gasset’s aforementioned analogy of the windowpane and the garden heralds the avant-garde’s preoccupation with the use of language, especially in contrast to the storyline of a novel. “The Dehumanization of Art” links the act of concentrating on language over the development of plot, with an ocular accommodation necessary to focus of the windowpane rather than the garden. The Spanish avant-garde celebrated the potency of language, especially the author’s use of metaphor, which Ortega y Gasset called “one of man’s most fruitful potentialities.” Language is ascribed a similarly high level of

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130 The following is the passage on metaphor in “The Dehumanization of Art.”

The metaphor is perhaps one of man’s most fruitful potentialities. Its efficacy verges on magic, and it seems a tool for creation which God forgot inside one of His creatures when He made him. All our other faculties keep us within the realm of the real, of what is already there. The most we can do is
competence through the rhetorical device of ekphrasis. The written and/or spoken word is endowed with the special quality, or unique power, of placing an object before the mind’s eye. Through words, the author is able to provide a verbal representation, or replica, of a visual art. Other definitions ascribe to ekphrasis the ability to give voice to an otherwise inanimate object. By the employment of words, an author is thus able to speak through, or speak for, an object. Through the power of language granted by ekphrasis, an author is able to give voice to an object and visual imagery to a reader.

The metaphor alone furnishes an escape; between the real things, it lets emerge imaginary reefs, a crop of floating islands… The metaphor disposes of an object by having it masquerade as something else. Such a procedure would make no sense if we did not discern beneath it an instinctive avoidance of certain realities. (33)

The Spanish text is cited from Obras completas, III:

La metáfora es probablemente la potencia más fértil que el hombre posee. Su eficiencia llega a tocar los confines de la taumaturgia y parece un trabajo de creación que Dios se dejó olvidado dentro de una de sus criaturas al tiempo de formarla, como el cirujano distraído se deja un instrumento en el vientre del operado. Todas las demás potencias nos mantienen inscritos dentro de lo real, de lo que ya es. Lo más que podemos hacer es sumar o restar unas cosas de otras. Sólo la metáfora nos facilita la evasión y crea entre las cosas reales arrecifes imaginarios, florecimiento de islas ingrávidas… La metáfora escamotea un objeto enmascarándolo con otro, y no tendría sentido si no viéramos bajo ella un instinto que induce al hombre a evitar realidades. (372-3)
EKPHRASIS: TIME AND SPACE

In the same way that narration and description are essential components of ekphrasis, time and space serve as similarly foundational elements. While literature is traditionally associated with temporality, the visual arts are often characterized by spatiality. However, the concepts of time and space within the context of ekphrasis cannot be understood merely from a dichotomous terminology. Comparing and contrasting the two art forms as a binary opposition has created some misconceptions about the relationship between literature and the plastic arts, and has stirred contention among many who argue that those elements must not transgress the limits of each art. In his essay “Laokoön: An Essay on the Limits of the Painting and Poetry,” Lessing argued that poetry should only employ temporal techniques while painting should only employ spatial ones. Since these two arts are perceived in different manners, the first in time and the second in space, Lessing argued that they should also differ in the manner in which they are created. Observing the respecting of artistic limitations in the Greek tradition, especially in the work of Homer, Lessing asserts the following:

Painting can only use a single moment of an action in its coexisting compositions and must therefore choose the one which is most suggestive and from which the preceding and succeeding actions are most easily

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131 For studies of ekphrasis that focus on the aspects of time and space, see Krieger, Mitchell, Heffernan and Steiner. Most of these works cite Frank’s essay “Spatial Form in Literature.” There are many book length studies and collections of essays that discuss time and space as well. See Space, Time, Image, Sign edited by Heffernan, Mitchell’s Iconology. Image, Text, Ideology. The Language of Images is a collection of essays edited by Mitchell, many of which were first published in Critical Inquiry 6.3 (1980). Also see the important study on time and space by Kern.
comprehensible. Similarly, poetry in its progressive imitations can use only one single property of a body. It must therefore choose that which awakens the most vivid image of the body, looked at from the point of view under which poetry can best use it. From this comes the rule concerning the harmony of descriptive adjectives and economy in description of physical objects. (78-9)

A fundamental barrier between the art of painting and the art of poetry for Lessing is grounded in the distinction between time and space. Each art must be faithful to its principle mode of representing reality, or its mimetic faculty. Therefore, for Lessing, what painting represents spatially, poetry should do so temporally. Those who argue against Lessing point to the aspects of time in the visual arts as well as the aspects of space in narrative. First I will consider the spatiality of texts and concepts of space in literature. Then I will discuss the temporality of images and the role of time in the visual arts.

**The Spatiality of Texts**

The visual arts are characterized by composition in space. But many have observed that spatial aspects are neither limited to painting nor independent from temporal aspects in narrative. Joseph Frank, in his influential and often quoted (1945) essay, “Spatial Form in Literature,” argues against Lessing, saying that time and space are not independent of one another and neither should be their relationship within the context of literature and painting.  

Although Frank didn’t agree with Lessing’s conclusions, he did, however, find

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132 Frank originally intended to publish the essay in two parts, but later added a third to conclude the essay. In the first two sections he examines the work of T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, Marcel Proust and James Joyce. The final two sections deal with Djuna Barnes’s
merit in Lessing’s methodology. Lessing presented a new concept of aesthetic form and criticism. Instead of observing externally prescribed rules for art, Lessing explored the organization of the laws that art prescribed for itself, “rather than accepting them ready-made from the practice of the past” (225). It is this method that Frank proposed to use in showing a move in the direction of spatial form in modern literature. By this he means that, “the reader is intended to apprehend their work spatially, in a moment of time, rather than as a sequence” (225). Instead of time and space remaining isolated one from the other and strictly pertaining to their particular manifestation of mimetic representation, Frank, and other critics after him, argue that spatial techniques are as much present in narrative as their temporal counterparts.

Mitchell further emphasizes the error of rigidly separating time from space, while at the same time defending Frank’s observation of spatial form in literature. Mitchell affirms that literature cannot simply be identified as a consecutive temporal sequence.

In literature, our sense of continuity, sequence, and linear progression is not nonspatial because it is temporal. Continuity and sequentiality are spatial images based in the schema of the unbroken line or surface; the experience of simultaneity or discontinuity is simply based in different kinds of spatial images from those involved in continuous, sequential experiences of time. (542)

novel *Nightwood*, a work in which Frank finds that spatial form in literature “reaches its culmination” (225).

Mitchell also speaks to the tendency to stigmatize space in literature as being merely static.

The common mistake of regarding space and time as antithetical modalities is reflected in the tendency of literary critics to speak of spatial form as ‘static,’ or ‘frozen,’ or as involving some simultaneous, instantaneous, and wholistic impression of that which is ‘really’ temporal. (542)

Even descriptions that pause narrative progress and continuity are not comprehended, nor related by the author, in a single, isolated moment. Mitchell points to the blending of spatial and temporal aspects within narrative, leading him to conclude that time and space are not separate and independent concepts within the context of ekphrasis.

The parallel claim that spatial forms are static, closed systems which can be completely apprehended in zero time is similarly fallacious. We cannot experience a spatial form except in time; we cannot talk about our temporal experience without invoking spatial measures. Instead of viewing space and time as antithetical modalities, we ought to treat their relationship as one of complex interaction, interdependence, and interpenetration. (544)

In showing how writers employ techniques to break up temporal sequence, Frank’s analysis of spatial form in the work of Marcel Proust is particularly helpful.134

134 Frank himself notes that it is ironic to speak of Proust in connection with space, because Proust has “almost invariably, been considered the novelist of time par excellence” (235).
Every reader soon notices that Proust does not follow any of his characters through the whole course of his novel: they appear and re-appear, in various stages of their lives, but hundreds of pages sometimes go by between the time they are last seen and the time they re-appear; and when they do turn up again, the passage of time has invariably changed them in some decisive way. Instead of being submerged in the stream of time – which, for Proust, would be the equivalent of presenting a character progressively, in a continuous line of development – the reader is confronted with various snapshots of the characters ‘motionless in a moment of vision,’ taken at different stages in their lives; and the reader, in juxtaposing these images, experiences the effects of the passage of time. (239)

Proust, then, presents the passage of time by employing techniques of simultaneity and juxtaposition. He juxtaposes past and present images of the protagonists in a single moment, thereby relating them spatially instead of presenting a sequence of chronological progression in time.

Simultaneity and juxtaposition are two techniques employed by ekphrasis that signal interactions between time and space. These combined with two other ekphrastic techniques – the arresting of time in space and digression – serve as the foundation for Diane Chaffee’s essay “Visual Art in Literature: The Role of Time and Space in Ekphrastic Creation.” The first technique involves arresting time in space. She relies on Krieger’s essay to assert that a temporal work can be arrested by spatial art by maintaining “a chronological progression through its friezes and a cyclical motion through its design and shape” (313) and thus producing a continuity and circularity of time. This circularity of form, especially in regards
to Keats’s “Grecian Urn,” leads Krieger to assert that “literature could turn itself metaphorically into the object which it was describing; thus, a temporal work could become frozen in space while trying to capture its subject, an *objet d’art*, in time” (qtd. in Chaffee 313). Chaffee shows an example of Cervantes’ creating a verbal picture by pausing *in media res*, the result of which freezes his characters in time and in space.

The second technique is that of freezing time in space through juxtaposition, which Chaffee demonstrates – with the help of Spitzer and Erdman – through the work of Lope de Vega. She describes how Lope de Vega places two snapshots before the reader, whose responsibility it is to arrange the moments to understand the story temporally. Chaffee cites Erdman’s essay “The Source and Structure of Lope de Vega’s ‘Al triunfo de Judit,’” in which he explains:

> Literature, though it may imitate an arrangement of objects in space, is perceived as a series of referents in time. Its component elements are ordered in a sequence through which the reader must proceed in time. In order to arrive at a complete comprehension, the reader must not only retain each word-induced image, but also superimpose each subsequent one. The end result of a reading of ‘Al triunfo de Judit’ is a static, composite picture, in the imagination, of an arrangement of words in time. (244)

A third technique is simultaneity, employing a vivid description that “gives the illusion of life which Aristotle’s called *enargeia*” (315) to present all temporal elements – past, present or future – in a single moment. This technique disregards sequential temporality in
favor of a global or bird’s eye view of an object. Chaffee uses the example of Kostos Krystallis, Borges’s *Aleph* and the second part of Cervantes’s *Don Quijote*.

The final technique of creating space in verbal art is “the ekphrastic illustration of a story.” This technique employs both spatial progression in time and digression. Spatial progression includes “a showcase of anecdotal word pictures” (317), which the second technique involves stopping narrative flow and frustrating narrative progress by means of ornamental descriptions. Chaffee cites Spencer and Góngora to support these ekphrastic techniques. Her conclusion is worth quoting at length.

Ekphrasis, like painting, is visual art since it shares in the representation of space or, to quote Murray Krieger: “To alter Horace and defy Lessing, as with the urn, so with poetry.”

The *enargeic* quality of language, in addition, assists the writer in evoking vivid imagery while he paints vibrant pictures of real or imagined art objects. Authors can create literature which is ekphrastic if they metaphorically transform their work into the object it is describing, or if they bring their painting to life with bright colors and much action. By arresting time in space through composite descriptions of plastic art or by employing the techniques of juxtaposition and simultaneity, writers produce visual art. The verbally illustrated story with its digressions and spatial progressions contributed to the graphic quality of language. Word painting in particular is so impressive that critics have even begun to see it as more pictorial than the plastic arts themselves. … The interdependence of spatial and linear art, then, cannot be ignored, and the combination of the two is necessary to

135 This quote is found in Krieger, 277.
produce vibrant ekphrasis, which is undoubtedly a symbolic form of plastic art. (318-319)

Chaffee argues for the interdependence of spatial and temporal art, which brings us to a discussion of mixing the elements of time and space between genres – the term coined by Frank “spatial form in literature,” but also the corresponding notion that Mitchell calls “temporal form in painting.”

The Temporality of Images

To say that literature is a temporal art refers to its linear and chronological nature, regulating the narrator as he presents the events as well as the reader in the act of reading. Prose in particular involves a temporally measured progress in which the narrator relates sequences of events in time, both actual and within the narrative. The reader creates an image of the event as he/she receives each piece of information. Both the narrator and the reader are bound by the constraints of time, as the former selects the order of each action within the story and how much narrative time to dedicate to each part, and as the latter reads the text word-by-word, line-by-line, and pieces the actions together to map out the narrative in his mind. In the introduction of Spatial Form in Narrative, Jeffrey Smitten analyzes the presentation of language, structure and reader perception in Frank’s essay and explains that the reader’s task of organizing the narrated elements becomes more difficult when the narrator moves away from what he calls a “conventional causal/temporal sequence” (20).


This collection of essays was sparked by Joseph Frank’s 1945 essay, “Spatial Form in Literature,” quoted previously.
The reader’s new task involves two aspects. (1) The reader faces a puzzling text. Because causal/temporal connectives are suppressed, the reader cannot locate characters and events in space and time. The words he reads do not describe a coherent dramatic situation referring immediately to external reality … (2) The reader must work out a syntax for the text. If conventional connectives no longer exist, the reader, to make sense of the text, must discover for himself what connections are to be made among the seemingly disconnected words and word groups. (17-8)

Smitten explains that Frank’s essay showed how “traditional narrative syntax can be disrupted in several ways: cutting back and forth between simultaneous actions (as in the country fair scene in Madame Bovary), using distributed exposition (as in Ulysses), presenting events or characters discontinuously (as in Remembrance of Things Past)” (19). Comparing an Impressionist painter to Proust, Smitten makes the following assertion.

The completion of the work rests with the reader/spectator. In the case of the painting, the spectator’s processes of visual perception pull discrete points of the picture into the whole. In the case of the reader, his alertness to reflexive reference, his ability to construct a syntax for the work, creates a whole out of the discrete parts of the narrative. The implication lurking in this passage – as throughout Frank’s essay – is that spatial-form narratives place a greater burden on the reader’s synthesizing power than do more conventional temporal narratives. (21)
Fowler also notes the burden on the reader, who must not only piece together the actions of the narration but also determine the interpretation.\textsuperscript{138} Since a reader takes an active role in reading, Fowler turns to the questions of focalization, or point of view, to examine the relationship between the person who presents a description and the person who “sees,” or reads that description.

The phenomenon of what the linguist W.J.M. Levelt has referred to as the speaker’s linearization problem:\textsuperscript{139} when we describe in words a scene, we have to decide the order in which we are to present the details and the duration – which may be zero – of the description of each of them. (29)

The author, or speaker, must choose the order in which to present the details of a narration, which will be read, or heard by a spectator. When describing a work of visual art, the author determines the order in which to describe the details he sees spatially. Rudolf Arnheim reaches this same conclusion when he states that “more and more explicit sequences are now established, and by the time the music is played, the play performed, the printed novel read, the work has altered the dimension of time. It now offers, in turn, to the

\textsuperscript{138} See “Narrate and Describe: The Problem of Ekphrasis.” Fowler’s argument (like Hamon’s) stems from the distinction between narration and description, which he approaches from the standpoint of semiology. I am more concerned at this point with the role of the reader.

Much modern critical reading of ekphrasis in classical literature takes the form of an attempt to show that what earlier critics had seen as ‘merely’ decorative description can in fact be integrated with narrative, indeed demands to be so integrated. Precisely because ekphrasis represents a pause at the level of narration and cannot be read functionally, the reader is possessed by a strong need to interpret. (27)

The level of interpretation will be discussed in the section on hermeneutics.

\textsuperscript{139} Fowler refers to Levelt’s essay “The Speaker’s Linearization Problem.”
listener, viewer, or reader the task of comprehending the sequence as a coherent whole” (3). Arnheim observes this condition of time not only to a novel but to the performing arts as well.

In a complementary manner, the temporality of images involves the act of reading. A painting, for example, cannot be apprehended in a single moment, but rather the viewer’s eye will see parts of the work consecutively, and then the mind will perceive the entire work. Proceeding in the opposite direction from the author, the artist must choose a single moment of a narration to depict. This “pregnant moment,” a term that Steiner borrows from Lessing, refers to the moment that offers the most fruitful possibility of meaning to represent the entire story. Krieger explains this as “the one moment to which all preceding moments in the narrative sequence led and from which all succeeding moments descended.” This can be observed especially in history paintings. One example would be an artist’s rendering of the story of Abraham and Isaac by choosing to paint Abraham raising his knife to slay his son. This not only represents the most dramatic moment of the story but also serves as a synecdoche that embodies the entire narrative. Baxandall also identifies the act of viewing a picture as a temporal activity. In *Patterns of Intention* he states “But if the picture is simultaneously available in its entirety, looking at a picture is as temporally linear as language” (3). This supports Mitchell’s assertion, previously quoted, that the spatial and the temporal concepts within ekphrasis are not antithetical, but rather interact with and depend upon one another.

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140 Arnheim’s article appears in *Space, Time, Image, Sign: Essays on Literature and the Visual Arts* edited by Hefferman as well as in *Images of Romanticism. Verbal and Visual Affinities* edited by Kroeber and Walling. I have quoted from *Images of Romanticism*.

141 This is the reason that Fowler asserts that “there is an obvious sense in which description in language inscribes a point of view more forcefully and more unambiguously than plastic art” (29).

142 See *Ekphrasis: The Illusion of a Natural Sign*, 88. This quote is found in Chapter Three: “Representation as *Enargeia* I: Verbal Representation and the Natural-Sign Aesthetic.”
EKPHRASIS: HERMENEUTICS AND ART HISTORY

Mimesis: The Role of Imitation in Ekphrasis

Another important element of ekphrasis is the ability of the speaker/writer’s to imitate. An artist uses natural signs to imitate nature, or reality, while the writer uses arbitrary (conventional) signs to imitate either nature itself of an object modeled after reality. Both artistic expressions within the framework of ekphrasis aim for mimesis – from the written perspective, the ability to represent with words a faithful imitation of a work of art or other visual representation, and from the perspective of the visual arts, the ability to present a faithful representation of reality through the painted canvas or sculpture. Verbal representation in most cases is twice removed from the actual object, making it a copy of a copy. The imitation of painting and poetry has led some to conceptualize this phenomenon as a mirror. Mirrors also play an important role in the novels analyzed in this study, reflecting and projecting reality, but in some cases a distortion of reality.

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143 E. H. Gombrich discusses natural and conventional signs in his *Art and Illusion*. In a chapter entitled “Nature and Convention: Ernst Gombrich” in *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology*, Mitchell argues against Gombrich’s natural-conventional sign dichotomy. Krieger also discusses the difference between arbitrary-conventional signs and natural signs based on Lessing’s argument that literature and the plastic arts should use natural signs rather than arbitrary-conventional signs. Krieger calls illusionary arts that substitute real objects (237). Barthes refers to the idea of illusion as an “effet de réel” or “a reality effect.” “The truth behind this illusion is this: eliminated from the realist utterance as a signified of denotation, the ‘real’ slips back in as a signified of connotation; for at the very moment when these details are supposed to denote reality directly, all that they do, tacitly, is signify it … An ‘effet de réel’, (a reality effect) is produced, which is the basis of that unavowed ‘vraisemblance’ which forms the aesthetic of all the standard works of modernity” (16).

144 This could have the effect of distancing the natural object from an authenticity in its representation; in the same way an original work of art loses its “aura” when mechanically reproduced. See Benjamin 220-1.

145 See M.H. Abrams, who cites Plato and Aristotle, among others, to support the idea of art mirroring life. Abrams important study presents four critical approaches to literature: mimetic, objective, pragmatic and expressive.
Iconology and Hermeneutics: The Interpretation of Meaning in Ekphrasis

In addition to theorizing ekphrasis through the lens of mimesis, other studies have investigated the role of interpretation in ekphrasis, namely through studies of iconology and hermeneutics. Panofsky offers a three-strata approach to the interpretation of works of art. The first level of interpretation, called “natural subject matter,” is an identification of the basic artistic motifs within a work of art. Panofsky states that this interpretive level is “commonly confused with form” (16). The second level, “conventional subject matter,” requires knowledge of themes and concepts, and is concerned with images, stories and allegories. Panofsky calls this level “iconography in the narrower sense of the word” (6). The third and most complex level of interpretation, “iconography in a deeper sense,” seeks out the intrinsic meaning or content of the work of art. The first level is “constituted by the world of artistic motifs,” the second by “the world of images, stories and allegories” and the third by “the world of

146 Though studies by Panofsky and Gombrich are fundamental, Mitchell’s Iconology is an excellent point of departure because he summarizes those arguments and other important studies of images. His introduction contextualizes the framework of his study. Except for the first chapter this is primarily a series of close readings of a few important texts in the theory of imagery, and these readings revolve around two historical centers, one in the late eighteenth century (roughly, the era of the French Revolution and the rise of Romanticism), and other in the era of modern criticism. The aim of these readings is to show how the notion of imagery serves as a kind of relay connecting theories of art, language, and the mind with conceptions of social, cultural, and political value. (2)

147 Michael Ann Holly’s book, and Elsner and Lorenz’s article are informative studies of the work of Panofsky. Mitchell discusses Panofsky’s work on iconology in Chapter One: “The Pictorial Turn” of Picture Theory. For more on Gombrich, see Mitchell’s third chapter of Iconology (“Nature and Convention: Gombrich’s Illusions”).

148 The introduction to Studies in Iconology is also included as the first chapter of Panofsky’s Meaning in the Visual Arts, with a few corrections (by the author’s admission) and parenthetical commentary enclosed in brackets. In the latter study, Panofsky labels the second level of interpretation as iconography (as opposed to “iconography in the narrower sense of the word”) and the third as iconology (as opposed to iconography in a deeper sense).
symbolic values” (14). Panofsky explains that these three spheres do not function independently but actually “merge with each other into one organic and indivisible process” (17).

While the study of iconology stems from investigation in the field of art history, there have been studies applying the term to literature, examples of which Mitchell illustrates in his *Iconology*.

Literary iconology has its ‘literal’ basis in certain specialized forms: graphic, concrete and shaped poetry, in which the physical presentation of the text is charged with ‘density’ and figural, iconic features; ekphrastic poetry, where the text attempts to represent a work of visual or graphic art. But literary iconology also invites us to pay special attention to the presence of visual, spatial, and pictorial motifs in film, and the theater as metaphors for literary representation; emblematic images as encapsulations of literary meaning; scenes (depicted or described) as symbolic settings for action and projections of mental states; portraits and mirrors as ‘agents’ of action and projections of selves; and characters as ‘picture-makers’ in the narrow sense (Austen’s *Emma*, Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre*, Virginia Woolf’s *Lily Briscoe*) or as ‘seeing subjects’ in the broad sense (Henry James’s visually acute narrators; the Ruskinian ‘beholder’; the steady Wordsworthian ‘eye’). (155)

Literary critics do not operate drastically different from art historians in respect to the search for signs, signifiers and signified. Both must understand motifs, themes and signs on one level, and images, stories and allegories on a deeper level, in order to interpret
intrinsic meaning, using visual and intertextual clues. The novels analyzed in this study include intertextual and interartistic references, which must be decoded and interpreted. Panofsky’s three-tiered stratum of interpretation represents one way of approaching the interpretation of ekphrasis in the novel. Avant-garde works demand an astute reader who is able to recognize and decipher those references in order to understand the aesthetics of those works of fiction. The ekphrastic references and metaphors contained within avant-garde works, especially those published in the “Nova Novorum” series, are evidence of an intended readership for these writers that is a cultural elite able to appreciate a higher level of critical interpretation.

The Spanish Avant-Garde’s Rejection of Mimesis: Manipulation through Ekphrasis

In addition to the role of mimesis and iconology, the Spanish avant-garde’s use of ekphrasis is bent toward manipulation. Instead of reflecting reality through the objectivity of a mirror, the avant-garde uses mirrors to distort images, not unlike Ramón del Valle-Inclán’s implementation of the concave mirror in *Luces de Bohemia*, when protagonist Max Estrella declares “los héroes clásicos reflejados en los espejos cóncavos dan el Esperpento. El sentido trágico de la vida española sólo puede darse con una estética sistemáticamente deformada” (162) and “las imágenes más bellas en un espejo cóncavo son absurdas” (163). The reality represented through descriptions of cities and landscapes in the works of the “Nova Novorum” series is much more subjective than the reality projected through mimesis. Even the descriptions of portraits do not have strictly mimetic ends, which will be discussed in a novel by Espina.

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149 This term is commonly used by semoticians in the study of signs, signifiers and signifieds.
CHAPTER 3: EKPHRASIS IN THE NOVELS OF BENJAMÍN JARNÉS

BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO JARNÉS: HIS LIFE AND WORK

Benjamín Jarnés was born in Codo, in the province of Zaragoza in 1888. He grew up in a large family, the seventeenth of twenty-two brothers and sisters. He spent nine years in the Seminary of Zaragoza, training for a career as a priest, but abandoned his theological studies for military service. He moved to Barcelona, and after one year became a sergeant. He enrolled at the Escuela Normal de Magisterio and graduated in 1916 as a teacher. His literary career began in 1917 when he began to contribute to magazines, which were enjoyed by a small reading public. In 1920, after having served in several different cities in the peninsula and in Morocco, he moved to Madrid, where he would settle permanently.

Jarnés was one of the most prolific in a circle of young writers of the 1920s and 1930s who were greatly influenced by José Ortega y Gasset. In 1925, Jarnés, along with Valentín Andrés Álvarez and Guillermo de Torre, founded the magazine *Plural* in Zaragoza. His contributions to this magazine, in particular his short work of fiction “El profesor inútil” which formed the nucleus of his novel by the same name, were brought to the attention of Ortega y Gasset. Later that year Jarnés was invited by Ortega y Gasset to collaborate on the *Revista de Occidente*. Beginning in 1927, Benjamín Jarnés participated as a member of the “Comité redactor de la Gaceta Literaria” for the literature section of the newly formed *La Gaceta Literaria*, directed and founded by Ernesto Giménez Caballero.\(^{150}\) He published fiction and book reviews until the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in 1936, when he moved to

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\(^{150}\) The other editorial board members of the literature section listed in the first issue (1 January 1927) were Ramón Gómez de la Serna, Pedro Sáinz Rodríguez, Antonio Marichalar, José Moreno Villa, José Bergamín, Antonio Espina, Melchor Fernández-Almagro, Enrique Lafuente, Juan Chabás and César Muñoz Arconada.
Mexico to live in exile. While in exile he continued to contribute to cultural magazines and he also wrote a number of biographies. Jarnés returned to Spain one year before his death, in 1949.¹⁵¹

Jarnés’s novelistic technique and style are consistent with those espoused by the school of Ortega y Gasset.¹⁵² Like other novelists of the 1920s in Spain, Jarnés’s preoccupation lies not with plot, setting nor character development. Instead, Jarnés’s novels are characterized by originality and a highly artistic quality, and contain what Víctor Fuentes calls “la expresión del espíritu creador”.¹⁵³ The author is interested in literary creation in which art and life intersect. The artist’s experience plays an important role in his literary

¹⁵¹ For more biographical information on Jarnés, see Bernstein and the introduction to Ródenas de Moya’s edition of El profesor inítil. See also Jarnés’s Autobiografía.
¹⁵² Jarnés’s novels are analyzed in detail by a number of critics. I find the book-length studies and articles by Víctor Fuentes, Domingo Ródenas de Moya and Emilia de Zuleta to be particularly helpful. A number of works were published by the Institución Fernando el Católico in conjunction with the centenary celebration of the birth of the author in 1988. Twelve previously unpublished works were collected and published as Cuadernos Jarnesianos. The titles by Jarnés, along with the number in the collection, are: Autobiografía (1), Desierto profanado (4), Paseos por Francia (5), Alta Mar (6), Miguel de Unamuno, Antonio Machado y las masas, García Lorca, De Buffon y el estilo, Madrid (7), Lecciones de Goya, Pintura de hombre y de niño, Quevedo, figura actual (8), Textos y Márjenes (9), Límites y Lecturas (10), Primores del paisaje español y Decadencia de la voluptuosidad (11) and Proyectos de novelas, fragmentos y recreaciones (12). The two other texts in the collection are Benjamín Jarnés Millán: El estudiante y su entorno escolar by Marcelino Artieda García and Jacinto Montenegro Valenzuela and the aforementioned Ciudades y paisajes aragoneses en la obra de Benjamín Jarnés by Ildefonso-Manuel Gil. Published at the same time are the following books: Ensayo de una bibliografía jarnesiana by Juan Domínguez Lasierra, Benjamín Jarnés: Bio-obra y metaficción by Fuentes, La pasión fría, lirismo e ironía en la novela de Benjamín Jarnés by Jordi Gracia García, La novela intelectual de Benjamín Jarnés by María Pilar Martínez Latre, La Venus jánica by César Pérez Gracia and Jornadas jarnesianas: Ponencias y comunicaciones, proceedings from a conference held in Zaragoza, September 27-30, 1988. Domínguez Lasierra’s bibliography is indispensable, including both a bibliography of works by Jarnés as well as critical works about Jarnés. Domínguez Lasierra credits Jarnés with 1,443 publications, plus 41 other book projects, which were begun and either never finished or never published. Issue number 673 of the magazine Ínsula, dedicated entirely to Jarnés, includes articles from the following prominent critics of the avant-garde and experts on the Aragonese writer: Fuentes, Ródenas de Moya, David Conte, Juan Domínguez Lasierra, María Soledad Fernández Utrera, Jordi Gracia, Juan Herrero Senés, Juan José Lanz, Eugenio G. de Nora, Armando Pego Puigbó, Enrique Serrano Asenjo and Francisco M. Soguero.
¹⁵³ See Fuentes, “La obra de Benjamín Jarnés, un estudio de su novelística y de su estética,” 122.
creation. Fuentes cites the prologue of Jarnés’s 1931 novel *Teoría del zumbel*, for example, where the author affirms that style results from striking a balance between reason and passion, forcing them to fight against one another within the artist.\(^{154}\) External reality is ancillary to internal reality. This is consistent with the contemplative nature of the protagonists in Jarnés’s novels. The thoughts and musings of the protagonists take precedence over their actions. Jarnés adheres to the many characteristics of the new style outlined by Ortega y Gasset as well by consistently employing the use of metaphor and images in his novels. Another important aspect is the element of lyricism, whose function Emilia de Zuleta identifies as a “manifestación sintética de la experiencia individual como un todo significativo, proyección del yo, ambigüedad” (125).\(^{155}\) Of Jarnés’s novels, Zuleta writes:

> hay un sostenido aliento de vitalismo y voluptuosidad al cual se subordinan los demás elementos novelescos: espacio, tiempo, acción, personajes. El estilo poético – que lo hay –, las imágenes, no son la cobertura decorativa de una narración más o menos tradicional, sino que la narración entera se estructura líricamente, y, repetimos, subordinados a esta perspectiva, ingresan en el orbe novelesco los diversos ingredientes. (126)

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\(^{154}\) Quoted from Fuentes 124. In the prologue of *Teoría del zumbel*, Jarnés writes:

> Estilo es – escribe Jarnés – algo que el hombre consigue armonizado todas sus energías espirituales, algo que surge de ese triunfo logrado contra las fuerzas contrarias que luchan dentro del espíritu. Estilo de cierto equilibrio de fuerzas conseguido por un hombre, no el mismo hombre. No es razón ni pasión, sino equilibrio entre ambas (1).

In light of the introspective nature of Jarnés’s protagonists and in keeping with the lyric tradition of the projection of a first person narrator, this dissertation is interested in the images that are evoked through the thoughts of Jarnés’s protagonists. In this chapter, as well as in the next two, I feel it is necessary to provide some details of the plot of each work to give ground to the reader. Since avant-garde authors, Jarnés included, do not normally adhere to a causal/sequential narration, this ground is like quicksand under one’s feet, but I will try to help the reader have a grasp of the action nevertheless, before analyzing the ekphrastic moments found within each text.
EVOKING THE ART OF JUAN VALDÉS LEAL: ASCETICISM IN EL PROFESOR INÚTIL

*El profesor inútil*, the second work published in the “Nova Novorum,” is comprised of three chapters that serve as a series of loosely connected episodes or vignettes, linked by a singular protagonist, the useless professor, who conducts one-on-one tutoring with students during his summer vacation. Two such tutoring sessions are narrated in the chapters, including an introductory scene in which the professor follows a woman on the street and a concluding chapter in which the professor conducts research in a library.\(^{156}\) Robert Hershberger, J. S. Bernstein and others have called the novel a modern rendition or a recasting of the Don Juan myth. In this case, however, an incompetent Don Juan, the protagonists is decidedly unsuccessful in his attempts at seduction.\(^{157}\) The action in each episode (or what little action is presented) is frequently interrupted by the first person narrator’s philosophical, aesthetic, literary, and scientific digressions. Illustrating an inversion of reality, the protagonist is characterized by his inability to act more than by his actions, by learning from his pupils rather than being able to teach them.

Pérez Firmat considers the first chapter of this novel, called “Mañana de vacación,” to be prototypical of avant-garde fiction as a whole, taking his cue from Rafael Laffón’s review in *Mediodía* from 1926, which stated that “la acción en *El profesor inútil* queda reducida al mínimo actuante de una ‘vacación’. (Acción de ‘vacación’: paréntesis de acción o acción


Jarnés published two editions of this novel, the first in 1926, and a second, more expanded edition in 1934. One chapter in particular, “El zoco y el bodegón,” from the 1934 edition is replete with visual imagery and ekphrastic moments. Parts of this chapter appear in the “Nova Novorum” edition, but sadly, a section in which the professor and his pupil Ruth spend the morning contemplating the market and walking through the Prado Museum is excluded from the edition that I will analyze. Their visit to the museum is contrasted a visit to the market and includes a discussion of still life paintings as well as of Goya’s Maja painting. I will not go into detail about this moment not just because it is not included in the “Nova Novorum” edition, but also because it has already been convincingly discussed by other critics.

The “Nova Novorum” edition of El profesor inútil is a third shorter in length and the final chapter, “Una papeleta,” was excluded from the second edition because it had been

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159 Ródenas de Moya has detailed the changes from the first edition to the second in the 1999 edition of El profesor inútil (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe). In his book, Idle Fictions, Pérez Firmat argues that the two editions of El profesor inútil serve as the inauguration and the conclusion of the production of avant-garde fiction in Spain, “the first a prelude, the second a swansong” (8).

The lifespan of vanguard fiction is thus bracketed by the two editions of Jarnés’ novel: 1926 and 1934. Before 1926 there was no general awareness of the genre, nor was there a corpus of works that could have engendered it; by 1934 – after the publication of perhaps three dozen works – the interest in this sort of fiction has all but dissipated. (29)

160 Jarnés uses the final part of “Mañana de vacación” (found on pages 61-77 of the 1926 edition) as the beginning of the chapter “El zoco y el bodegón” (found on pages 125-32) in the 1934 edition without significant changes. The rest of the chapter from the 1926 edition is broken up and placed in two other chapters in the 1934 edition – one fragment appears in a chapter with the same title, “Mañana de vacación” (found on pages 145-53), and another fragment is found in a chapter entitled “Aparece Ruth” (found on pages 107-11 and 115-24).

161 See Johnson 18, Oostendorp 562, Martínez Latre 232-3, Pérez Gracia 31, Villanueva 217 and Zuleta 133.
incorporated into an entirely different novel.\textsuperscript{162} The exclusion of the final chapter from the first edition points to the loose associations between one vignette to the next. The fragmentary nature of Jarnés novel is part and parcel of the new literary aesthetic of the 1920s in Spain. As a result, on the one hand, the works by avant-garde authors can be difficult to place in a particular genre.

On the other hand, avant-garde authors, chief among them being Jarnés, are able to liberate the novel from the rigid limitations placed on it by nineteenth century conventions. Because of a lack of continuity from one chapter to the next, Jarnés is able to stitch together portions of one novel into another without them seeming out of context.\textsuperscript{163} The first person narrator, the useless professor, is the only character to resurface from one chapter to the

\textsuperscript{162} Ródenas de Moya includes a note in the Appendix of his edition of \textit{El profesor inútil}, explaining that the third chapter had been removed from the 1934 edition of Jarnés’s novel because it had been incorporated into his 1931 novel \textit{Escenas junto a la muerte}. The chapter had been renamed “Juno (Edad antigua)”. Following is Ródenas de Moya’s note:

En este apéndice se reproducen los textos publicados o inéditos que no se integraron en la segunda edición de la novela. El primero es el tercer y último capítulo de \textit{El profesor inútil} de 1926, que desapareció de la edición de 1934 debido a que se había incorporado a la novela \textit{Escenas junto a la muerte} (Madrid: Espasa Calpe, 1931) como capítulo 1 “Juno (Edad antigua)”, donde ocupa las págs. 23-35. (253)

\textsuperscript{163} I find particularly helpful Bernstein’s comments about the fragmentary nature of Jarnés’s novels.

One implication of the Jarnesian practice of altering the book’s contents, including in it prose matter composed for other books or on other occasions, is that the Jarnesian novel was not a fixed or unchangeable entity. Its contours could be altered at will to accommodate new material. Since there is no “plot line” in the traditional sense, new episodes grafted into an existing novel do not disrupt the book’s internal coherence. They do not serve, as in a serialized novel, to prolong the fictional trajectories of the characters; but neither do they support entirely the description of Jarnés’ novels as thoroughly hermetic. For if a short story can be included in a novel, and if the novel can swell in a second edition by an injection of new fictional matter, then we are not dealing with a self-contained, impermeable world. Because of this fact, the novel might also be accused of being badly finished off, not well rounded, artistically incomplete. On the other hand, it could be said in the author’s defense that such a novel was closer to real life, more of a living thing itself, and like a living being, adaptable and capable of growth. (58)
next. The unifying threads of each episode are the sensations that the professor experiences during his attempted seduction of a woman (Ruth in the first chapter, Carlota in the second, and Juno in the final chapter). Ródenas de Moya affirms that each chapter teaches a useful life lesson, as opposed to the lifeless lessons taught by the professor himself. But it is the women that serve as teachers and the professor becomes the student. José-Carlos Mainer has summarized each lesson as “el triunfo de la carne y de la espontaneidad sobre la muerte y lo estéril.”

At the outset of the novel we find the professor out of his normal context, on the first day of vacation. No longer held captive by the rigor of academic work and the tyranny that requires him to adhere to the dry task of teaching according to lesson plans, he is free to pursue his impulses. He chooses to do so by following in the direction of the first woman who crosses his path. He does not pursue the first woman, however, due to various excuses, such as that the women were mourning, or chatting, or laughing. One woman eventually arrives who happens to be beautiful and alone. Within as few as twenty steps, she realizes that she is being followed. His pursuit of her ends abruptly when she boards a subway car and he is left without money to pay the fare. This becomes the first of his many attempts to experience an amorous adventure, each of which ultimately result in failure.

After this scene in which the professor follows whimsically after an unknown woman, the professor responds to a letter written by another woman, Ruth, the daughter of Professor Mirabel. She writes on behalf of her father, who would like to find a tutor for his

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164 See Ródenas de Moya, “Introducción” of El profesor inútil. “Cada una impartirá una lección, una útil lección de vida frente a las inánimes lecciones librescas del donjuanesco maestro y, en este sentido, son ellas quienes, invirtiendo los papeles, enseñan algo al enseñante” (49).

165 See Mainer, “Creación y teoría literarias en Benjamín Jarnés.” Mainer’s article appears in two different publications and the quote is found in Letras aragonesas (Siglos XIX y XX), 179 and Jornadas Jarnesianas, 116.
son Valentín. Professor Mirabel is the very antithesis of Jarnés’s protagonist, the useless
professor. The “viejo profesor” is a serious and dedicated professor of archeology. Their
meeting is brief because the “wise excavator” is submerged in his task of reviving the
centuries. Mirabel entrusts the useless professor with the preparation of Valentín for his
“estudios superiores” because he, himself, does not have the time to devote to didactic
endeavors. Mirabel warns him that he has a difficult assignment before him. Valentín, in fact,
lacks his father’s academic ambition and work ethic. Instead of tutoring Valentín, the
professor finds himself alone in Valentín’s study, waiting in vain for him to return, because
the student prefers to ride his motorcycle, which the professor calls his “habitual
instrumento de percepción” (52). Each day the professor occupies himself by “liberating”
from the bookshelf one of the dozens of volumes available to him in the study. When,
finally, rain prevents Valentín from escaping his lesson, the tutoring session results in utter
failure because Valentín is so easily distracted. Valentín convinces the professor to take him
to Madrid, where his sister and father have gone in order to take part in the Fall festivals.
The pretext of the visit is to have the professor show him the museums. When they arrive,
however, Valentín is the one who teaches a lesson during a night of drunken revelry. The
reader never learns whether or not Valentín has passed his examination and the prospect of
his success is uncertain, due both to his own avoidance as well as the professor’s
incompetence.

As the second chapter, “El río fiel,” begins, the professor is in the town of
Augusta166, on his way to meet a new pupil, Carlota. She has read his advertisement in the

166 Ildefonso-Manuel Gil has studied the settings in Jarnés’s novels, concluding that Jarnés
makes use of familiar places in his novelistic spaces. Gil calls this aspect “novelización
jarnesiana” of real cities. Gil traces the resemblance of literary spaces to places in Aragón, of
which Augusta corresponds to Zaragoza. Taking into consideration experience during his
military career, literary profession and the many cities in which Jarnés resided, Gil maintains
paper and has hired him to help her prepare for her examinations. This tutoring session turns out to be equally ineffective and unsuccessful. The professor is more interested in a lesson of a carnal nature. Both his inadequate instruction and her inability to retain the material result in a waste of time when we find out at the end that she, indeed, has failed the examination. During the months of April and May, they meet each afternoon at six o’clock for lessons. During these lessons, however, the professor is frequently distracted by Carlota’s physical appearance. The chapter includes many digressions in which the first person narrator contemplates the seduction of his pupil. In one particular digression the useless professor attempts to mathematically calculate the proper distance he should maintain while walking with Carlota, which he finds to be inversely proportional to the magnetic power of her gaze and to the temperature of her skin. The chapter ends with the professor unable to leave his academic impression on Carlota. She shows him her report card with the failing grade, to which he signs his name in pencil. She makes a paper boat out of it and tosses it in

that Jarnés carried fond memories of Codo, his birthplace, and also of Zaragoza. In *Ciudades y paisajes aragoneses en la obra de Benjamín Jarnés*, Gil writes:

> En posteriores viajes y breves estancias en tierras aragonesas renovó sus vivencias, amplió su conocimiento de Aragón, de manera que con las viejas memorias y las nuevas experiencias pudo formar la base de su geografía novelesca, o “geografía moral” como habían preferido decir Pereda y doña Emilia Pardo Bazán.

La de Jarnés se limitó casi exclusivamente a lugares aragoneses pero esa utilización del espacio no es el solo fundamento de lo que, para entendiernos de algún modo, llamamos aragonesismo de Jarnés; bien es verdad que es uno de sus aspectos más claros y el más significativo, por no ser susceptible de discusión. (7)

This quote is from the book-length study published in collaboration with the celebration of the centenary of the birth of Jarnés. It previously appeared as an article entitled “Ciudades y paisajes aragoneses en las novelas de Benjamín Jarnés,” in *Archivo de Filología Aragonesa* 6 (1956). Gil notes that a revised version of the article, titled “Espacios aragoneses en la obra de Benjamín Jarnés,” appeared in the book *Escritores aragoneses. Ensayos y confidencias*. 

167 The text reads, “la distancia estaría matemáticamente definida, es decir, en proporcionalidad inversa al poder magnético de su mirada y a la temperatura de su piel” (91).
the Ebro River. His name, like his impact as a professor, quickly vanishes from the page. His didactic exercise has once again proven useless.

“Una papeleta,” the third and final chapter of the first edition of Jarnés’s novel, consists of the professor transcribing biographic information on the life and work of Pero Guillén de Segovia. The actual writing is broken up by his observation and imagined seduction of a woman in the library, whom he calls Juno. Ironically, he uses scientific terminology, rather than poetic or romantic language, to describe her and to envision an amorous adventure. Time passes for him from glance to glance from Juno. She exits the library and the professor is left with only the whirlwind of small moments that slowly fade from his memory. The conclusion of the episode, and of the novel itself, depicts the professor with a scribbled sheet of paper before him, on which he wishes in vain to reproduce the beautiful, useless gesture created by Juno’s contempt; an image which serves as a reminder of his failure to win her affection, as well as that of the two women from the previous chapters.

168 The following is the textual passage that the useless professor transcribes during his visit to the Ateneo. Each section is framed by quotes, with his parenthetical contemplations dividing the transcription process.

“Pero Guillén de Sevilla, nacido en Segovia…” No. “Pero Guillén de Segovia, nacido en Sevilla, en 1413…” (137) … “Tradujo en verso los Salmos penitenciales. Hombre poco afortunado…” (140-1) … “Hombre poco afortunado. Fué protegido por Don Alvaro de Luna, que murió en el cadalso…” (143) … “Fué protegido por Don Alvaro de Luna, que murió en el cadalso. Fué tesorero del arzobispo Carrillo, gran alquimista…” (146) … “Escribió la Silva copiosísimas de consonantes para alivio de trovadores, una suerte de diccionario de la rima…” (150) … “… de diccionario de la rima. En el Cancionero general figura una traducción de los siete salmos…” (154)

It is evident that the professor is distracted at the beginning of the chapter when he catches his own transcription error, writing “‘Pero Guillén de Sevilla, nacido en Segovia…’ No. ‘Pero Guillén de Segovia, nacido en Sevilla, en 1413…”’ (137).

169 The last sentences read:

Juno sale de la biblioteca, dejándome olvidado a este remolino de pequeños sucesos que lentamente se van borrando de los pupitres, de los estantes, del techo. Minutos después sólo queda ante mí una cuartilla emborriconada donde
The visual arts play an important role in Benjamín Jarnés’s novels. There are many allusions to artists in his works, mostly Spanish painters. At times the protagonist simply evokes the name of a painter, but at other times those references and the descriptions that follow give enargeia, the aspect of ekphrasis mentioned in Chapter Two, to the images. At the beginning of the second chapter the professor describes the area where Carlota lives. It is significant that the place she lives is called the “Pensión Goya,” which, according to the professor, is located in “el barrio más pintoresco, es decir, en el más sucio y enmarañado de Augusta” (81). The reference to Goya serves to call to mind the Spanish painter, but Jarnés does not evoke one of the artist’s paintings. Instead the professor describes his surroundings and the circuitous route he has taken through town. The narration includes vocabulary related to the plastic arts in particular in these descriptions (pintoresco, dibujando, arquitecto) that lead up to the professor’s arrival and first encounter with his student.

A more suggestive ekphrastic reference occurs in the same chapter. The professor gives his lesson to Carlota each afternoon to help her prepare for her examinations. During one particular scene the protagonist tries to restrain himself from giving in to his passions. This ekphrastic scene begins when Carlota’s and the professor’s fingers become linked together. In order to divert his attention from the attraction he has for his pupil, the professor puts at his disposal what he expects to be his most secure defense: that is, conjuring up a frightening image:

Tengo miedo de seguir la lucha. Para defenderme y huir, apelo a estratagemas de muy honda eficacia, me hundo en las trincheras más sutiles. Acudo a la astucia de los místicos. Con un esfuerzo imaginativo desesperado, en vano quiero reproducir el bello gesto inútil creado por el desdén de Juno. (155)
sobrehumano, logro recibir en mi carne la impresión, no de la piel ardida de Carlota, sino de sus huesos fríos, mondados de toda voluptuosidad. Logro ver sentado junto a mí un esqueleto que estudia Geometría en su propia enjuta armadura. (102)

The clever scheme of conjuring up an allusion of Carlota as a skeleton brings to the professor’s mind images from the Spanish Baroque painter Juan de Valdés Leal (1622-90).

Un tropel de místicos chamarileros acude a ofrecerme cuadros de Valdés Leal, de donde brincan los esqueletos y vienen a estrecharme las manos. Todos llevan el sombrerito verde de Carlota. Me penetra el frío de sus falanges y oigo el crujido de sus costillas. Acaso voy a vencer la tentación… Pero uno de los esqueletos me abraza, y yo, lleno de terror, rodeo precipitadamente de músculos la terrible arquitectura; abro en ella ríos de sangre; la recubro de piel rosada; la corono de una eléctrica y sombría cabellera… Cuando la calavera se dispone a regalarme su primera sonrisa – esa sonrisa rota y macabra del ‘pulvis es’–, ya tropieza con el rojo muro entreabierto de los labios recuperados que deslíen en miel la fracasada mueca. El esqueleto de Valdés Leal desaparece bajo la seda vibrátil de la carne de Carlota. La ascética añagaza fue excesiva: Nada hace sentirse vivir más intensamente como el escalofrío de la guadaña que acecha. (102-4)

These images stem from two paintings in particular by Valdés Leal’s paintings, *In Ictu Oculi* (“In the Twinkling of an Eye”) and *Finis Glorae Mundi* (“The End of Earthly Glory”).
These two paintings were installed in 1670-72 on the walls of La Caridad, a chapel in Sevilla. They preface paintings by Bartolomé Murillo (1617-82) and are part of a tripartite expression of Christian charity as the way to salvation. Valdés Leal’s paintings demonstrate the futility of earthly pursuits and honors. A life devoted to accumulating wealth, power, and even learning is shown to lead only to the grave. In his book *Painting in Spain 1500-1700*, Jonathan Brown describes *In Ictu Oculi* as “a highly charged representation of the futility of worldly goals and pursuits. A menacing skeleton carrying a scythe, a coffin, and a shroud extinguishes the flame of life, causing darkness and oblivion to descend over the attributes of wealth, power, and learning” (217-8). The paths of glory lead but to the grave, which is
unflinchingly rendered in the companion picture, *Finis Glorae Mundi*, where vile bugs feast on the rotting remnants of human flesh (218).

The useless professor evokes Valdés Leal’s works, but he distorts their description in order to serve his ascetic purposes. The professor transfigures Carlota into one of the skeletons from Valdés Leal’s painting as a way of exercising restraint over and resisting the temptation to succumb to his passions. Instead of presenting a faithful verbal representation of the painting, he adapts the images to suit his context and his description infuses life into Valdés Leal’s spatial scene. As mentioned previously in Chapter Two, in establishing painting as a spatial art and poetry as a temporal one, Steiner compares ekphrasis in literature to the
still-moment topos, or the pregnant moment, in painting. Her use of the term “pregnant moment” comes from Lessing’s *Laokoön*, where he mentions that painting should choose the moment of action “which is most suggestive and from which the preceding and succeeding actions are most easily comprehensible” (78). While a painter is forced to choose the moment in a given narration from which most meaning emerges, a poet, or in our case, a novelist, imitates the still movement to arrest narrative. While there exists in this description a narrative impulse, which Heffernan argues exists in all examples of ekphrasis, the action does not add to the plot but rather deviates from it. This rhetorical technique, which seeks to freeze narrative progress, succeeds in doing so in this passage, but brings to life the images in a highly vivid manner. This part of the ekphrastic moment concludes when the professor startles himself with the images dancing in his mind’s eye. But it has momentarily served its purpose in distracting him from the intimate scene he is hesitant to experience with his pupil. A contemporary reader would have been familiar with the images in the paintings, but it is not necessary because Jarnés’s purpose is not necessarily for the reader to be able to visualize the painting, but rather for the author to distort and give action to the images.

The scene continues as his imagination returns his pupil to flesh and blood. Combining his knowledge of both painting and geometry, the professor envisions Carlota as a Cubist painting, alluding to the work of Pablo Picasso.

Ya tengo de nuevo a mi discípula vestida de su piel, cada vez más sugerente. Pero, en la prisa, me olvidé de todo otro vestido, y es preciso hacer inofensiva tan espléndida desnudez. A las formas ascéticas prefiero las formulas cubistas. A Valdés Leal, Picasso, el humorista. Rápidamente los brazos de Carlota se me truecan en cilindros; los senos en pequeñas
pirámides, mejor que en casquetes esféricos de curva peligrosa; los muslos en troncos de cono, invertidos… Traslado al cuerpo de Carlota todo el arsenal de figuras del texto. Todo en ella es ya un conjunto de problemas espaciales. Se baña en el agua más pura. Por su piel ya pueden resbalar las más tiernas esponjas sin temor a empaparse de zumo de sensualidad. Es una pura geometría, lo más cercana posible a una pura estatua. (104-5)

Jarnés implements the style of Cubist painting to describe Carlota. This is the type of imitation that caused Lessing to express what Mitchell refers to as “ekphrastic fear.” Lessing argues against the doctrine of *ut pictura poesis* (as with painting, so with poetry), which imitates the “manner of presentation,” or the style employed by another art form. Instead, each art, painting and literature, should be faithful to its principle mode of representing reality, or its mimetic faculty. He alludes to Picasso and the description brings to mind the painting *Le guitariste* from 1910. Picasso and Georges Braque (1882-1963) experimented with representing three-dimensional objects on a two-dimensional surface. One of their approaches to this problem was to do away with vanishing points as a means of establishing perspective and to rely on sharp angles and geometric shapes to show depth in their paintings. Paul Cézanne (1839-1906), who prior to Picasso and Braque attempted to show depth by his use of angles and blotches of modulated colors, had a profound influence on the two artists. Jarnés imitates Cubist techniques in his description of Carlota and in his imagination interacts with her as a spatial problem.

These two moments serve the protagonist as attempts at asceticism, but also provide the author with the opportunity to digress from the primary narrative action. They are bracketed by a geometry lesson, but within that frame lies another – that of a love lesson.
The professor’s attempts to resist temptation have been in vain, as he confesses “el instinto es más robusto, y vence siempre a la razón. No valen astucias con el deseo. Conquistaré humildemente los dedos de Carlota, falange a falange, y sus manos, dedo a dedo” (105-6). At this point the professor sets aside his self-restraint in order to contemplate the possibility of an amorous adventure. But “conquistaré” remains the only verb implicit of action used by the professor. The rest of the passage consists of a scientific approximation to love, employing adjectives of a geometric and mathematic nature combined with those of a sentimental and passionate nature. The professor reflects on his “antiguas experiencias de calorimetría” (106) and calls on his analytical skills in order to interpret the reaction of
Carlota’s fingers. As this section concludes, the professor declares that “Carlota cierra los ojos. Cuando los abre, la lección de Geometría ha terminado... Y la de amor, también” (108). The interval of time in which Carlota closes her eyes and then opens them again is a clue that an impropriety has transpired between the professor and his pupil. The professor confirms that the eyes are the first and last strongholds of instinct. Furthermore, passion begins in the retina and then proceeds blindly.\textsuperscript{170} The lead up to that statement is pure contemplation and analytical calculation rather than donjuanesque seduction. The fact that she has closed her eyes indicates that she has acted on her instincts and passion has ensued. However, the narrator’s focus in this section is not on the passionate encounter itself, but rather on the theoretical and philosophical approach to an amorous experience. The professor is preoccupied not with the practical, but rather with the philosophical potentialities of passion. In this case, the internal monologue of the protagonist takes precedence over narrating his actions.

Another visually pervaded moment takes place as Jarnés employs the use of metaphor to describe the Glorieta de Atocha. In the final fragment of the first chapter, as the professor waits for Valentín to arrive for his art lesson, he presents a seemingly contradictory description that is both spatially stagnant and dynamically animated.

La Glorieta de Atocha es la palma extendida de una mano gigante que prolonga sus dedos en largas fibras nerviosas, destrenzadas luego para hacer

\textsuperscript{170} The sentences prior to Carlota closing her eyes read:
Los ojos son los primeros y últimos reductos del instinto. Ellos comienzan el asedio, pero al final la lucha, suelen agazaparse en la trinchara de sus órbitas, para no presenciar la derrota o el triunfo. Son las manos – ágiles, mudas – las que firman el pacto. La pasión comienza en la retina, y luego se complace en avanzar a ciegas. (107-8)
vibrar a toda España. O quizás es un puerto sobre el Mar Gris. Se cuentan el Mar Negro, el Mar Rojo y el Blanco, pero apenas se recuerda al Mar Gris, es decir, Castilla. (61)

The Glorieta is depicted as the palm of a hand that reaches out to connect all of Spain. 171 Jarnés moves from this metaphor to one of Madrid as a port on the “Gray Sea,” a body of water invented to symbolize the plateaued region of Castilla. The professor mocks Madrid for not being a port city, lacking “esa enorme estatua del descubridor de Iberia, el Colón de los grandes puertos, que señalase con el dedo a ninguna parte, mástil de piedra donde encallan todas las miradas sin brújula” (62). Included in this ironic statement is an allusion not to a real statue of Christopher Columbus, but to an imaginary one that serves to

171 Ródenas de Moya notes in his edition of El profesor inútil that this image probably comes from “Castilla,” a poem by Unamuno. “Tú me levantas, tierra de Castilla, / en la rugosa palma de tu mano.” See 125n 34.
heighten the irony. This is an example of Hollander’s term notional ekphrasis, since the object described by the narrator does not exist. Continuing to present a description replete with dynamism, the professor observes the scene around him as a port teeming with activity. Along with the use of nautical terminology the professor employs visual, auditory and olfactory perceptions to depict a chaotic scene, juxtaposing urban with seaside imagery.

Hay en el muelle lanchas atracadas, olor a pescado, collares de luces nadando en el agua negra de la noche. Y todo hiere de pasajeros febriles que van a perder el vapor… Van tejiendo en el muelle una espesa malla de vibraciones la gritería de los vendedores de mariscos y periódicos, la baraúnda de
Figure 3.6 Glorieta de Atocha, Madrid, at beginning of the 20th century.

Photographer unknown. (www.fuenterrebollo.com/recuerdos/pentimento3.html)

buhoneros y limpiabotas, de camareros y mendigos, las risas, los piropos,
todo el sordo tumulto de las diez de la mañana en la Glorieta. Resbalan,
rebotan en la malla los bocinazos de los taxis, el estruendo de los camiones,
el tintineo apremiante de los tranvías. (62-3)

The sights, the smells and the sounds that the professor observes around him combine to give the reader the image of a bustling plaza, filled with the business of life and mechanization. Noise from taxis, commotion of trucks and even the ringing of the trolley bell represent the sounds of vehicles transporting the hectic passengers. Although certain professions are included by name, the narrator’s focus does not rest on any one individual, but rather the people around are presented in general terminology. Instead of providing a
detailed portrait of those he observes, Jarnés paints the people within the scenery as a blurred mass.\footnote{Fernández Cifuentes makes the connection between Walter Benjamin’s \textit{flâneur} and avant-garde authors, especially Jarnés. See “Fenomenología en la vanguardia: el caso de la novela.” Fernández Cifuentes points to the avant-gardists preference of public spaces over private spaces seeking out environments of anxiety, as well as preference for silence, the absence of dialogue (54-6).}

The flurry of seaside and urban activity is contrasted with a stylized, spatial description of the Glorieta. This scene is framed within the context of a visit to the Prado. The professor is supposed to meet Valentín at 10 o’clock in the morning to show him around the museum and give him a lecture about the plastic arts. Valentín has enticed the professor to go with him to Madrid on the premise of seeing the museum for the first time. The professor, however, is not only interested in an art lesson, but also in the prospect of seeing Ruth, who traveled to Madrid the previous day with her father. As he waits for his pupil to arrive, he initiates the process of explaining the visual arts with a description of the
scene around him, which is narrated as a landscape painting rather than a description of reality. He lets his eyes wander about the traffic circle in a panoramic fashion. The path of his eyes leads him from “la Estación del Mediodía a los muros rojos de Fomento, de éstos a la masa verde del Jardín Botánico. Toda la valla está en divorcio del azul, nunca se empapa de él” (63). What stand out in the professor’s description are the modulation of colors that surround him and the lack of intricate details of the buildings. The professor does not praise the plaza for being a masterpiece of architectural ingenuity. On the contrary, he equates it to a “construcción infantil, para ser recortada y fingir relieve” (63). The architecture that the professor observes in the Glorieta de Atocha is inferior to other cities’ skylines.

Otros cielos y otras ciudades logran fundirse en la total perspectiva: las masas plomizas de las nubes norteñas son magníficos penachos de cúpulas, toldos
monstruosos de azoteas. En Madrid los palacios y las torres se alzan desnudos de aire, los cascos de las cúpulas no tienen días de gala. (63-4)

This exercise of description and criticism on the part of the useless professor has been a diversion while waiting for Valentín. The use of metaphor – in this case, one abounding with visual stimulation – serves as a digression from the development of the storyline. The professor is once again at the mercy of his pupil, whose propensity for leisure prevents the delivery of lectures. The professor notes that as of 11 o’clock his pupil has still not arrived. “Nos citamos aquí para continuar en el museo nuestra lección de artes plásticas” (64). The professor is eager to continue the lesson, because in the museum he will resume his role as teacher. The mention of the continuation of a lesson in the plastic arts causes the professor to flash back to the lesson given the previous night by Valentín during a descent into debauchery. A tour of Valentín’s “predilecto cabaret,” is compared to a museum visit, referring to the Glorieta itself as a museum. During a night of drinking, in which the passing of time is measured not in hours but in the number of drinks consumed, the professor confuses statues with women. His flashback includes a collage of details and juxtaposition of images in his mind. The professor is still feeling the effects of the evening as he waits for Valentín. Even when Ruth shows up to tell him that Valentín is still asleep, he is not in full control of his faculties: “No me muevo del asiento. Ni logro salir de mi estupor. Intento por fin incorporarme. Vacilo. No puedo sostenerme en pie. La Glorieta es para mí un torbellino. Es inútil. No puedo dar paso. La acera se desliza bajo mis pies. Penetro de nuevo en una espesa bruma” (75-6). He passes out and Valentín wakes him up in his hotel room. At the conclusion of this chapter Valentín declares “Querido profesor. Bien...

173 The professor tells Valentín “– La Glorieta es un museo” then comments to himself that “Debí decir parque zoológico” (70).
aprovecha usted mis lecciones. ¡Magnífico cicerone!” (76). The professor is disgusted with himself and infuriated with Valentín but is assuaged to hear that Ruth is enamored with him.174

In *El profesor inútil*, Jarnés’s employment of the description of images is used to provide digressions from the narrative progress and to suspend the advancement of plot. These digressions, however, do not lead to static descriptions and lack of activity, but rather to moments ripe with movement and activity. The protagonist in his introspective contemplation gives voice to the images as they come to life in his own imagination. Jarnés also uses ekphrasis to draw attention to the use of language. Comparable to the human reality of Ortega y Gasset’s garden scene being set aside in order to focus on the windowpane, the visual object described is no longer the focus of the work, but rather the language used to describe that image and the philosophical musing caused by the description. Ekphrastic descriptions allow Jarnés to “frustrate narrative movement” (Baldwin 19), and to focus on language rather than plot development. Ekphrasis, resembling the use of metaphor, allows the author to escape reality, in ways that are consistent with Ortega y Gasset’s notion of the dehumanization of art. In this case, the author deals with an external reality on a superficial level, or abandons it all together, in order to experience an internal, personal one.

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174 In the 1934 edition, the professor is able to give Ruth a tour of the museum and complete the comparison between the market and the museum.
OCULAR TRAINING: PROGYMNASMATA AND PAINTING WITH WORDS

IN PAULA Y PAULITA

Jarnés’s *Paula y Paulita*, the fifth publication in the “Nova Novorum,” is comprised of two parts, preceded by a “Nota preliminar” and followed by a “Nota final,” which serve as a prologue and an epilogue. The two parts, “El número 479” and “Petronio,” are more or less distinct fragments, which have some common elements but were written at different times. Similar to his other novels, parts of *Paula y Paulita* appeared in various magazines and periodical publications in fragmented forms prior to their inclusion in the completed novel. The two fragments share a common setting, a spa in the countryside village of Aguas Vivas, although the second fragment includes an excursion to the Abadía de los Fresnos. In the first section, the action centers around three protagonists: a first person narrator who identifies himself as number 479 (his room number) and two women, whom he also associates with their room numbers, a mother named Paula, 478, and her daughter Paulita, 477. A character named “Mr. Brook” becomes the focus of the second section, which is narrated in the third person. This new narrator reveals that number 479’s name is actually Julio. Each part is divided into chapters, the first part includes seven and the second part six.

The “Nota preliminar” is an essay on aesthetics presented by the same first person narrator that recounts the first part (“El número 479”) and the “Nota final.” In a four-chapter essay, the narrator comments on the indecision of young artists. He concludes that indecision stems from timidity, which in turn leads to fear. The artist knows all of the paths to avoid, but not the direction in which to proceed. In the fields of art, architecture, music

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175 Jarnés dates the first section from 1925-1926, while the second part carries the same year of novel’s publication, 1929.
176 According to Gil, Aguas Vivas resembles a monastery called Alhama de Aragón. See *Ciudades y paisajes aragoneses en la obra de Benjamín Jarnés*, 45.
and literature, Jarnés affirms that young artists are paralyzed by a fear of committing new errors. Jarnés does, however, provide a solution – love. Fear can be overcome by intelligent love, which shortens the distance between the world and the spirit, and grants the ability to paint something on the blank canvas.\textsuperscript{177} The aesthetic essay converts the author into an artist standing in front of a canvas and preludes what Jarnés intends to accomplish through the novel.\textsuperscript{178} In the “Presentación” of his edition of Jarnés’s novel, Ródenas de Moya suggests that the narrator represents the hesitant young artist described in the “Nota preliminar.”

Julio … es el irónico y único narrador de toda la historia y su complacencia en el anonimato, oculto tras un número o simulando no ser quien habla, no pasa a ser un ardid de muy efímera eficacia, fracasado de igual modo que la pretendida cura de silencio que le llevó a trasladarse a Aguas Vivas. Julio encarna, así, al artista inhibido, atenazado por el miedo, que describe Jarnés; Paula y Paulita son el ciego turbión de la vida, que da al traste con los programas meticulosamente urdidos. (17)

The first part introduces the first person narrator, who is on his way to Aguas Vivas to enjoy a relaxing vacation at the Balneario de las Termas. He is searching for a therapeutic rest and on the train ride to the resort he is ready to defend his right to silence: “Primer baño

\textsuperscript{177} This is a paraphrased translation from the original (Jarnés 19), which I will quote later in this chapter.

\textsuperscript{178} Martínez Latre concludes that the prologues of Jarnés’s novels are instrumental in communicating the novelistic techniques which are applied to that particular novel. I agree with Martínez Latre when she asserts that the prologue “suele ser la presentación teórica y explícita de la novela en la que se aborda el significado último que para Jarnés tiene el mensaje novelístico y las técnicas utilizadas en el mismo” (83-4). Furthermore, “el prólogo sirve de guía al lector al entrar en la ficción, teniendo en cuenta que el caos, según opina el escritor, puede suministrar otra forma de conocimiento, siempre que se sepa conjugar con la razón” (85).
de mi plan curativo. Defenderé mi derecho al silencio con todas las armas de que dispongo” (25). This weapon is a book titled “Molestias del trato humano” that he frequently uses when traveling, not necessarily to read but rather to “dejarlo sobre el asiento, con la cubierta bien visible, bien enfilada hacia el enemigo” (26). Upon arriving at the hotel, he is assigned a room number, 479, which, in order to remember more easily, he reduces to a single value. The protagonist’s predilection for introversion, his proclivity for numbers and a mathematical approach to understanding his surroundings as well as his human interactions correlates to Ortega y Gasset’s dehumanization of art and the avoidance of all things human. The characters at the beginning of the novel are reduced to anonymity and association not with names, but rather with numbers.

On his way to the room, however, the analytical reduction of his room number to a single digit backfires on him. Confused by the lateness of the hour and the shadows that fill the hallway, he enters the wrong room – 478 rather than 479 – both to his surprise and that of the woman who occupies this room. Once in the correct room he hears two women, whom he surmises are the occupants of 477 and 478, whispering and laughing at his error. In the next chapter, the narrator thinks about his mistake from the previous evening and its disastrous effects on his plan of an anonymous vacation. Now, instead of being seen as merely one of a number of bathers, he has been converted from a numeral into an anecdote. It is also at this point when he reveals another purpose for visiting the spa – his official capacity as an accountant.

Conozco que ya soy para todos ‘el joven que anoche se metió en el cuarto de una señora’. Ya para todos – excepto la administración que sólo tiene en cuenta los sucesos capaces de desequilibrar el Balance – dejé de ser el
In accordance with his commitment to maintain silence, the narrator introduces an interest in training – or disciplining – his other senses, specifically his ears and his eyes. To this effect, the narrator articulates his plan to study – visually and audibly – a wild portion of the countryside. But before he is able to make his excursion, he goes to breakfast. The narrator approaches the table where the two women are seated in order to apologize for the previous night’s intrusion. His new epithet sticks with him even when he meets Paulita, the occupant of room number 477. Paula introduces him as “el joven de anoche” (40). The conversation between the three of them is primarily filtered through first person narration, intermingled with brief exchanges of dialogue. Picturesque descriptions of Aguas Vivas and of the two women, whom the narrator confuses with one another, permeate the third and fourth chapters. Ródenas de Moya notes that “desdoblamientos, escamoteos, engañifas, mascaradas” and “juegos de identidad” (“Presentación” 16) characterize much of the novel, but the first part in particular. As the narrator spends more time with these women, he begins to see himself as a median between the two of them. They become enemies, with differing trajectories. In one particular conversation, the narrator finds it difficult to maintain the balance between the two women.

Se combinan en mí dos propiedades contrarias, y me tortura un grave problema fisiológico: el de hacer independientes mis dos retinas. Tengo que

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179 To describe the actions of the narrator in this passage, Jarnés uses the Spanish word “disciplinar,” which could be translated “to discipline” or “to train.” The narrator demonstrates this practice in subsequent passages with detailed descriptions of what he hears and sees at the resort.
mirar alternativamente,midiendo con exacta precisión los segundos que
empleo en cada mirada. Cuando me detengo en Paulita, Paula se acentúa su
emoción, azuzando mi impaciencia. (61)

When he is unable to maintain equilibrium between the two women, his attention
diverts to the younger Paulita. Paula is focused on winning his affection, but it is Paulita who
captivates him. In the fourth chapter, the narrator is describing the valley where the spa is
located, when, suddenly, it begins to rain. He is too far from the hotel, so he seeks shelter in
the Baño del Rey. Paulita has been gathering fruit from a garden, and she flees from the storm
as well. The narrator calls to her, inviting her to escape the rain in the shelter of a bathhouse
pavilion. This momentary burst of action quickly dissipates as the narrator returns to his role
of spectator. As she drops apples from her basket, rather than demonstrating an act of
gallantry, he simply observes her. Once again, he symbolizes the artists, described in the
“Nota preliminar,” who are paralyzed by the fear of making a mistake. Alone with Paulita,
the narrator begins to regale her with legendary tales of the spa. He fails, however, in his
attempt to woo her through his storytelling. When the storm ends and she tries to leave, he
grabs her arm and whispers in her ear. Confused, she quickly escapes.

In the fifth chapter, the narrator carries out his plan to study the countryside of the
resort, as well as many of the guests. He compares the resort to giving a lecture, which he
would divide in three parts, corresponding to different times of day – the spa in the
morning, in the afternoon and in the evening. During the rest of the chapter, he elaborates
on his lecture, beginning the point of view of different types of guests to the spa. Asserting
that there are as many landscapes as there are bathers, he examines the point of view of a
farmer, an athlete, a botanist and a builder. His own perspective as an accountant is the only
one in which one can find the unbiased expression of the resort, ironically concluding that
“mejor que exprimir sus jugos líricos, tan arbitrarios, es fijar exactamente el número y el
precio de cada flor” (91). He finds that a poet, a painter, a topographer, and a skin specialist
are not able to observe and provide a consistent assessment of the scenery.

No tengo empeño en aplicar a la consideración del paisaje mi criterio
profesional, sino de señalar la inconsistencia de las demás valoraciones. El
poeta no suele ver el paisaje, porque trae siempre consigo modelos más
complicados. El pintor, tampoco, porque teme pintarlo tal cual lo ven todos
los demás, lo que le haría fracasar en la primera exposición. Ni siquiera puede
verlo el topógrafo, que lo palpa y mide palmo a palmo, como no suelen ver a
una mujer hermosa los especialistas de las enfermedades de la piel. (91)

The narrator, then, elaborates on his lecture titled “Las Termas en atardecer,” which
he divides into four chapters. At the end of the explanation of his lecture, the narrator
comments that he is no longer the center of his little world, nor the center of Aguas Vivas,
but rather is now orbiting around Paulita, who has stolen his crown. Her popularity has not
only propelled her into occupying the center of the narrator’s world, but also that of the
resort. It is from this new perspective that the narrator sees Paula as a caricature of Paulita,
deformed by time, the most ironic sketch artist. Just as Paulita displays an aversion to the
narrator, the narrator seeks to avoid Paula, whom he calls his enemy. In the final chapters of
the first part, the narrator is unsuccessful at times in escaping the presence of Paula. He
begins to confuse her with Paulita, not the real Paulita, but an image of Paula as a younger
woman. They visit the movie theatre and during the film Paula introduces the name of Mr. Brook, a character who figures prominently in the second part of the novel. She tells the narrator that Mr. Brook was a business partner of her and her husband, Moisés. She alludes to the fact that Mr. Brook is actually the father of Paulita, and that since he is about to die, he would like to say goodbye to her.

In the last chapter of the first part, the narrator comes full circle in his interest in identifying people numerically. He returns to linking himself with the number 479, and even 479,000,000, which suggests that he now sees himself as one out of an enormous number of people: “Ser un ente que goza en borrarse todo gesto individual, dejándose convertida en un pedazo de material trémula el ardiente contacto del trozo que le precede o que le sigue” (142). In his estimation Paula, as well, returns to her identity as number 478. As they watch fireworks exploding over the valley of the resort and Paula has succeeded in her seduction of the narrator, he retreats to the safety and anonymity of his mathematical calculations.

There are significant narrative changes from the first part of the novel to the second part. Mr. Brook is now the focus of the narration, which is written in the third person. Mr. Brook immediately announces his intention to commit suicide, declaring the morning to be “un día espléndido. El mejor para un final de una vida” (147). The first person narrator from the first part is now identified as Julio, whom Mr. Brook grooms to be his executor and successor. The six chapters of the second part consist of a visit to the Abadía de los Fresnos (Abbey of the Ashes), in which Mr. Brook entertains Julio, Paula and Paulita with a series of legendary tales about the caves of the abbey. Mr. Brook pronounces the key to understanding this part of the novel when he tells Paula: “hay unos hombres extraños que se

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180 Pointing out the complexity of each of Jarnés protagonists, Pérez Gracia notes the duality of the two female protagonists in his La Venus jánica. “La relación entre la madre e hija está vista como una forma dual de la mujer, como un espejo en forma de diptico, el ayer y el hoy, la juventud y la madurez” (8).
llaman abaciólogos. … Especialistas en catálogos de abades. Es una pintoresca profesión. Por ellos conozco la historia de estas ruinas malogradas” (156). Even when a tour guide from the abbey joins the group, Mr. Brook asserts his authority in the hidden history of the grottoes. Upon meeting the guide, Mr. Brook declares:


Mr. Brook is more interested in the unofficial history of the abbey rather than the anecdotal stories told by the official tour guides. The visit through the caves is comparable to a walk through a museum, but instead of describing the details of paintings, Mr. Brook informs them of the name of each grotto and expounds upon a legendary tale associated with that place.

Another important theme in the second part of the novel is Mr. Brook leaving an inheritance to Julio. This inheritance begins with some notes that Mr. Brook has accumulated and will leave to Julio after his death. These notes are the stories that Mr. Brook has been telling as they pass through the caves. But Julio is an heir of more than just the notes. Mr. Brook names him heir to his spirit and the spirits of the legendary tales. Mr. Brook becomes more than a mere storyteller as the novel progresses. He is described as a conjuror of ghosts. He begins to see the images of the protagonists in the stories he has compiled as he declares: “acabo de ver los novios del poema” (188). Mr. Brook chooses Julio
to succeed him as a conjuror of the ghosts of the abbey, making him heir to “un nuevo aparato de percepción” (191). The action of the second part culminates as three ghostly figures appear before the group and invite Mr. Brook to a Bacchanalian supper, after which he commits suicide with a revolver.

Julio narrates the “Nota final,” where he finds himself on the train platform again. He has returned to the city. He has returned to the point where both the novel and his journey began. Julio realizes a change caused by his vacation when he declares: “Salí de aquí sin equipaje emocional alguno; vuelvo abrumado” (213). The judge comes to gather evidence in his investigation of the death of Mr. Brook. Julio shows him a suicide note from the notebook, but the judge dismisses it as an excuse: “¡Bah! Eso es música. Es la Bolsa. Jugaba sin tino. La Bolsa. O alguna mujer” (215). The judge’s conclusion is that Mr. Brook killed himself because of money or a woman. In the last line of the novel, Julio expresses his intention to publish the notes Mr. Brook has bequeathed to him.

In this novel, as in *El profesor inútil*, the visual arts play an important role. The novel opens with introductory remarks about the nature of the avant-garde, comments that Martínez Latre has called “un manifiesto sobre el arte contemporáneo” (85). The “manifesto” has four parts, the first of which I will analyze as an ekphrastic moment. In the first part the narrator calls on the reader to visualize three objects that correspond to three types of art. Each object is described as being reduced to a rudimentary form, waiting to be

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181 Hershberger has also noted the importance of the visual arts in the novels of Jarnés. His dissertation focuses on the cinematic mode in a few of Jarnés’s novels. Hershberger is interested in paintings and artistic style, but does not, however, recognize an ekphrasis impulse. In the third chapter, “Painting and New Humanism in Paula y Paulita,” Hershberger proposes that the references to paintings allows the protagonist to “move from a dehumanized, urban existence to a more fulfilling humanistic experience in the countryside... Jarnés appropriates painting styles that suggest a movement away from vanguard aesthetics that center on a language of symbols and images toward a new literary humanism based on sentiment” (193, 195).
adorned, written, or painted. The first representation corresponds to architecture, a modern building in particular.

Tengo delante una moderna construcción. Es una quinta de placer. Tiene por fachada un blanco, un limpio muro rectangular, abierto aquí y allá por negros, por exactos cuadrados. Cada frente de la nueva arquitectura es otro rectángulo. Y otro el barandal de piedra. Y la tapia del jardín. (13)

Each side of the country villa is a blank wall with holes. This austere architectural structure is lacking all adornment, waiting for the modern architect to add the artistic details and the paint necessary to complete the project. Not only is the house incomplete, but even the surrounding area is untouched, described in the most simplistic of forms.


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182 A translation of the “Nota preliminar” is found in Samuel Putnam’s *The European Caravan: An Anthology of the New Spirit in European Literature*. The translation is credited to Víctor Llona. The translation reads: I have before me a modern building. It is a country-house, a villa. Its façade is a white, neat, rectangular wall, broken here and there by black, precise squares. Each front in the new architecture is yet another square. And another the coping and footing of the balustrade. And the garden wall. (397)

183 No projecting roofs, no niches, no columns, no stepping-stones, no friezes, no pediments. Planes, planes, planes. And, behind, a few trees. Lines, dry angles – perfect, bare. And, in the background, the baroque volume – gold and green – of the countryside. (397)
The next object is a book of poetry. Again, the narrator describes a work in the beginning stages of creation. Upon opening the book, the narrator finds “líneas ágiles, delgados chorros líricos, soterrado patetismo, emociones estranguladas por el implacable lazo irónico, diseños de sonrisas” (13). The schoolmaster’s cane (“la palmeta del dómine”) is about to descend threateningly upon his creation (“la desnuda construcción”). For a second time, the narrator uses the metaphor of a lack of clothing to describe artistic representations in their blank state.

The third representation is found within an artist’s studio. Mentioning Francisco Bores (1898-1972) by name, but only as a point of reference, the narrator describes a drab canvas, with splotches of monotone colors and outlines of figures.

telas manchadas de gris, de ceniza, de blancos terrosos, donde se asoman, trémulas, unas formas rudimentarias, bosquejos de seres, estructuras larvadas, sin apoyo, sin tentáculos que esclavicen la atención, sin afán alguno de cosechar palmas: líricos tallos de floras desconocidas que apuntan en un terreno yermo donde el rastrillo arrancó las últimas raíces. (14)

Commenting collectively on these three art forms and the production of young artists in general, the narrator describes an allegorical descent into the Jordan River, where the figure of art personified is to be baptized. After this baptism it returns to be “dressed,”

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184 “agile lines, thin lyrical jets, buried pathos, emotions strangled by the implacable string of irony, drawings of smiles” (397).
185 canvases stained with ashen greys, with earthen whites, among which one glimpses dim, tremulous, rudimentary shapes, sketches of beings, larval structures, supportless, without tentacles to enslave attention, without any anxiety to reap laurels: lyrical stems of unknown flowers sticking out of a ground made bare, stripped by the harrow of its ultimate roots. (397)
but postpones this moment, which signifies the act of artistic inspiration. The new art is free from tradition (“la abrumadora impedimenta de siglos”) and associated with “días de vacación,” unable to decide how to act next. The narrator points to a transgression by the artist as the most promising creative act. Only through sin is originality possible, because virtue, on the other hand, prefers the common pattern. Art stutters, hesitates and abstains because of fear. Fear is the reason that the young artist “no sabe qué pintar en el muro blanco” (14). The narrator uses a metaphorical description of these three representations in order to philosophically ruminate about the nature of avant-garde artists. The purpose of this ekphrastic moment is not to imitate natural representations, but rather to manipulate them and use them as the starting point of a philosophical conversation. Leaving the objects aside, the narrator continues his manifesto by describing the indecisiveness of the contemporary young artists—a paralysis caused by fear, which stems from a scarcity of love. It is only through an intellectual love that art can overcome the fear, which the narrator describes as a spiritual coldness “capaz de abrir anchos espacios vacíos entre el espíritu y las cosas” (18). This aesthetic theory serves as the springboard for Jarnés in Paula y Paulita. He will use this novel to experiment with an intellectual love that is able to overcome fear, to be able to paint with words on a blank canvas.

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186 The last two phrases read: “Freed from the overwhelming burden of the ages, it takes breath and enjoys the holiday” (397).
187 “It knows not what to paint upon the bare wall” (397).
188 “capable of opening wide empty spaces between the mind and things” (399).
189 The last two paragraphs of the introduction are as follows.

El arte tiene miedo, porque ha olvidado ese camino donde se juntan el mundo y el espíritu: el del amor inteligente, capaz de empujar los astros, las ideas y los hombres.

Sólo ese amor puede hacer que, de nuevo, volvamos a pintar alguna cosa en el muro en blanco. (19)

The English translation is as follows.
Vision also plays an important role in the first part of Jarnés’s novel. In the second fragment, the narrator announces his intention to “disciplinar un sentido, a hacerle captar menudas palpitaciones de las cosas” (35). He exercises his sense of hearing and then, more important to the present study, he turns his focus to his sense of sight. He initiates a series of descriptions, which allow him to hone his skills in visual observation. He chooses a wild portion of the countryside and begins to describe a banquet he observes from his vantage point on a hillside. The scene is a close-up shot of an apple that has fallen from a tree and the creatures that approach to feast on what is left of the fruit: “Un cadáver de manzana, que aún conserva trozos del epidermis tersa, de pulpa suculenta, es el bodegoncillo de dos romerías de gusanos que van buscando el despojo inerte” (37). The detailed description is artistically rendered, as observed by Hershberger, to resemble a still life painting:

“Although the term bodegoncillo refers to the worm’s tiny, ambulatory banquet, it also suggests a small still-life (un bodegón) that Julio visualizes through a still primarily scientific and reductionist perspective” (Hershberger 208).

In a way similar to the confusion between

Art is afraid, because it has forgotten the road where the world and the mind come together, the road of intelligent love, capable of propelling stars, ideas and men.

Only such a love may cause us again to paint something upon the bare wall. (Putnam 400)

Jarnés also makes reference to “bodegón” in the 1934 version of El profesor inútil. In a chapter titled “El zoco y el bodegón,” parts of which appears in the chapter “Mañana de vacación” of the first edition, the narrator correlates the marketplace with life and the still-life with the novel. “Porque si la vida es el zoco, la novela ha de ser el bodegón” (136). The novel represents a plastic imitation of life in the same way the still-life painting imitates statically the real fruit of the marketplace. The fragment in which Jarnés comments on still-life painting is derived from three vignettes, “El zoco,” “El bodegón” and “Corolario,” which make up the “Nota preliminar” of Salón de Estío. This fragment was published in Residencia 1, 2 (1926) with the title “Dos mercados.” See Jarnés’s Salón de Estío y otras narraciones, 5–9.

Hershberger examines the visual arts to identify an evolution of Jarnés’s painterly styles. He observes a progression in this novel in four stages – dehumanization, Cubism, Impressionism, and finally, a Romantic impulse. Hershberger sees this moment as the beginning of Julio’s attempts to artistically render his surroundings.
Paula and Paulita, Jarnés plays on the double meaning of the term *bodegón*, to refer to both the consumption of the apple and the type of painting. While Jarnés assimilates the description to the still life painting, as is common in ekphrasis, the scene includes a measure of activity. After the worm approaches the apple, a mosquito comes into focus. Julio observes as the mosquito “desciende también a chupar un sorbo de zumo” (38). Another apple falls from the tree and crushes a group of gluttonous insects. Even a little rat attends the feast, but absconds quickly when it senses a cat lurking on the premises. The purpose of this exercise has been for Julio to sharpen his skills in visual observation. The effect has been to provide the reader with a picturesque description of part of the valley. Jarnés does not present a panoramic description analogous to a landscape painting, but rather a narrow microscopic view restricted to a fallen piece of fruit, more comparable to a still-life painting.

This visual exercise executed in the countryside is juxtaposed with a description of Paulita, at that moment identified by her room number, as “esta maciza agrupación de músculos, vestida ahora de morado” (39). As he sits in the spa’s dinning room, he continues his ocular training. The narrator performs this exercise of honing his senses – first that of hearing and next that of sight – in order to present to the reader a vivid description of his surroundings. This is reminiscent of the kind of exercises taught in the *Progymnasmata* handbooks of Ancient rhetoric mentioned previously; exercises that sought to achieve pictorial vividness through the verbal description of objects and works of art. The narrator/protagonist of *Paula y Paulita* sees this ekphrastic technique as an extension of his new personality, which he describes as being “entre audaz y pintoresca” (39). Paula begins to read the menu, to which Julio adds his commentary, “extrañas observaciones acerca del pan, del vino, de la carne, de las frutas” (41). Julio affirms the superficial nature of his observation. As part of the training of his eyes, he has been observing only the outward
appearances of the objects around him, similar to his experience viewing the apple in the countryside.

Me limito a la pura actualidad que nos rodea, a los componentes más sencillos, más elementales de la minuta, que poco a poco van pasando a ser nosotros mismos. No siendo ducho en artes culinarias ni sociales, prefiero hablar de la naturaleza desnuda, sustancial, tan simple antes de convertirse en este complicado y aderezado producto que es un hombre. (41)

At this point, Julio still pertains to that group of young artists who are afraid to paint on the blank canvas. Julio prefers to observe the scene in its simplest form, reduced to mere appearances. “Una mirada circular me descubre el pintoresco espectáculo de mis torpes compañeros de ducha termal, que desconocen su verdadera condición de seres transitorios que arrastra un torbellino de apariencias” (44). Everyone in the dining room is transformed into a machine. The dining room becomes “un abigarrado mecanismo, una divertida máquina social donde cada pieza acusa un taller de construcción distinto” (44). Julio turns his attention to Paulita, but only perceives her external beauty, offering nothing more than a surface level examination. Julio approaches this visual training from a scientific, or mathematical, perspective. His vision is described as moving tangentially to her temple, creating a radius from his pupils to her head. The space between them is conceived as a ring with his eyes and her head forming two luminous points. But he quickly loses his place at the center of the circle: “De un hoy que ya no existe. Paulita no es ya cifra, ni apariencia. No es ya un doble punto del aro, porque ya sus ojos avanzan por las vibrantes sendas de los radios, empujándome fuera del centro para instalarse en él. Me abrirán un hueco entre los seres que
giran en torno suyo” (45). Julio begins as the center of the room but Paulita supplants his position with everyone at the spa now orbiting around her.

Julio’s visual training continues in the third segment of the first part. Instead of the minute details of the restricted view resembling a still life painting, he now studies the wide sweeping, yet dense, panorama of Aguas Vivas as if he were creating a landscape painting, infused with a historical perspective.

Estudio en Aguas Vivas cierto período de transición en las evoluciones del paisaje. Hay aquí un sugerente tipo medio entre el patrón natural y el artístico, que me recuerda el cuadro histórico, tipo de creación intermedia entre la historia y la pintura.

Y culpo de delitos de precipitación al arquitecto del balneario. En unas pocas hectáreas de terreno, fue amontonando los relieves pintorescos de muchas leguas a la redonda. Este denso panorama se formó a expensas de muchas otras perspectivas vacías hoy de sentido decorativo. (47)

In expounding on the history of the spa, Julio relies on intertextual references, a technique which Hershberger associates with “the cubist technique of pastiche in which verbal elements are incorporated into the canvas” (211). The narrator combines historical accounts with a pictorial representation of the spa. The landscape becomes a whimsical drawing by the Cubist painter Juan Gris (1887-1927):

Ahora este paisaje es sólo un capricho de Juan Gris. Para unos metros de tela se adquirieron: un río, siete rocas, un panteón, una estación ferroviaria, un
montecillo de pinos, un lago con su islote para aventuras acuáticas, un parque enmarañado para aventuras terrestres, un parterre y un gran casino. Sin contar un cine y un quiosco de periódicos como elementos culturales. (50)

The association of the landscape of Aguas Vivas with a drawing by the Spanish artist evokes a colorful collage of fragmented objects. Gris is recognized, along with Picasso and Braque, as one of the pioneers of Analytic Cubism. His greatest contribution to the movement is found in his production from a period of 1911-17, during which time he painted many Cubist still lifes and portraits. Only a few of his paintings from this period are identified as landscape paintings. In two landscape paintings of Céret – *Landscape with Houses at Céret* and *Landscape at Céret*, both from 1913 – Gris employs a technique that Jarnés adopts in his narrative, a technique described by Douglas Cooper in his *The Cubist Epoch*.

By the spring of 1913, Gris had dispensed with his linear framework and had arrived at a new compositional device – deriving undoubtedly from the technique of *papiers collés* – namely a system of vertical, horizontal and triangular planes which overlap but are not transparent (*Playing Cards and Glass of Beer; Landscape at Céret*). These planes, which are differentiated from each other tonally, and often texturally as well, provide the spatial structure

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192 Many critics have unfavorably reviewed Gris’s work after 1917. In *Cubism and Abstract Art*, Alfred Barr mentions Gris when describing the development of Synthetic Cubism and *collage*, but mentions none of his work after 1917. Herbert Read likewise states, in his *A Concise History of Modern Painting*, that Gris’s “development in the years immediately preceding his death in 1927 at the early age of forty was to be disappointing and Apollinaire’s word ‘impoverished’ becomes much more apt” (86).
of the composition as they take their places in front of or behind others. On each of them Gris either represents, in its solidity, a single aspect of one or more objects, or else in outline some related aspect. (202)

After mentioning the key elements of the spa, Julio gives a historical account of how the architect juxtaposed disparate objects.
No cupo todo en un plano, y fue preciso intentar una poco armoniosa yuxtaposición. Se construyó al ferrocarril un largo puente aéreo sobre el parque. Al río se le internó por un desfiladero. El montecillo de meditar redujo su espesor hasta convertirse en torreón salvaje con una escalera embozada entre los pinos colgados de los muros. El casino escamoteó algunos chopos, y el estanque redujo su isla afortunada, para abrir una pista más ancha a los peces vestidos de frac rojo que acuden al banquete improvisado por los niños. (50-1)
Instead of a deliberately organized plan, Julio accuses the architects of haphazardly arranging the buildings and reshaping the geographical features into a collage of illogical juxtapositions, causing the elements to lose their natural properties. The elements are described as being overlapped upon one another, in the same way Gris uses nontransparent shapes to create the composition of his landscape scene. Julio finds the result to be “a hasty, decorative puzzle:”

Todo fue cruzado de pasarelas, amenazado de saledizos y aleros, sombreado por terrazas. De la primitiva sencillez de Horeb ha quedado un atropellado puzzle decorativo. Recuerda esos dibujos infantiles que pretenden apiñar el universo en una hoja de papel, como el aforista intenta apiñar todo un sistema filosófico en una oración de relativo.

Ellos y la gerencia profesan el horror al intervalo, tomándolo por el vacío. De las cosas apenas conocen la intersección de sus planos, pero no la silenciosa y lenta endósmosis de sus mundos circundantes. (51)

The landscape of Aguas Vivas becomes an overlapping of fragmented elements squeezed into a constrained space. The once serene hilltop has been stripped of this original quality due to its placement near the lake filled with fish. The tunnel became so close to the newspaper stand that it appeared more like “una cabina de redacción, donde, entre cigarrillos y tazas de café, se fragua o precipita la caída de un concejal” (52). The compression of the hill side caused medicinal and drinking water to spring forth at the same time a short distance from one another, offering two choices to the clientele: “caliente para los miembros
anquilosados, fresca para los desperezos del puro deleite” (52). The description of the countryside provides Jarnés with an opportunity to implement painterly techniques in his narrative.

Not only are the elements of the landscape layered one upon another, but also at the spa the narrator observes the same phenomena in regards to the seasons: “La misma yuxtaposición de ambientes. Alineados en poco trecho están la Primavera, el Estío, el Otoño y el Invierno. Son los mismos que reparten por la escalinata del hotel” (52). The narrator begins to describe statues placed around the spa’s hotel that depict the four seasons, which are represented by three male statues and one female. The female statue that represents spring is “la misma doncella desnuda” (52). The statue of summer is “el mozuelo del manojo de espigas” (52). Fall is depicted as “el viñador en trance de cantar un fado” (52). Winter is “el anciano barbudo tiritando bajo la capa filosófico” (52). With the same attitude of criticism toward the architect of Aguas Vivas, Julio now takes to task the sculptor, who was brought in by the administration to elevate the aesthetic tone of the spa. Julio condemns the sculptor for having little more knowledge than that of mythological fauna and claims that the artist’s imagination did not rise above the signs of the Zodiac. One of the statues in particular – the one representing winter – comes under fire from the narrator for being an intrusion. It is a poor advertisement for the spa because the man appears to suffer from rheumatism and should have a more youthful disposition. Even the color of the beard could have appeared less like disheveled snow and more like the flower of an almond tree. Julio’s exercise of ocular training leads him to paint with words a collage-like landscape and to describe statues that represent the four seasons. He does not praise the spa and its rural surroundings, however, but presents an uncomplimentary assessment of the architecture and sculpture.
The description progresses from one of a fragmented landscape to that of four statues depicting the four seasons, and becomes infused with the life of the spa. The narrator observes a flurry of activity occurring near each statue, causing a cacophony of symbols. Each group of visitors to the spa is contrasted with the nature of the statue adjacent to them:

“Cerca del Invierno, corren dos rapaces futbolistas. Bajo el macilento Otoño, una pareja de novios ríe estrepitosamente. Junto al lozano Estío, sueña una joven raquítica. Y vecinos de la desnuda Primavera, nos sentamos Paula y yo” (53). The description of the statues establishes an unharmonious juxtaposition with the guests of Aguas Vivas. Two athletes harass the statue of the ancient representation of winter. A couple of sweethearts laugh noisily underneath the haggard figure of Fall. A poor, young girl dreams next to the vigorous statue of summer. Paula and Julio sit near the nude statue of spring. The gathering of people is a direct contradiction to the symbols represented by the statues. The same type of illogical juxtaposition exists in the narrator’s assessment that the architect hastily composed the spa’s buildings and natural features.

The narrator has employed vision to describe minute details of the countryside resembling a still life painting and to describe the buildings and natural features similar to that of a landscape painting. As the third section comes to a close, the narrator now uses his ocular training to verbally paint a portrait of the two women. Julio has previously presented a picturesque description of Paulita, but only as an external and superficial inspection. This description came on the heels of his detailed examination of the apple in the countryside. His visual training began with a surface level observation. Now, as his skills have improved, he illustrates a spiritual topography of the two women.\footnote{Hershberger signals this moment to be a further evidence of collage. “The unusual coupling of classical and more contemporary intertexts in his portraits of the bathers still bears the mark of a vanguardist’s pastiche” (214).}
level only occurs to the narrator when both of them are present. “Es curioso que, sólo al llegar Paulita, piense en realizar esta investigación. Quizá esperaba el punto de referencia. Como los malos críticos, sueloe operar comparando; o como los buenos impresionistas, por el choque de dos colores” (58). He operates by drawing a comparison between the two women in the same manner in which an Impressionist would contrast colors in a painting. The image Julio describes draws a distinction between inner qualities and exterior characteristics. In fact, he observes in these two women the incompatibility of a simultaneous projection of internal and external beauty. Either the woman’s voice or her physical appearance will be pleasing, but not both.

Necesitamos sacrificar siempre un sobrante de inteligencia para hacernos perdonar el resto. Así, una mujer hermosa debe sacrificar una parte de su belleza para hacerse perdonar toda la demás. El mismo sabio suele elaborar torpemente algunos chistes para hacer soportable su sabiduría. Así, Paulita, parece haberse elaborado una voz agria, erizada de ortigas, para ofrecer un talón a las flechas enemigas. Ella prefiere arrojarles esa voz destemplada, como un mendrugo de pan que se alarga al mendigo, mientras se oculta el sabroso pastel. (60)

Out of an aesthetic necessity, Paulita has sacrificed a pleasing voice to make her external beauty more tolerable, while Paula, on the other hand, covers over her twilight years of beauty with a caramel-like voice. The two women are portrayed as being polar opposites, even as two enemies with the same trajectory, only in opposite directions. In geometrical terminology, Julio explains how he and the two women form a triangle, with himself as “el
vértice de un ángulo cuyos lados son sendas miradas de muy desigual temperatura. Por un lado, brisa filtrada por cañas de azúcar; por otro, una ventolina punzante, tamizada por un zarzal” (61). As he talks with the two women he is faced with the physiological problem of detaching his two retinas from one another in order to look at both of them at the same time. Looking alternately at each woman, he measures the precise amount of seconds he detains his vision on each one and each moment spent on Paulita accentuates an emotional response from Paula. This visual triangle is abandoned when Paulita’s attention is attracted to a young male employee of the spa, whom Julio dubs “Casanova,” while Paula remains intently focused on Julio.

Soy el fiel de una balanza cuyos platillos tienen muy distintos pesos. No puedo mantener el equilibrio. Callamos los tres, y ya decido mirar sólo a Paulita, que, desplegando el abanico de todas sus coqueterías, comienza a saludar insistentemente a un joven que lee junto al quiosco. Y ella mirando hacia el quiosco, y yo hacia Paulita y Paula hacia mí, … (61)

At this point Julio decides to look only at Paulita and no longer honor a visual equilibrium between the women. His exercise of visual painting ends with the announcement by an “indiscreet bookseller” that the books he requested have arrived. The narrator’s practice in “disciplinar los ojos” has resulted in descriptions resembling three types of paintings: still life, landscape and portrait. In each case, Jarnés has made use of allusions to painters or painting styles in order to facilitate the reader in visualizing the surroundings of Aguas Vivas and its visitors.
The use of allusive ekphrasis, a term mentioned in Chapter One and coined by de Armas, allows Jarnés to manipulate the image of a work by a familiar artist or school. The aim of Jarnés’s employment of ekphrasis in *El profesor inútil* has not been to present a faithful mimetic representation of the objects, but rather to distort them. Jarnés utilizes ekphrasis in *Paula y Paulita* as a rhetorical device for painting with words. The descriptive exercises practiced by Ancient Greek rhetoricians, reported in the *Progymnasmata*, provide a connection to what Jarnés does aesthetically within his novel.
CHAPTER 4: EKPHRASIS IN THE NOVELS OF ANTONIO ESPINA

BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO ESPINA: HIS LIFE AND WORK

Antonio Espina was born in Madrid in 1894. He abandoned his medical studies to pursue a career in literature and newspaper journalism. Having spent time in Morocco to fulfill his military service, Espina returned to Madrid in 1917 and threw himself into literary activities, frequenting the tertulias that met in the Café Pombo and publishing a great number of books and articles.194 His collaboration in newspapers during the 1920s covered a wide range of topics, most notably literary reviews and articles about art and culture. He wrote about politics in the 1930s and even entered the political arena himself. He encountered opposition to some of his political writings, to the point of being imprisoned in 1935 after publishing an article that denounced Hitler. During his brief political career, he was named Governor of Ávila and later appointed to the same position in Baleares. However, on his way to Palma de Mallorca, he was detained and imprisoned in the Fuerte de San Carlos. During this imprisonment, Espina suffered anguish and depression. After an attempted suicide, he was transferred to a psychiatric hospital, from which he would be released in 1939, as Spain enter the Post-Civil-War period. Similar to many of the writers in his circle, he sought exile from Spain. Espina lived in Paris and Mexico before returning to his homeland.

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194 In the Introduction to her 2001 edition of Pájaro pinto and Luna de copas, Gloria Rey mentions some of the magazines and periodical publications in which Espina participated. 
Durante la tercera década del siglo xx, la firma de Antonio Espina se encuentra en muchas de las revistas literarias y culturales más importantes de aquella efervescente época: La Pluma, Alfar, Índice, El Estudiante, Horizonte, Litoral, Mediodía, Meseta, Papel de Aleluyas, Residencias, Revista de las Españas o Verso y Prosa. (22)
Along with Jarnés and Salinas, Espina would figure as an important collaborator in both the Revista de Occidente and La Gaceta Literaria.
in 1953. Upon his return from exile, he continued literary work, which allowed him to meet his financial obligations – writing biographies, translating, writing prologues, and publishing articles for newspapers,\textsuperscript{195} until his death in 1972.

In addition to biographies and newspaper articles, Espina is recognized for his poetry. He published two books of poems, \textit{Umbrales} and \textit{Divagaciones. Desdén}, before his two novels were published in the “Nova Novorum” series. Espina is considered by some critics to be the most representative of the Orteguian school of “dehumanized” prose writers.\textsuperscript{196} His prose works align with Ortega y Gasset’s analysis of the novel in “The Dehumanization of Art” in a number of ways. Replete with images and metaphors, \textit{Pájaro pinto} and \textit{Luna de copas} represent a hybrid approach to fiction that combines genres and techniques. This study is primarily concerned with his allusions to artists and detailed description of images.

\textsuperscript{195} According to Rey:

\begin{quote}
Lo mejor de la prosa escrita por Espina en aquel tiempo se encuentra en estos textos, en los que el autor habla del mundo del arte, y de la cultura en sus distintas manifestaciones (literatura, pintura, música, cine, moda, teatro, espectáculos, ballet, periodismo) o del anecdotario social, pero casi siempre para referirse a figuras y momentos de un pasado histórico más o menos lejano, como forma de romántica evasión de un mundo en el que ya no se sentía parte activa. (44)
\end{quote}

Many of these literary projects were published under pseudonyms, such as Simón de Atocha and Antonio Valverde.

\textsuperscript{196} See Nora 197. In a chapter titled “Tentativas de novela intelectualista, lírica y deshumanizada,” Nora compartmentalizes the novelists in Spain during a period of about twenty years into four groups. The first two groups (Nora labels as \textit{los prosistas ‘deshumanizados’} and \textit{los humoristas}) are influenced by Ortega y Gasset’s “dehumanized art,” while the latter two (\textit{los realistas moderados} and \textit{los nuevos realistas críticos}) offer antithetical characteristics. Jarnés, Salinas and Espina headline the first group and are joined by Chabás, Chacel, Verdaguer, Bacarisse and Ayala.
ALLUSIVE EKPHRASIS: ARTISTIC REFERENCES AND NEOLOGISMS IN

PÁJARO PINTO

In the “Antelación” of his 1927 novel, Pájaro pinto, Espina announces his intention to blur the lines of genre. He mentions two suggestive intermediate zones of literary production, one between novel and poem that he forms, el poema novelar, and the other between this hybrid genre and cinematography. Similar to his fellow avant-gardists, Espina seeks to implement new literary styles and techniques, which make it difficult to classify the work within one particular genre. This introduction serves as a manifesto outlining what Espina intends to do with the work.\(^{197}\) In addition to the “Antelación,” Pájaro pinto is comprised of six separate fragments entitled “Pájaro Pinto,” “Xelfa, carne de cera,” “Manola,” “Actor,” “Bi o el edificio en humo” and “Un naufragio.”

The first fragment (from which the novel is named) tells the story of an allegorical bird that, on the first anniversary of the armistice, is named Foreign Minister of wooden crosses. The wooden crosses are the markers for all of the soldiers killed in action and buried during the First World War. Each cross doubles as a radio with an antenna of four points; the two horizontal ones communicate with the earth, the top part of the vertical point communicates with heaven and the bottom part of the vertical point communicates with

\(^{197}\) The following is the entirety of the “Antelación”:

Traer a la literatura los estremecimientos, el claroscuro, la corpórea irrealidad, o el realismo incorpóreo del cinema, la lógica de este arte, es procurarse nuevos efectos literarios, muy difíciles de situar en ningún género determinado.

Entre la novela y el poema, ya existe una zona de interferencia, verdaderamente sugestiva. Entre el poema novelar y la cinegrafía, la interferencia resulta mucho más sugestiva. (Buscar una especie de proyección imaginista sobre la blanca pantalla del libro.)

Lo peor es que el interés argumental se suele perder bajo el desafuero de la fotogenia y de la metáfora.

Se suele perder. (7)
hell. Pájaro Pinto travels throughout the cemeteries in Europe, an allegory for orchards whose crops are the crosses. The messenger bird receives instructions from each cross and acts as an intermediary between the deceased soldiers and their families and loved ones. But when he shows up at the house of each soldier to carry out his mission, the response is invariably the same – the housekeeper answers the door and explains that no one is home, everyone has gone to the movie theater. Pájaro Pinto declines the invitation to enter the home and sadly departs. One day he simply disappears.

The next section, “Xelfa, carne de cera,” is a narration about Juan Martín Bofarull, called Xelfa, a soldier who returns from fighting in North Africa. This part includes a prologue, three chapters (“Xelfa, volvió de la guerra,” “Xelfa, enamorado” and “Xelfa se inhibe”) and an epilogue. The action of the novel can be summarized thusly: the protagonist returns to Madrid from the war in Morocco and reenters civilian life. He courts and marries his cousin Andrea. A third person omniscient narrator reports their wedding and the beginning of their married life. They have a child who dies shortly after birth. Xelfa suspects his wife Andrea of adultery, abandons his marriage and flees to Buenos Aires. A conversation between Xelfa and a Cabaret poet, occurring in both the prologue and epilogue, serves to bookmark the three chapters of this fragment.

“Manola,” subtitled “Los tipos ejemplares,” is a short fragment with three sections. The first two sections present antithetical portraits of a family – surrounding and reacting to a man are a cat, a dog, a boy and a woman. The man is friendly and peaceful in the first section but terrible in the second. Likewise, the cat and dog submit to the authority of the man in the first scene but flee in the second. The child sits at his feet in one scene but looks frightened from afar in the second. The woman ignores him in the first scene but hugs his

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198 The seeds of the Great War have produced a harvest of wooden crosses. “La más visible cosecha de la gran guerra ha sido ésta de las cruces de madera” (12).
neck in the second. The third section is two brief sentences: “Haremos mal en generalizar. Pero hay aquí, evidentemente, una postal popular” (126). In Montajes y fragmentos, del Pino says of this fragment “este tipo de viñetas pueden leerse como dos posibles historias novelescas reducidas al mínimo, como argumentos en germen” (142). As the subtitle indicates, they are generalized types, portrayed as a glimpse into a scene but lacking in detail and the development of a plot.

The next section, “Actor,” is an account of one actor’s experience, narrated in the first person. The narrator comments that an actor’s role and his real life are inseparable. His life becomes a role: “El actor, siempre papel, no vive. Subvive” (130). Amidst the collected musings of the actor is the repeated phrase, which is the subtitle of the section and serves as the unifying thread of the brief fragment: “hace que se va y vuelve.” The section, which is presented as a prose poem, ends with the actor reminiscing about the funeral of Talma, a historical actor of the Comédie Française. The narrator includes a poem about the funeral, “Y todos muy tristes. / Todos inmutados. / Todos muy solemnes. / Todos enlutados”, and then shortens the repeated phrase to “hace que se va…” (133), omitting “y vuelve” since Talma will not return.

“Bi o el edificio en humo” represents a more mature and developed narration than the previous two vignettes. A first person narrator is seated in a bar across from an apartment building and narrates his observations of the people living there. Gloria Rey has mentioned that the perspective is similar to that of Hitchcock’s Rear Window (81). The

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199 In her edition of the novel, Rey notes that Espina edited this fragment and incorporated it into a poem published in the collection El alma Garihay (79).
200 “Lo primero que llama la atención en este relato es la originalidad de la perspectiva adoptada, de clara influencia cinematográfica, hasta el punto de recordar, si se permite el anacronismo, la de la película La ventana indiscreta, de Alfred Hitchcock” (81).
fragment is divided into five parts with subheadings. As the scene unfolds before him, the narrator describes the scene as if the action were taking place in a theater. There are clues that point to the spectator/reader serving the role of theatergoer observing the drama unfolding at the house of Isaac Bi, as communicated by the narrator. The mention of the painterly technique of chiaroscuro by Carrière, as well as the references to glass, shop windows, mirrors and opera glasses signal the importance of vision, the means of viewing and the spectacle of theater. The structure of the fragments also lends itself to its consideration as a five-act play. The narrator establishes his role as intermediary between the reader and the images described from the opening lines: “detrás del cristal estoy yo. Entre el cristal y la elegante casa, que tiene al lado un solar madrileño, con el árbol triste, en el ángulo, y el farol, ha terminado de llover” (137). The entire fragment serves as an exercise in ekphrasis, reminiscent of the Progymnasmata previously discussed in Chapter Two: the narrator observes the scene before him and relates it in a vivid way for the reader to be able to picture it. Furthermore, the mention of cristal recalls Ortega y Gasset’s metaphor of the garden and the windowpane.

In the first act, the narrator sets the scene, explaining that he has just taken a walk around the city and has stopped to sit in a bar. He begins to observe the house across the street, a building with three floors, an attic and a store on the bottom level. As the second act begins, the narrator once again confirms his role as spectator of the theater.

Aquella tarde todo era cristal, vidriera y espejos. Tanto espejeaba la situación, que la propia realidad iba tomando un carácter alarmante. El telón pasa de

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201 The vignette is divided into the following parts: I. El paraje. II. Muecas en la cristalería; El vizconde; Las señoritas del canario; Se borda; El judío del bazar; El poeta y la tempestad. III. El tiempo; El tiempo y las rachas; Desde aquella tarde yo no volví a contemplar…; Mi existencia. IV. El paraje se torna fresco y claro. V. El muerto.
folletín a revista, a puerto, menos desenfocado – y extinto – que en la
celeridad del cinematógrafo.

Y en la casa era mancha vaporosa. Destacan los hierros puros del
balconaje. Recordaba los claroscuros de Carrière [sic] y la ojeriza del gas
sobre los rostros del período romántico. (139)

The first character to enter the scene is the viscount, the occupant of the main floor
of the house. The omniscient narrator informs the reader of certain genealogical details
about the viscount: “Este joven se ocupa de los deportes y cultiva la frivolidad. Derrocha el
oro, derrocha el oro de sus antepasados, su padre, el duque; su abuelo, el general; su bisabuelo,
el intendente; su tatarabuelo, el ganapán de labrantío, generador de la fortuna” (140), and
that “por parte de madre, tres desviados: dos histeroides (heredosífilis) y una monja y santa,
con equivalentes epilépticos y algún talento musical. Ascendencia capitalista invariable”
(141). The action he observes is that the viscount opens the balcony doors and puts on his
yellow gloves. An automobile stops at the door and the viscount enters.

The next scene moves to the second floor, where the narrator observes a canary in a
cage. The hand of a single woman who lives with her elderly father opens the cage. Again,
the narrator inserts a detail that would be difficult to surmise,202 that the man is “jubilado del
Fomento” (142). He does, however, conclude that the woman is single because of the
presence of “San Antonio con peana,” a saint to whom women would pray in order to find a
husband. It is at this point that the narrator comments on his role as spectator, which once
again places a premium on visuality.

202 This detail, along with the genealogy of the viscount, indicates that the narrator is either
omniscient or inventive.
Visto así, buscando en el interior de los domicilios, los hombres y las mujeres, aparecen en la exactitud de su vida con pleno detalle. Los cristales de estos balcones son lentes de gemelo de teatro, a los cuales nos asomamos para acercar o alejar las figuras, según miremos por la lente grande o por la lente pequeña.

Al vizconde le hemos visto muy lejos con la lente grande. El canario y la soltera con la minuciosidad de la lente pequeña. (142-3)

The narrator, in his role as spectator, is in control of this scene. He determines whether to take a close and detailed view or to view the scene before him from a distance. The next scene, moving to the third floor, is centered on a virtuous young woman who is busy doing embroidering work. This scene is viewed as a close-up, through “la lente grande.” She is compared to the Virgin Mary, but also to Melibea, a character from La Celestina. A distinguishing feature is her green eyes. The next scene introduces the title protagonist, Isaac Bi, a Jewish man who runs the store on the ground level of the building. Isaac stands at the entrance of his store and the narrator mentions the types of customers that enter: “el ario prístino, el mongol ceremonioso, y hoy el árabe, europeo sajonado o latinoide zumbón” (145). In the final scene of the second act there is a storm. A carpenter and his wife live in the building as well. He leaves during the storm to build an altar. The narrator’s attention moves to the roof, where another pivotal individual is presented, a poet. The narrator uses the epithet of a gargoyle (gárgola) as well as the adjective pompous (Figurón) to refer to this protagonist. Above the poet’s head there is an electric billboard, flashing advertising messages: “Farmacia de Garcilaso. / Precios de la militar” (149). These lines are juxtaposed

Figurón may also refer to a ridiculous and quirky protagonist in a comedy.
with some of the poet’s own lines: “El poeta hablando de su corazón, dice unos versos simpáticos con voz desaforada: Amapola sangrienta / Al cuidado de Dios” (150).

The third, fourth and fifth acts take place twenty years after the first two. The narrator has returned to observe the house. The living arrangements have changed. The single woman has either died or moved away and Isaac now lives in her apartment. The viscount has spent his inheritance and now lives in the apartment abandoned by the virtuous young woman who was embroidering. The latter has married a famous doctor and has moved into the apartment on the first floor. The only resident of the building that has not changed locations is the poet, who maintains his space on the roof of the building. The narrator introduces some personal information about himself: he describes his career as a mathematician and engineer, his marriage and their children. In the fourth act, he describes the burning of the building and even cites a report from a newspaper article. This remains a subjective event, however, as he mentions the fact that this is the first building he has seen burn to the ground. In the fifth and final act, we learn that everyone has survived the fire except for the poet, who has thrown himself out of the window. His death is reported with cold indifference, the narrator even uses the very words from the poem composed twenty years earlier: “Es lo cierto que quedó aplastado. Contra el suelo. Ensangrentado como aquella amapola sangrienta que se dejaba cuidar de Dios” (162).

Rey points out the irony that the narrator himself represents a protagonist in a modern novel more so than the people he describes.

La ironía ha ido impregnando todo el desarrollo del texto y alcanza al propio narrador. También el paso de los años ha dado un novelesco vuelco a su vida, aunque, en su caso, ha estado más en consonancia con el apropiado para un personaje intelectual y cosmopolita característico de una novela moderna que el experimentado por los habitantes de la casa, al fin, tipos de folletín decimonónico. Se ha convertido, como cuenta él mismo, en un matemático e ingeniero triunfador, reconocido universalmente, se ha casado con una joven norteamericana, es padre de dos hermosos hijos y la Academia le ‘ha llamado a su seno’, imagen que da lugar a una serie de ingeniosas consideraciones sobre el seno de la Academia. (85-6)
The final vignette, entitled “Un naufragio,” is narrated in the first person. On Pablo’s first day of work, his boss impresses upon him the importance of being punctual. Pablo prepares himself to fit the mold of the rest of the workforce: “fui al peluquero, me rapé, me cosmetiqué, compré una novela de Mata, y me puse una corbata ‘Farman’ con los colores nacionales” (169). He describes this transformation as becoming transfigured and this accompanies the surreal scene of seeing himself in the mirror with an umbilical cord attached to his stomach. A person, who appears to be his double, saves him by cutting the cord. The description of his savior is similar to the transformation he has just undertaken: “se trataba de un hombre pelado, cosmetizado, con una de Mata novela, en la mano, y en el cuello una corbatita ‘Farman’ con los colores nacionales” (170). This transfiguration has caused him to be late to work. He explains to his boss that he is one hour late because he has been in an accident – a drowning. The fragment, and the entire novel, ends when Pablo responds with a defiant “no” to a sarcastic question from his boss.

Vision and visual representations play a significant role in Pájaro pinto, by expressing verbal representations of the visual arts, establishing connections to painters as well as neologisms formed from painter’s names, and using observational skills that allow the narrator to describe his surroundings. A fruitful ekphrastic moment is found in the description of a portrait of don José, the deceased patriarch of the Bofarull family and uncle of Xelfa. In “Capítulo II: Xelfa, enamorado,” the protagonist has arrived in Madrid and decides to visit his aunt in order to see his cousin: “una prima como la que todos tienen, bonita, coqueta, confianzuda, medio novia siempre” (58). His intention to fall in love with her is clearly articulated by the narrator. Xelfa’s aunt, tía Gertrudis, lives at Velázquez, 54 with her daughter Andrea and two servants. She has a son, José, who lives in the Philippines. Her husband has passed away and left her a monthly pension of 25 duros. The fact that
Xelfa’s aunt and cousin live on a street named for one of the most important painters in the history of Spanish art is significant, in and of itself. Although Espina’s intent here is not ekphrastic in nature – there is no mention of a painting by Velázquez – this allusion would certainly trigger a flood of mentally reconstructed images in the mind of the reader. Similar to Carlota’s house being named for Goya in Jarnés’s El profesor inútil, Espina evokes the name of an artist but has other aesthetic plans in mind, namely presenting a detailed description of the house with special attention to a portrait.

Xelfa arrives at Gertrudis’s house and begins to describe the rooms at Velázquez 54. A portrait of don José is displayed prominently in the study of the house. “Al retrato de don José, el padre difunto, le ennegrecía profundamente la iluminación del circo. Le iba mejor, mucho mejor, la leche fresca de la luz diurna, que parecía chupar con golosos labios, por una paja, mientras le temblaba el bigote y sus ojuelos vivaqueaban en la estancia” (67). In addition to serving as a reminder of his presence, the other protagonists interact with the portrait of the uncle as if he were a part of the story. This first mention of the portrait includes a description that is not simply static, but rather infused with activity. His mustache trembles and his eyes are trained on the living room, observing the activities of his wife and daughter. Through his portrait, don José is able to maintain vigilance over his household.

An interaction between the portrait and the other protagonists also occurs during the courtship of Xelfa and Andrea. In a section called “Interrogatorios,” Xelfa puts a series of questions to Andrea, answers to which are included by the narrator in italics. Xelfa mocks the portrait and asks Andrea why they would hang such a ridiculous image in an elegant study.\(^{205}\) Andrea responds saying that it belongs to her mother and defends the placement of

\(^{205}\) “40. ¿Por qué tenéis ese retrato tan ridículo de tu padre, colgado y desentonando en un gabinete tan bonito? Es cosa de mamá. Yo no creo que sea tan ridículo. Papá era asimilado a capitán y esos bigotes eran los que se llevaban en su época” (84-5). Italicized in the original text.
the portrait. Xelfa alludes to the portrait of don José in order to undermine the authority and disparage the elevated position of the deceased in the minds of tía Gertrudis and Andrea. Xelfa continues to ridicule the portrait after the wedding ceremony. Passing the portrait of his now father-in-law, he greets it sarcastically.

Terminó el ‘lunch’. Cambiados los trajes que los protagonistas vestían durante el enorme suceso, por los otros diarios y menos epilépticos, el ‘novio’ (sic) que se encontró un instante solo – a solas – en el gabinete, frente al retrato de su suegro, quedósele mirando rectamente a los ojos y le dijo:

– Hola.

No pudo contener una gran carcajada. Este ‘hola’ le acometió con una irresistible fuerza cómica … *(98-9)*

Tía Gertrudis’s interaction with the portrait – which has been diametrically opposed to that of Xelfa – at the beginning of third chapter (“Xelfa se inhibe”) begins to change. The change in attitude is a result of her displeasure with the marriage of her daughter and her nephew.

Doña Gertrudis, apurando el problema de su espiritualización, desde que el psico-doméstico de su hija se había resuelto tan brillantemente, quedó en punto. Su cara, silenciosa y sagaz siempre, ahora dislaceraba su expresión en ambos atributos – sagacidad, silencio – ascéticamente. Era de ver el modo de

*206 The “sic” in parenthesis, which follows his being named “novio,” belongs in the original text. My insertion of “sic” in brackets appears after the outdated use of attaching pronouns to a verb conjugated in the preterit.*
sostener el reto imposible que desde su retrato le arrojaba el esposo difunto.

Ya no bajaba la vista, quizás arrepentida de antiguos sucesos, sino que la
sostenía, clavándola como dos lanzadas de walkyria sobre las pupilas de don
José. (103-4)

She no longer lowers her gaze from that of don José, but rather begins to stare him
in the eye. Espina compares doña Gertrudis to a Valkyrie to describe the way she begins to
gaze upon the portrait of her husband.\textsuperscript{207} The purpose of the ekphrastic description of this
portrait is not to present a faithful representation, but to show how the protagonists interact
with it: the wife with respect and affection, the son-in-law with scorn and contempt. It is
described in such a way as to infuse the image of the deceased don José with life and allow it
(the portrait) to be inserted into the story as a protagonist.

Other ekphrastic moments in Pájaro pinto consist of references to painters that
supplement the descriptions of the protagonists. These references simply allude to the
manner of presentation for which the artists are famous. This technique falls under de
Armas’s categorization of allusive ekphrasis, mentioned previously in Chapter One. The
reader is expected to have background knowledge of these artists in order to fully
understand what the author communicates in his narrative. Espina either mentions the
artist’s name or creates a neologism incorporating the artist’s name to establish a connection
to the visual arts. It is important to note that although none of the artists mentioned in Pájaro
pinto hail from Spain, they all have a connection to the peninsula. Espina mentions an Italian
artist, Giambattista Tiepolo (1696-1770), who lived in Spain while completing works
commissioned by King Carlos III. Espina also mentions the Italian painter Paolo Veronese

\textsuperscript{207} In Norse mythology, the Valkyrie determined who would survive and who would be slain
in battle.
(1528-88), some of whose works were purchased on behalf of King Philip IV. In this work the narrator alludes to a painterly technique by Eugène Carrière (1849-1906), a French painter. I would like to begin, however, with a discussion of a painter from Flanders.

This ekphrastic allusion is found in the second chapter of the fragment titled “Xelfa, carne de cera,” which makes reference to the Flemish painter David Teniers the Younger (1610-90). After his visit with his aunt and cousin, Xelfa leaves their apartment on his way to his house. In a section titled “Llueve en su corazón,” the narrator describes the process of falling in love as a symbolic act. Xelfa pictures a scene from Shakespeare’s Romeo and Juliet. “Lo primero que brotó en el corazón de Xelfa fué una imagen. ‘La luz de las antorchas deben aprender a brillar de su hermosura’ exclama Romeo al contemplar, por vez primera, a Julieta” (76-7). Xelfa imagines himself as Romeo seeing his Juliet for the first time. The next section is set apart from the rest of the narration, written in italics. This part of the narration, which the narrator confesses is “una fatua irradiación simbolista” (79), describes metaphorically the process of Xelfa falling in love with Andrea, a love which “vaga y vagoriza … entre símbolos” (77). One of the symbols evokes the work of Teniers: “Alguien en la taberna, un viejo jocundo, de Teniers, levanta un jarro de cerveza. Comienzan las grandes velocidades, los grandes lanzamientos en las inéditas pistas de lo sentimental” (78).

Two paintings in particular by Teniers, Tavern Scene and Figures Gambling in a Tavern, depict the type of man to which the narrator alludes – portrayed gambling and drinking in a bar.

Teniers, the son of painter David Teniers the Elder (1582-1649), was born in Antwerp and trained in his father’s studio. He became a member of Antwerp’s Guild of St. Luke in 1635, but was already well established and successful by 1636. Jane Davidson, in her

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208 The Diccionario de la Lengua Española of the Real Academia Española defines the adjective jocundo as “plácido, alegre, agradable” (II: 1322).
Figure 4.1 David Teniers the Younger, *Figures Gambling in a Tavern*, 1670. Private Collection.

biography of David Teniers, explains that “not only where his works sold abroad by prominent dealers, but he was considered an artist of enough importance to receive a commission from Rubens to furnish a painting for the Torre de la Parada, the Spanish king’s hunting lodge” (4). Teniers’s works are predominately genre paintings, scenes of everyday life, especially depicting peasants. Christopher Brown points out that “there seems to have been a large and constant demand in the southern Netherlands (as there also was in the north) for paintings showing country people eating, drinking, fighting, playing cards and so

Davidson goes on the mention that the painting was destroyed and is only known because of its entry in the catalogue of Torre de la Parada paintings. The subject of this work is typical of his paintings at that time, a scene of peasants dancing. See Davidson 4. This account of Teniers’s life and stylistic development provides a very good source of biographical information as well and a sampling of his paintings. It does lack, however, examples of Teniers’s works during his service to the Archduke Leopold Wilhelm, works which are important not only to the development of the artist but also for their historical significance.
The purpose of genre paintings was not simply for the representation of observed reality – which they certainly portrayed – but for the incorporation of clues that point to criticism of the scene depicted. In addition to providing a slice of life, genre paintings were intended to provoke thought and discussion. 

Figure 4.2 David Teniers the Younger, *Tavern Scene*, 1658. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

210 See Brown, *The National Gallery Schools of Painting. Flemish Paintings*. This book is an illustrated guide to the paintings in the National Gallery. Brown is also responsible for the publication of *Dutch Paintings*. The book consists of an introduction to the holdings and their connection to the National Gallery, followed by color plates of all the paintings in the Flemish school owned by the Gallery. The book highlights seven works by Teniers: *Two Men playing Cards in the Kitchen of an Inn* (1635-40), *Spring* (1644), *Summer* (1644), *Autumn* (1644), *Winter* (1644) *A View of Het Sterckshof near Antwerp* (1646) and *The Covetous Man* (1648).

211 The idea of “disguised symbolism” – a term coined by Panofsky, similar to “apparent realism” used by Eddy de Jongh to indicate the presence of “hidden” symbols that signal the interpretive possibilities of the paintings – is a highly debated by art historians and critics. Franits credits Alpers with sparking the debate with her 1983 book *The Art of Describing*. The debate centers on the verisimilitude versus the symbolic nature of Dutch genre painting. For more on Dutch and Flemish genre painting, see Franits, Alpers, Brown and Wheelock. The “Introduction” to Franits’s *Dutch Seventeenth Century Genre Painting* is particularly informative. Franits’s book primarily deals with artists from the northern Netherlands, but does mention
paintings contained warnings. In support of this moralizing aspect of genre paintings, Brown affirms that “drunkenness, and its consequent violence, as well as profligacy, are often mocked in such paintings” (185). Teniers’s genre paintings take place in public spaces, in this case in taverns, which, according to Brown, in addition to the negative association also represented important places for respectable social interaction.  

From 1647-56 Teniers was employed as court painter and curator of the royal collection for the Archduke Leopold Wilhelm (1614-62), cousin of King Philip IV (1605-65) and Governor of the Spanish Netherlands. During his appointment to the court, Teniers collected many works for his patron, especially from Italian Masters. Teniers’s 1660 book *Theatrum Pictorium*, the first of its kind, is an illustrated catalogue of 243 of the Archduke’s most treasured paintings. The book was published in Dutch, French, Spanish and Latin, but retained the Latin title, which in English means *The Theatre of Painting*. Teniers painted oil copies of each of the Archduke’s paintings that were included in the book, which required incredible skill of imitation of the original artists, especially at a reduced scale. These copies (17 x 25 cm in size) were given to the 12 engravers he employed to complete the project, as a means of ensuring its accuracy.

In addition to his *Theatrum Pictorium*, which provides a visual as well as historical record of the artistic possessions of the Archduke, Teniers painted several large paintings of

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212 In a section about “Recreation and Pleasure,” Brown discusses the presence of tavern scenes in genre painting. “An apparent contradiction within Dutch society, pervaded as it was by stern Calvinist morality, is that large numbers of pictures of both brothels and taverns were painted, for which there must have been a considerable and a constant demand” (182). The idea of a moralizing effect of genre paintings seems logical in a Dutch Reformed society, while Flanders, the southern Netherlands, at this time was governed by Catholic Spain.
the Archduke in his various galleries.\footnote{This type of gallery painting would indelibly make its mark on Baroque Spanish painting, as will soon be mentioned in more detail.} One example, *Archduke Leopold Wilhelm in His Picture Gallery at Brussels*, shows Archduke Leopold Wilhelm admiring his collection in front of Teniers and a few other individuals. The Archduke, at the center of the painting wearing a tall broad-brimmed hat, is surrounded by masterpieces of the Italian Renaissance as well as by works of Dutch painters, many of which are recognizable and still exist today.\footnote{George L. Dillon, of the University of Washington, has created an imagemap of a similar work by Teniers, *The Art Collection of Archduke Leopold Wilhelm in Brussels* (1651, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna). The imagemap includes links that show larger versions of many of the paintings in the gallery. See “David Teniers and the Cabinet of Archduke
is standing by a table with a decorative center leg, which is a bronze statue of Ganymede.\footnote{According to the myth Ganymede was abducted by Zeus to serve as a cupbearer in Olympus. Zeus can be seen in the form of an eagle in this sculpture.} On the table is Frans Duquesnoy’s sculpture of Venus Amphitrite,\footnote{Both the Ganymede and the Venus Amphitrite of Flemish-born sculptor Duquesnoy (1597-1643) are identified in Dillon’s imagemap project.} a bust of a man and another sculpture of a head, most likely pieces acquired by the collector. Every inch of wall space is covered by paintings, and others are stacked up along the walls of the room. The vanishing point of the picture is the half-open door, which gives the viewer a glimpse of another room, its walls also completely filled with paintings. This is evidence that critics have used to establish a connection between Dutch paintings, particularly those of the collector’s gallery, and the 1656 painting Las Meninas by Diego Velázquez (1599-1660).\footnote{Kahr notes that “Velázquez’s day-by-day association with Philip IV and his art collection would almost certainly have brought him into contact with the picture by David Teniers II of The Archduke Leopold William in His Picture Gallery in Brussels, which the Archduke had sent to the King” (240), but also that Velázquez would have been familiar with the tradition of gallery paintings long before he began to paint Las Meninas. Vergara discusses the influence of Jan van Eyck’s Arnolfini Portrait on Las Meninas, especially the presence of the mirror on the back wall of both painted spaces.} In Velázquez’s painting, though, an attendant of the Queen is positioned in the doorframe, in a posture that makes it difficult to determine if he is arriving to or departing from the room. In addition to the patron displayed prominently in the painting, both works by Teniers and Velázquez convey the importance of the artist at work. Teniers is holding a print in his hands while Velázquez shows himself in front of the canvas with paintbrush in hand, presumvably painting a portrait of the King and Queen, Philip IV and Mariana of Austria.\footnote{There are many interpretations of Velázquez’s painting, speculating on whether the image on the back wall is a mirror or a portrait. The presence of don José Nieto Velázquez, the Queen’s chamberlain, is an indication that the Queen too was present in the artist’s studio, sitting for a portrait, but situated in the foreground and outside of the painted space. See Kahr 242. For more see also Foucault’s first chapter in The Order of Things in which he analyzes Las Meninas.} Both of these

works also serve as an artistic compendium, visibly cataloguing some of the paintings owned by their patron. Teniers imitates more paintings than does Velázquez – due to the nature of the genre and the purposes of each work – but each artist demonstrates his remarkable ability to imitate another work of art.
At the end of the Archduke’s term as Governor, Teniers remained in favor with the new Governor-General of the Spanish Netherlands, don Juan de Asturias (1629-79), the illegitimate son of King Philip IV. The fact remains that although Teniers never traveled to the peninsula, he is connected to Spain in various ways. While knowledge of works by the Flemish painter is not required for the reader to imagine the type of person described by the narrator in Pájaro pinto, the allusion enhances the description and the reader’s ability to create a mental rendering of the image described. Furthermore, there are striking connections between Teniers and Velázquez, but Espina chose an allusion to the Flemish painter instead of the Spanish, whose career in some ways mirrors that of Teniers, both of whom had served as court painter as well as produced bodegón (or tavern) scenes depicting peasants and drunken men. The reason for the attraction to allude to Teniers instead of Velázquez can be attributed to the desire of the Spanish avant-garde to be included once again in the discussion on an international level. Following the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1898 and the loss of its colonies, Spanish writers were nostalgic for the glory days of the empire. Espina’s experience as a soldier witnessing first-hand the Spanish defeat in Africa informed his decision to allude to Teniers, an important painter during Spain’s glorious past.

A reference to another artist is found in the first chapter of this fragment, “Xelfa volvió de la guerra.” As Xelfa takes one last look across the plains of Tetuán, Morocco before his departure, the narrator mentions the protagonist’s preference for vision over his other senses: “Con mucho cuidado, cogió con los párpados la vega y luego la dejó donde estaba. Tenía música y no le convencía. Los verdes musicales – exentos de veronés – y los blancos desentonados de las enjabelgadas casas morunas, casi le molestaban. El oído no fué nunca su sentido directriz. El ojo sí” (31-2). In her edition of Espina’s novel, Gloria Rey connects this parenthetical comment by the narrator with the Venetian painter Paolo
Veronese.\(^{219}\) The landscape observed by Xelfa contains a shade green but not the one for which Veronese was famous. The distinctive green mentioned by Xelfa is present in one of Veronese’s most famous works, *Feast in the House of Levi*,\(^ {220}\) which was painted for the rear wall of the refectory of the Basilica di Santi Giovanni e Paolo in Venice.

Veronese was not only recognized for his vibrant use of one color – in this case, green – but rather for that of his entire palette. Terisio Pignatti points out this characteristic in an analysis of the *Feast in the House of Levi*:

> Against the clear light of the background – revealed in the recent restoration to be in the grayish azure tones of approaching evening – the banqueters and accessory figures stand out with an alternation of high points and low as if traces by the moving marker of a seismograph. Their colors are among the most intense, refined and scintillating that the Venetian palette ever conjured up: reds blazing against yellows and deep blues, greens against crimsons, ochers against browns and violets, and each color another splash of light. (14)

\(^{219}\) Paolo Caliari is his given name, but he is identified by his birthplace of Verona. To the phrase “exentos del veronés,” Rey adds the following footnote: “sin la intensidad de los verdes característicos de las obras del pintor veneciano Paolo Veronés (1528-1588)” (149n 12).

\(^{220}\) The painting originally depicted a Last Supper scene – to replace one by Titian that was destroyed in a fire – but came under scrutiny by the Venetian Inquisition. The inquisition took exception to the presence of drunkards, buffoons and German soldiers at the Last Supper. After hearing his testimony regarding the painting, the judges decided that he must change the painting within a time period of three months. Instead of changing the painting, however, Veronese simply changed the title to avoid what the inquisition considered to be heresy in his painting. See Rosand 118-9, Cocke 32-3 and Pedrocco 111.
A detail of the painting shows a courtesan in the foreground wearing a cloak of both dark and light shades of green, the color to which Espina alludes. The noun formed from an epithet of the painter is an example of allusive ekphrasis but is not intended to present a mimetic representation of an actual work. This moment serves to evoke a distinct color in the mind of the reader and to point out its absence in the landscape described by the narrator.

Although *Feast in the House of Levi* is perhaps the most well known of Veronese’s works, Espina would also have been familiar with *Venus and Adonis* (1580), sometimes referred to as *Venus and the Sleeping Adonis*, which depicts a scene from Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*. Now housed in the Prado, Velázquez acquired the painting during his tenure as court decorator. The painting shows Adonis asleep in Venus’s lap, moments before he embarks

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221 Mary Hollingsworth mentions that Velázquez purchased this work for Philip IV. See *Art in World History*, 267. Brown confirms this fact in his *Painting in Spain 1500-1700*. 
upon a hunt. One hunting dog is resting while another, eager to hunt, is being held back by Cupid. According to the myth, Venus foreshadowed that Adonis would be killed by a wild

One consequence of the new project was the second trip of Velázquez to Italy, which was authorized on 25 November 1648. Two months later, the artist started the journey from which he would not return until June 1651. During his long absence, he acquired numerous bronze sculptures and bronze and plaster casts of antique statuary for use in the Hall of Mirrors and other palace rooms, as well as a few choice Venetian paintings, notably Veronese’s *Venus and Adonis* [220] and *Cephalus and Procris* (Strasbourg, Musée des Beaux-Arts). (168)

Stephania Mason mentions that this painting was originally paired with another Veronese painting, *Death of Procris*, but “the paintings were probably separated by Velázquez in 1641, on the occasion of his visit to Venice to purchase works on behalf of Philip IV” (29). Richard Cocke mentions that the painting, along with *Cephalus and Procris*, “remained in Venice until they were acquired by Velázquez on his second visit to Italy in c. 1651; it was no. 595 in the Spanish Royal collection at the Alcázar in Madrid in 1666” (114).
boar during a hunt. The landscape in the background is saturated with the Veronese green, the shade of color absent in the narrator’s description of Tetuán.

Espina uses a neologism to allude to a painter of international distinction, who did not ever visit Spain, but whose work would have been familiar not only to Espina but also to his readership. As is the case with most avant-garde texts, only an astute reader would able to recognize and contextualize this ekphrastic reference, understanding of which would glean a greater aesthetic appreciation for the novel.

Espina once again employs allusive ekphrasis by coining a new word in a section entitled “La boda. O el blanco y el negro,” in which the narrator describes the wedding ceremony, contrasting the attitudes and perspectives of the priest, the bride and the groom.
A Xelfa le irritaba la ceremonia. Sobre todo cuando, arrodillado al lado de Andrea con el yugo puesto, escuchaba al sacerdote, un grueso sargento de las milicias de Dios, leer la epístola de San Pablo. Miró al plafón, por si veía, como en los teatros, temblar el telón antes de caer. Miraba hacia arriba. El sacerdote hubo de mirar hacia arriba aludiendo al Espíritu Santo, mientras elevaba sus dedos gordezuelos. También miró hacia arriba la novia, con una mirada preciosa de azul tiepolesco, dardando satisfactoria. En su fantasía vió claramente descender a la sagrada paloma, invisible para el sacerdote cuya vista exigua le impedía sin lentes sondear la altura, donde revolotean el Paracleto y la imaginación de la mujeres. En cambio Xelfa sí vió. Vió descender en forma despaciosa y regocijada a un aviador acrobático bajo un paracaídas de tafetán negro. (94-5)

The neologism (tiepolesco) is a reference to the Venetian painter Giambattista Tiepolo, who was commissioned to paint frescoes in the Royal Palace for the King of Spain Carlos III (1716-88) from 1762-1766. By the beginning of the 1760s, Tiepolo had already achieved fame on an international scale and completed several commissions outside of Venice. At the King’s request, Tiepolo traveled to Madrid in 1762 to decorate the ceilings of various rooms in the Royal Palace. Upon the completion of these ceiling frescoes, the Venetian artist agreed to stay in Spain to work on other projects, even though by this time the King favored the work of two of his rivals. Tiepolo died in Madrid in 1770 and was buried in the cemetery.

222 Another of his famous international commissions was his work in the Würzburg Residenz in Germany. He did ceiling frescoes above the staircase depicting the continents.
at San Martino. His son, Domenico, and his other assistants stayed in Spain after his death to complete projects that he had begun in Aranjuez.\footnote{On Tiepolo’s years in Spain, see Levey 255-86 and Morassi 35-40.}

Tiepolo began working on *The World Pays Homage to Spain* before departing for Spain. This work, now held in the National Gallery of Art in Washington, is a preparatory painting.
for the ceiling fresco in the Throne Room. In this *modello*, Tiepolo paints the sky in the middle with scenes of Spain’s glorious history unfolding around the edges.

*Apotheosis of Spain*, the fresco that adorned the ceiling of Throne Room in the Royal Palace, demonstrates Tiepolo’s characteristic color blue. *Apotheosis of the Spanish Monarchy*, a fresco on the ceiling of the Queen’s antechamber, and *Apotheosis of Aeneas*, a ceiling fresco in the Halberdier’s room, are two further examples of works that include vast expanses of sky in which Tiepolo was able to display shades of blue paint noted by Espina.

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224 Christiansen discusses the term *modello* as applied to Tiepolo’s work. More than simply an “oil sketch” of a fresco or large oil painting that he was contemplating, Christiansen asserts that Tiepolo considered *modelli* to be “independent exercises of artistic expression and in endowing them with that quality of resolution associated with self-sufficient works of art” (286). “Modelli served not only a promotional end as a means of winning approval for a proposal. They also allowed patrons to judge key iconographic elements” (286).

Alpers and Baxandall discuss the idea of “oil sketch” as well, mentioning a distinction in the terms *bozzetto, pensiere, schizzo, ricordo, disegno, macchia* and *modello*. It is helpful to list here the four purposes for a Tiepolo oil sketch:

1. One purpose is pictorial invention …
2. Another is as a project to show a patron, either on its own or with others as alternatives, for approval or discussion …
3. A third is as a workshop resource, a means of communicating ideas to assistants – one use Rubens had made of his oil sketches – or a record of the master’s practice available in the shop for teaching and ideas …
4. A fourth purpose is as a collectible, which is, of course, one reason why so many oil sketches have survived. (64)

225 It is well documented that Tiepolo created large preparatory oil sketches before beginning the fresco on a ceiling, and many of these *modelli* are still on display today. The works cited in the previous note discuss both reasons for the existence of Tiepolo’s *modelli* and the process by which he created his frescoes. See Christiansen 285-91, and Alpers and Baxandall 63-9.

226 There is some inconsistency with the titles of the frescoes. This is partly due to the existence of *modelli*, preliminary sketches and oil paintings upon which Tiepolo based the actual frescoes. For the fresco in the Throne Room of the Royal Palace, Andrea Bayer uses the title *Wealth and Benefits of the Spanish Monarchy*, Pignatti calls this fresco *Glory of Spain*, Morassi uses the title *Apotheosis of Spain*, Brown refers to it as *The World Pays Homage to Spain*. Levey uses the title *Triumph of Spain*. See Christenson 34, Pignatti and Pedrocco 38-40, Morassi 35, Brown 304-5 and Levey 257-9. I will refer to the fresco as *Apotheosis of Spain*, and I will refer to the *modello* as *The World Pays Homage to Spain*.

The title of the fresco in the Queen’s antechamber is consistent, with the exception of one variation; Morassi calls it *Triumph of the Spanish Monarchy*. See Morassi 36.

In his *G B Tiepolo: His Life and Work*, Morassi refers to the fresco in the Halberdier’s room as *Aeneas conducted to the Temple of Immortality by Venus*. It is also called *Venus and Vulcan*. See Morassi 36.
Figure 4.9 Giambattista Tiepolo, *Apotheosis of the Spanish Monarchy*, 1764-1766. Queen's Antechamber, Royal Palace, Madrid.

Returning to the ceremony in *Pájaro pinto*, the narrator describes the perspective of each of the principal members of the wedding party: the priest reads from one of Paul’s letters in the Bible. As the priest mentions the Holy Spirit, his eyes look up towards the heavens. As does that of the bride, whose gaze of “azul tiepolesco” emanates satisfaction as she captures a vision of the descent of the sacred dove, a symbol of the Holy Spirit. The neologism of the color, combined with the subject matter of the fragment, evokes the kind of biblical images that Tiepolo included in the ceiling frescoes – cherubim descending from the light-blue heavens to make contact with humans, who populate the edges of the frescoes. Contrasted with the reverent vision of Andrea is that of Xelfá, who denigrates the holy scene.
by picturing an acrobatic bird descending with the aid of a parachute made of black taffeta in place of the dove.

Espina’s reference to Tiepolo is logical for two reasons – while still representing the Spanish avant-garde’s international attraction, the Venetian artist maintains strong ties to the peninsula. Furthermore, the subject matter of Tiepolo’s commissioned paintings is Spain’s Imperial power, the loss of which was much lamented by Espina’s predecessors of the Generation of 98. The purpose of this moment of allusive ekphrasis is to call to the mind of the reader a particular shade of paint, but imagining the works of Tiepolo familiar to his
readership would also have the effect of calling to mind frescoes that memorialize a powerful era of the Spanish Empire.

The fourth and final example of allusive ekphrasis in Pájaro pinto is found in the fragment entitled “Bi o el edificio en humo.” In the second “act” of this fragment, which carries the subtitle “Muecas en la cristalería,” the narrator describes the scene unfolding before him.

Aquella tarde todo era cristal, vidriera y espejos. Tanto espejaba la situación, que la propia realidad iba tomando un carácter alarmante. El telón pasa de folletín a revista, a puerto, menos desenfocado – y extinto – que en la celeridad del cinematógrafo.

Ya la casa era mancha vaporosa. Destacan los hierros puros del balconaje. Recordaba los claroscuros de Carriere [sic] y la ojeriza del gas sobre los rostros del período romántico. (139)

The filmy-stained appearance of the house reminds the narrator of painting during the Romantic period. In addition to the dislike of gas upon portrait painting, viewing the faces in the window is compared is to the effect of chiaroscuro typical of paintings by French painter Eugène Carrière. Carrière is most closely associated with the Symbolist

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227 The influence of cinematography, mentioned in this passage as a point of contrast, is a topic discussed by del Pino.

228 Although Espina does not include the diacritical mark, it is a clear reference to the French painter. Rey includes the following information in a footnote in her edition of Espina’s works.

En sus cuadros, en los que predominan los retratos y la reproducción de escenas de la vida de su entorno, el pintor y litógrafo francés Eugène Carrière (1849-1906), próximo al Simbolismo, creó un estilo característico. Las formas se atenuan en sus obras, al envolverlas en claroscuros grises y marrones, y el
movement, promoted in literature by Mallarmé and Paul Verlaine (1844-96) during the 1860s and 1870s in France and by Puvis de Chavannes (1824-98) and others in the plastic arts in the 1880s. In his study on the Symbolists, Philippe Jullian says that Carrière, “a dozen or so years older than the young Symbolists, was much admired by them; they found in his ‘Motherhoods’, in his portraits and even in his landscapes that mistiness which expresses the soul” (45). Another assessment of Carrière’s work suggests that “by employing a monochromatic brown palette, softening the focus and enveloping his figures in a thick, dark atmosphere, as in Maternity (c. 1889; Philadelphia, PA, Mus. A.), Carrière achieved a natural sense of space, light and colour. His ethereal images have a quality of pervasive stillness.”

Chiaroscuro is a compound word in Italian meaning “light-dark” that, according to the Concise Oxford Dictionary of Art Terms, refers to “a term used to describe the effects of light and dark in a work of art, particularly when they are strongly contrasting.” The dictionary entry mentions the pioneering work of da Vinci, and the term’s frequent use in the discussion of the works by 17th-century artists Caravaggio (1571-1610) and Rembrandt (1606-69). An interesting discussion of Carrière can be found in Huneker’s Promenades of an

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For more on Carrière see Eugène Carrière, Anders Zorn, Estampes (Genève: Cabinet des Estampes Musée d’art et d’Histoire, 1983). This book includes more than 30 of his works and two essays written in French – “P. Puvis de Chavannes, E. Carrière, A. Rodin” by Daniel Baud-Bovy (pp. 37-9) and “Le surgissement er l’intuition” by Rainer Michael Mason (pp. 40-3). For more on Symbolist painting in France see Loevgren.

Critic Jean Moréas (1856-1910) published “The Symbolist Manifesto” (Le Manifeste du Symbolisme) in the magazine Le Figaro on September 18, 1886. An excerpt of the manifesto is published in Caws 50-1.

This “mistiness” of Carrière’s chiaroscuro is what caused Degas to comment sarcastically “They have been smoking again in the children’s bedroom” (qtd. in Philippe 45).

See entry on Eugène Carrière in Grove Art Online.
Figure 4.11 Eugène Carrière, *Portrait of Paul Verlaine*, 1890. Musée d’Orsay, Paris.

*Impressionist.* Though the chapter is ten pages in length, the most important section, as it relates to the artist’s use of chiaroscuro, is as follows:

As Camille Mauclair says, ‘Carrière was first influenced by the Spaniards, then by Ver Meer and Chardin … formerly he coloured his canvas with exquisite delicacy and with a distinction of harmonies that came very near to Whistler’s. Now he confines himself to bistre;\(^{233}\) black and white, to evoke

\(^{232}\) Huneker work reads more like a travel memoire than a work of art criticism and lacks documentation of sources.

\(^{233}\) The Oxford British Dictionary defines “bistre” as “a brownish-yellow pigment made from the soot of burnt wood.”

those dream pictures, true images of souls, which make him inimitable in our epoch and go back to Rembrandt’s chiaroscuro. Colour went by the board at the last, and the painter was dominated by expression alone. His gamut of tones became contracted. ‘Physical magnetism’ is exactly the phrase that illuminates his later methods. Often cavernous in tone, sooty in his blacks, he nevertheless contrives a fluid atmosphere, the shadows floating, the figure floating, that arrests instant attention. (71)

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234 See Mauclair 128-9.
Carrière’s use of *bistre* – sooty tones of color – to achieve chiaroscuro can be seen in two of his more famous paintings, *Portrait of Paul Verlaine* and *Self-portrait*. Recognition of the artist’s mastery of chiaroscuro is the element singled out by Espina in the narrator’s observation of Isaac Bi’s house. If the spectator/reader has knowledge of chiaroscuro in general, not necessarily that of Carrière, then the narrator is able to paint a visual likeness of the scene in front of him. Interestingly enough, Espina did not choose an allusion to one of the great masters of chiaroscuro – whether da Vinci, Caravaggio, Rembrandt, or even Velázquez – but rather to a lesser-known but more contemporary French artist.

Each of the painters referenced by Espina has a connection to Spain; Teniers was a favorite of the Governor-General of Spanish Netherlands, don Juan of Austria, Veronese’s works were purchased by Velázquez on behalf of Philip IV, Tiepolo lived and worked in Madrid to complete a commission to paint ceiling frescoes in the Royal Palace, and Mauclair mentions that Carrière was influenced by Spaniards. I have included illustrations of works by these artists that exemplify the particular traits alluded to by Espina and recognized by art historians. When possible, I have also chosen works that are currently located in Spain, either in the Prado or adorning the Royal Palace in Madrid. The fact that Espina makes allusions to artists of international origin further exemplifies the paradoxically un-Spanish nature of the avant-garde in Spain. The ekphrastic moments in Espina’s novel represent a global rather than nationalist perspective.
VENTRILLOQUISM AND STATUES: SPEAKING PICTURES AND STILLED
LIFE IN LUNA DE COPAS

More so than Pájaro pinto – a series of fragmented narrations – Luna de copas approximates the form of a novel, divided into two parts (“Primera parte: Bacante” and “Segunda parte: Baco”). However, Jaime Mas Ferrer, in his article “El arte de novelar de Antonio Espina,” suggests caution on this point: “no nos engañemos – la técnica y el punto de vista que adopta el autor son idénticos en ambas novelas: trama desestructurada y desarticulada, ironía y conceptismo deformante” (29). The first part of the novel begins, in a section called “Paisaje bailable,” as the observation of a landscape is subjected to the velocity of an automobile and compared with a type of dance. The female protagonist of the novel, Silvia Contreras, is driving rapidly along a highway toward Visiedo, a fictitious seaside resort town in Cantabria, where her father has a chalet. The beginning of the novel indicates Espina’s fixation on modern modes of transportation and the effects speed has on vision. The narrator comments “estas sensaciones son primarias, y superadas al primer golpe de vista, por cualquier espectador, al primer kilómetro veloz” (9). As the names of the two parts

235 Luna de copas is identified as a novel by Salazar y Chapela in his review of the work. Salazar y Chapela even goes so far in his exaltation of the novel to proclaim that Espina had achieved “por primera vez en España, la primera, auténtica novela moderna” (387-8).
236 The first part is comprised of 16 chapters (I. Paisaje bailable, II. Visiedo, III. La escalinata del hotel, IV. Reversible (Y un espejo), V. Silvia llega a su casa, VI. Cierta mañana, VII. La isla de Caribdys, VIII. Don Enrique, IX. Mara. – Hércules F. – Elisa. – Clara y Cereceda, X. Un borracho, algo Teniers, XI. Puzzle, XII. Supremacía imprevista, XIII. Silvia y Mara, XIV. Vago croquis del castillo, XV. La consagración and XVI. El áspid enroscado) and the second part contains nine chapters (I. Fisiología especial, II. Comercio, III. Fémina insurgente, IV. Ella misma, pero consintiendo menos en ella misma, V. La Anunciación, VI. Coloquio en presente, VII. Zenit, VIII. Regreso and IX. Alegoría del sacrificio y la transubstanciación).
237 This is reminiscent of the beginning of Salinas’s Víspera del gozo, in which the protagonist is observing the landscape through the window of a speeding train. Here though, Espina compares this activity to a dance, while Salinas associates it with a type of reading.
indicate, mythology plays an important role in Espina’s novel, not only as a major topic of conversation between Silvia and a friend of hers, but, it is also as a factor in the naming of a number of protagonists and locations.

During the first part, Silvia spends time with her friend Dagmara Wolenka, a Russian sculptor, who spends the summer in Visiedo with her husband, Hércules, “cónsul y literato americano” (25). The other protagonist, Aurelio Sheridan, at first is ridiculed behind his back by the two women, but remains an alluring figure, who lives alone on the island of Caribdys except for his servant, Sebastián. Expressing romantic interest in Silvia, Aurelio invites her to visit his island at 7:30, just after sunset. Silvia is advised by Dagmara not to agree to the date. However, Silvia accepts the invitation and, as a precaution, conceals a pistol in her purse. Sebastián rows her to the island, where Aurelio seduces her, with the aid of an intoxicating substance that doesn’t even need to be ingested to take effect. She tries to defend herself but finds that Sebastián has replaced her pistol with one of Aurelio’s that has been emptied of its ammunition. Shortly after this encounter, Silvia and her father return to Madrid. Despite constant pressure from Dagmara, she refuses to confess that she has indeed visited the island.

Ródenas de Moya states that the two parts are named for the two protagonists who occupy the central role of each part: “Bacante” aluding to Silvia and “Baco” referring to Aurelio. See Los espejos del novelista, 238-9.

The island where Aurelio Sheridan lives being called Caribdys and Dagmara’s husband being named Hércules are two such examples of this phenomenon.

Silvia recognizes a mysterious force at work that causes her to be intoxicated without her having taken a drink. She has fallen victim to some sort of “embriaguez infusa” (95).

Yo creía – murmuraba Silvia en triste monólogo, resignándose por fin, a su soledad – que el vino era sólo un líquido. Que el cristal del vaso lo aislaba en el espacio y que no despertaba, ni podía despertar, otras fuerzas que las pequeñas fuerzas conocidas y vulgares de la fantasía del borracho. Mas, no. Ahora advierto, con deslumbradora videncia, que también desata en algunos seres fuerzas misteriosas. Por simple contagio de su onda. De su ánima. Sin necesidad de beber. Y no hay quien lo aise. Como no hay quien aise, verdaderamente, la sangre en los tubos arteriales. La sangre posee una irradiação parecida. (93-4)
At the beginning of the second part Aurelio receives notification from London that his father Arturo has died. He departs for England in the hope of inaugurating “un nuevo ciclo extraordinario” (107), after collecting what he expects to be a large inheritance. Arturo had amassed a considerable fortune importing fruit from Spain, but the war interrupted his commercial traffic and he began to lose all of his money. The narrator attributes his failure to a lack of genius. “Los genios que supieron crear sus metáforas, hicieron fortuna” (112). Furthermore, he did not listen to the wise counsel of his wife, a woman of Jewish descent, who advised him to supply German submarines or, if he could not overcome his patriotic scruples, at least to supply the French army. The inheritance Arturo left to his son was paltry, diminished to the sum of a few hundred pounds. Meanwhile, Silvia has sequestered herself in her apartment in Madrid to hide the fact that she is pregnant. Her father gets drunk and commits suicide, without leaving behind any explanation or justification for shooting himself. The weight of all these events is enough to drive Silvia mad, to the extent that she begins to go about her apartment dressed only in animal skins. Dagmara and her husband, accompanied by a banker from Madrid, discuss Silvia’s condition. Comparing Aurelio to don Juan, they conclude that she must have fallen into a pathological trance because of her enchantment and infatuation with him. Silvia gave birth to a child, described by Dagmara as being “un monstruo … un enorme coágulo sanguinolento” (143), but the baby died a few hours later. Their conversation returns to Aurelio, who was married in France and had a child. Through his successful business he amassed a colossal fortune. But his business began to lose money and he chose suicide as a means of escape, throwing himself from one of his own planes.

241 In *Luna de capas*, Espina continues to proscribe the stereotype that Jewish people are adept at dealing with finances. See the description of Isaac B in *Pájaro pinto*.

242 Aurelio’s inheritance listed: “Unos centenares de libras. Un crédito menguado, lleno de reservas y de artículos amenazadores. El Código de Comercio” (118).
Cuando el gerente se enteró del suicidio de Sheridan, empezó a meditar sobre la catástrofe y sobre la historia de su amigo, con las mismas ideas (véase Freud) que la habían ocurrido a Silvia, varios años antes.

– Igual que un radium de sangre – dijo–. Lo que debe ocurrir es que hay naturalezas, seres elegidos, de sangre báquica, y cuando surge cualquier estímulo ideal, profundo, esas personas se transfiguran y quedan en un estado de embriaguez particular. ¡Cosa más rara! Luego ¿existe una embriaguez infusa? ¿Que desencadena poderes mágicos? Y ¿de dónde procede esta embriaguez? (156)

The novel ends as the business executive contemplates the life and death of his friend Aurelio Sheridan. The fact that he arrives at the same conclusion as that of Silvia during her seduction years before, with almost identical wording, the narrator attributes to Freud. Modern transportation, which at the beginning of the novel had offered promise of a new perspective by means of a car, is used to bring about the death of the protagonist, who jumps from a plane.²⁴³

Allusive ekphrasis is one technique employed by Espina in Luna de copas, mentioning not only artists but also artistic movements. But two other elements integral to ekphrasis are found within the novel: ventriloquism and the statuesque description of the protagonist. Ventriloquism corresponds to the inclusion of prosopopeia in the definition of ekphrasis proposed by Hagstrum as “that special quality of giving voice and language to the otherwise

²⁴³ Susan Larson, in her article “The Avant-Garde Novel: The Search for New Concepts of Aesthetic and Social Engagement,” argues that “the promise new technologies offer is sometimes celebrated but more often than not undermined in the Spanish avant-garde novel by the threat of dehumanization” (365).
mute art object” (18n 34). Furthermore, upon discovering her father’s body, Silvia is described by the narrator as if she were a statue. These two counteracting ekphrastic elements empower statues with human characteristics and reduce a human being to a statue-like figure.

Espina once again evokes the work of Teniers the Younger in *Luna de copas*, the same artist to which he alluded in *Pájaro pinto*, to describe Aurelio. The fact that this section carries the title “Un borracho, algo Teniers” elicits the same ekphrastic allusions as the “jocundo de Teniers” previously discussed. In this novel Espina will give a closer contextualization to his ekphrastic reference, however, narrowing his allusion to a type of genre painting typical of the Flemish artist. The comparison between Aurelio and one of Teniers’s drunkards is framed within a description of figures made of rubber and the contemplation of the secret of wine. The first-person narrator discusses the existence of certain “individuals” that have the ability to float and do so in an aimless and haphazard manner, as if they were balls on a pool table ricocheting off one another: “Hay individuos de goma, de tal elasticidad temperamental y tan decididas condiciones para la profesión de pelota, que se pasan la vida de aquí para allá en puros rebotes” (57). The heads of some of these “individuos de goma” are described as Cubist portraits, formed of diverse, heterogeneous fragments. “Con los retales y fragmentos heterogéneos, infinitos y mal ensamblados, que sobraron en el taller de la especie” (58). These celestial bodies form a constellation of heads, to which the narrator declares Aurelio pertains. Similar to these celestial formations, Aurelio’s head enjoys an extraordinary autonomy from his body, due in large part to his state of intoxication.245

244 These figures are so bizarre that their existence can only be explained as being narrated in an intoxicated state.

245 Espina’s narrator uses terms of architecture and mythology to describe the head being autonomous from the body in this intoxicated state. The ability of the head to separate itself from the body is described as “abandonada con su gusto su escultura corpórea” (60).
En la ciudad, por ejemplo, a la hora del aperitivo se salía sigilosamente de la cama y se marchaba solo al bar, se encaramaba sobre la alta banqueta y trasegaba dos ‘whiskys’, antes siquiera de que la cabeza se hubiese despertado del profundo sueño originado por el alcohol de la noche anterior. La cabeza también bebía sola. Y hablaba sola. Y se quedaba sola, hundida en la almohada. (59-60)

In his drunken state, Aurelio’s head is also compared to that of a balloon used in the decoration of kermesse, an open-air festival usually celebrated in the Low Countries:246 “Bajaba la suelta cabeza, rebotando como un eco, retumbando en las paredes, ansiosa de aplicar los labios a las espitas de los grandes toneles. El rostro adquiría en estos momentos un reluz de ventura, parecido al que se ve en algunas fisonomías de las fiestas bodegueras de Teniers” (61). The use of the word kermés coupled with the mention of the Flemish painter combine to form an allusion to the type of festival that would have been observed in the streets and which Teniers depicted in several paintings. One painting in particular, Village Feast (1650),247 shows a host of villagers enjoying beverage and dancing outside of a tavern. The facial expressions and characteristics, especially of those individuals painted in the center and the foreground of the scene are those that establish a connection to the “reluz de

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246 The heads of these floating figures “poseen la elasticidad gomosa y tienen por patria natural el espacio. También tienen algo de globos. Y de faroles de colorines de kermés” (58). Aurelio’s head is called “el globo de kermés” (60).

247 This is one example of a number of Teniers’s paintings that depict this type of outdoor celebration. Some of the other titles are Peasants Merry-Making, Flemish Kermesse and A Country Kermesse.
Espina focuses on physiognomic aspects to establish a connection between the painting of Teniers and the protagonist of the novel. This moment is bracketed by a discussion of the secret of wine, which is supposedly guarded by the symbolism of the Holy Grail (la Copa del Santo Grial). This very object is central to the narration. In other words, as Óscar Ayala asserts, “es el astro que ilumina los momentos más importantes de la narración” (132). The occult sciences, religion and mythology all figure prominently in the concealment of the secret of the alcoholic substance.

La ciencia oculta recoge – de la taumaturgia que ha transformado hipócritamente el vino en sangre – esta sangre y aquel cáliz, y lo convierte en
Figure 4.14 Cover of the first edition of *Pájaro pinto*.

copas y corazones en los naipes. El corazón de la baraja francesa y la copa de la baraja mediterránea.

La Mitología enreda un áspid, en cifra de interrogación, al tallo del escifo [sic]. Y la Tora cubre con un paño negro la boca de la crátera.

La fuerza legendaria de los cultos paganos había repercutido en una actual imaginación femenina. Es decir, en dos. En la de Silvia y en la de Mara. La Copa del Santo Grial nacía muy lejos, venía desde muy lejos hasta el alma de Silvia. (No hay anacronismo. La Copa del Grial es el símbolo transmitido a la Edad Media de la Copa de Baco.) (62-3)
Figure 4.15 Cover of the first edition of *Luna de copas*.

The reference to playing cards (“copas y corazones en los naipes”) complements the image printed on the cover of the first edition of each of the novels in the “Nova Novorum.” The design of five of the publications includes the name of the author and the title with a picture of the Queen of Spades in the center. The image of the queen is presented as a doubling or a type of mirrored image. The image is not exactly mirrored in the sense that one of the queens is the reverse of the other, but rather that one image is rotated 180 degrees and juxtaposed diagonally with the other. One novel, however, which predictably is *Luna de copas*, does not include this graphic, but rather a Cubist-inspired picture, showing a wineglass filled with a red fluid. Emerging from the cup are two crescent moons with a human-like appearance that could be formed from broken pieces of the glass.
This image encapsulates the title, the common theme throughout and especially the previous quote from the novel. The red liquid could be either wine or the wine that has been transformed into blood. In addition to encapsulating the title, the image is the reverse of the title – a cup of moons rather than a moon of cups.248

The symbolism of the cup ties back into a mythological reference to Bacchus. The parenthetical comment by the narrator suggests a doubling of historical and mythological time. The Holy Grail is synonymous with and transformed into the Medieval Cup of Bacchus, rather than serving as an anachronistic reference. After the mention of Bacchus, the narrator returns to Aurelio. The chapter ends with a description of the wine cellar on Aurelio’s island of Caribdys, which is littered with objects used for the storage and dispensation of alcohol.249 Thus the ekphrastic moment is framed between a narration filtered through the intoxicating effects of wine and a historical analysis of the secrets behind wine.

The other example of allusive ekphrasis is found in the description of how Arturo suffered economic losses during World War I. The narrator draws a parallel connection between commerce and the arts. Financial success and security during a time of warlike conflict requires being endowed with a type of artistic genius, which Arturo did not possess. His failure in poetry and music is described as the reason behind his failure in wartime

248 I must express my appreciation to Dr. Ana Rueda for pointing out to me that this image is actually “una copa de lunas”.
249 Cubas, pellejos, toneles, tinas. Una piscina enorme de aguardiente abrasador, estalactitas de champán y grifos de licores exquisitos llenaban la caverna. Por todas partes se veían vasos de vidrio ordinario, jarras de todos tamaños intactas o desportilladas, una ánfora griega y un bufoncillo porrón valenciano. Y abandonadas en un rincón, formando la pirámide de las calaveras, multitud de botellas vacías. (63-4)
finances: “Fué el momento en que todas las poesías, todas las artes, todas las religiones, todos los enamorados y todos los ejércitos verificaron su revolución capital. Renaciendo luego todos ellos, y de otra manera, en la Metáfora” (112). The genius’s ability to create metaphors resonates with Ortega y Gasset’s philosophy, which labels metaphor as “la potencia más fértil que el hombre posee” (372), and in the right hands becomes “el arma lírica” that “se revuelve contra las cosas naturales y las vulnera o asesina” (374). Arturo mistakenly believed that things were what they appeared to be and he lacked the vision to see past those facades: “Él creía que los productos hortelanos que le llegaban del Levante español, no podrían jamás alcanzar otras posibilidades que las meras del canje por libras esterlinas, y que el arte nuevo no significaba absolutamente nada en la vida seria, ni mucho menos en el serio comercio” (113). When in fact, according to the narrator:

La guerra demostró con relámpago subitáneo, lo que podía esperarse de ella en cuanto a imágenes cotizables.

En efecto.

La vanguardia de los ejércitos iba mandada por poetas de vanguardia.

Y una formidable sinopsis – zigzagueo resplandeciente – de imaginismo [sic] amaneció en el cielo y atardeció en el mar.

Los aviones convertían en diseños cubistas las grandes ciudades, los monumentos, la catedral y el navío, haciéndolos brotar en formas nuevas y más bellas (cuanto más risueñas) bajo la inspiración de los explosivos.

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250 The narrator states: “Las cifras se articulan en sílabas … la finanza tiene su musa … Míster Arturo carecía de oído, y el ritmo musical de sus naranjas de fuego y sus limones jaldes, se le escapaba siempre” (110-1).

251 Ortega, Obras completas III. Weyl’s translation reads: “The metaphor is perhaps one of man’s most fruitul potentialities” (33) and “the weapon of poetry turns against natural things and wounds or murders them” (35).
¿Qué fué – observemos esto –, como instrumento de arte y de guerra, el submarino, sino un transmutador [sic] dadaí de las escuadras?

Cuando la naranja mediterránea hizo su metáfora y estalló como una granada, nuestro pobre inglés no supo actuar en consonancia con la rimación [sic] del hecho y cayó en profunda melancolía. (113-4)

References to “arte nuevo,” avant-garde poetry, Cubism and Dada, movements that were contemporaneous to the First World War, are presented by the narrator as having a direct influence on the events of the war and as means of securing financial success during the conflict. According to the narrator, avant-garde poets direct the actions of the soldiers on the frontlines of battle, the destruction caused by planes is compared to a Cubist design and submarines are nothing more than a Dadaist creation transformed into a fleet of military vessels. Rather than mentioning specific artists or works of art, the narrator references the movements in general and their effects on the war.

One of the movements mentioned is Dadaism, whose principle proponent and founder was Tristan Tzara. Caws says of the movement that “whether it is the name a child babbles first of all things, a hobbyhorse, or just the first word Tzara pointed to in the dictionary, and thus a chance name, Dada has gone far since its 1916 beginning in the Café Voltaire in Zurich” (288). The purpose of the movement was destruction and a spirit of contradiction. In his 1918 manifesto Tzara writes “there is a great destructive, negative work to be accomplished … I am writing this manifesto to show that you can do contrary actions together, in one single fresh breath; I am against action, for continual contradiction, for affirmation also, I am neither for nor against and I don’t explain because I hate common sense … Dada means nothing” (Caws 300-1). The narrator draws a comparison between the
destruction of Dada and that of a fleet of war ships. Although the narrator does not reference a work of art for the reader to imagine, it is possible to conceptualize the movement as a whole, its aims and objectives, to understand the ekphrastic reference.

Another movement alluded to in a general manner in this fragment is that of Cubism. Again, familiarity with the style and technical aspects of the movement would give the reader a greater appreciation for the text. The narrator evokes the metaphor of a bomber pilot as a Cubist painter, using explosives rather than paintbrushes to create newer, more beautiful forms out of the cities and buildings below. Tellingly, the cover illustration of the 2001 Cátedra edition of the novel is a detail of Landscape at Toul, a Cubist landscape painting by the French painter Albert Gleizes (1881-1953). This landscape painting is somewhat grounded in mimetic realism but the artist is beginning to move toward abstraction by breaking up the composition into pieces. One of the original claims of Cubism was that the artist sought to portray three dimensions on a flat surface. A technique to accomplish this feat was to show an object from the side and front view simultaneously. Gleizes does so by using sharp angles in order to break up the scene and then converting them into geometric shapes to represent the landscape of Toul. Similarly, the narrator of Luna de copas suggests that a bomber pilot acts as a Cubist painter, destroying a city with explosives, but with the purpose of creating new forms. The painterly technique influenced by Cubism is employed through military tactics during combat.

The selection of Gleizes’s painting as the cover art, even though it is not mentioned by name in either text, signals the important role of Cubism in both of Espina’s novels. These ekphrastic allusions require the reader to bring to mind not a single work of art but rather the style and techniques of entire art movements and expressions.
Vision features prominently in the fourth and fifth chapters of the first part, “Reversible (Y un espejo)” and “Silvia llega a su casa” respectively. The fourth chapter is encapsulated entirely within parentheses in which the narrator comments on the habits of men and women, the latter being characterized by an obsession of analyzing and observing themselves. The narrator compares the birth of women in general to that of Aphrodite:

La mujer vive siempre mirándose al espejo. La cosa, de puro vulgar, no debiera decirse. En realidad, lo que hace es nacer en él, y a esto es a lo que, indudablemente, alude el mito de Afrodita naciendo de la espuma.
De niña y de mayor, la mujer conserva un espejito apretado en el puño; y lo mete en el bolso; y lo saca del bolso para mirarse el rostro. Para iluminar sus labios y encapucharse la mirada. (19-20)

According to myth, Aphrodite was born by rising from the froth of the sea. In one of the most famous paintings depicting the mythological scene by Sandro Botticelli (1445-1510), *The Birth of Venus*, the goddess emerges from the sea standing on a seashell and is being blown by two intertwined Zephyrs. In the same way, the narrator of *Luna de copas* compares the birth of women from a mirror. Man, on the other hand, if he were to be born in the same manner, would break into pieces.

The association between women and vision through the act of self-observation is a key element in the subsequent passage. In the very next chapter the narrator compares Silvia’s make-up mirror to the windshield of her car, as she drives to her father’s house in Visiedo. The mention of the glass of the windshield and mirrors signal Ortega y Gasset’s metaphor from his essay “The Dehumanization of Art.” These elements also represent unorthodox means of viewing, similar to those found in Pedro Salinas’s “Mundo cerrado,” whose protagonist views the landscape through the window of a speeding train. The effect of the description in Espina’s narration is a blending of portrait and landscape painting: “Silvia veía su rostro en el cristal, agredido y traspasado por el paisaje, que al chocar contra la superficie del vidrio, se disolvía neblinoso huyendo con las alas abiertas, por ambos lados” (21). The landscape is superimposed over the image of her face, and is infused with movement due to the rapid pace of her automobile. The narrator then describes the village of Visiedo as a service tray for tea. The ocean, the hotel and the beach— which is equated

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252 The title of Botticelli’s painting references the name of the goddess in Roman mythology most closely associated with the Greek goddess Aphrodite.
with a slice of toast – also appear as elements served with tea: “El mar engolaba unos tonos crepusculares. Unos tonos violeta, oscuro, gris, verde gris, perla y el rojo, ausente. Este fué el tono ausente que necesitaba Silvia, preocupada, en serio preocupada toda la tarde” (22). The description of the village is a conglomeration of colors that are infused with sonorous tones. One color missing from the painter’s palette, however, is red. The absence of one color in particular is reminiscent of Xelfa’s description of the landscape of Tetuán in Pájaro pinto. Tetuán was devoid of the Veronese shade of green as Visiedo was lacking in the red stain, which is symbolically representative of a man: “el maravilloso Aurelio” (22). Silvia is anxious to complete the painting by the inclusion of the color. The red reminds the narrator of the color of wine, which becomes a reoccurring association with Aurelio, as well as that of blood.
The narrator concludes this digression and contemplation of vision and visuality by mentioning the object that represents the crux of the novel, the Holy Grail: “Del tabernáculo destacaba la forma pura de oro cristalino de la Copa. (Ya veremos detalladamente. Y ya explicaremos el porqué de estas ideas en apariencia tan disímiles.)” (23). The narrator’s parenthetical interjection concludes the digression and provides an opportunity to transition back to the action of the narration, returning to Silvia’s car ride to Visiedo.

Finally, Espina gives voice to objects and conversely silences a protagonist in his novel. The first aspect, a manifestation of ekphrastic ventriloquism, occurs in the Paris studio of Dagmara Wolenka, Russian sculptor and friend of Silvia. On the evening that Silvia visits Aurelio, Dagmara and her husband walk silently arm in arm along the beach, an after-dinner habit of theirs. The narrator chooses this moment to reveal the inadequacies of her husband Hércules, and to flash back to an early period in their marriage when her shortcomings are brought to light. One night in the ether-filled studio, her sculptures question her about her ability to love. Similar to the way in which the ghosts appeared before Macbeth in Shakespeare’s tragedy, Dagmara dreams that the statues that she has created spring to life and begin to speak to her.

El perdón irónico de cualquier mujer salva, a menudo, tan leves pecados, si posee la naturaleza propicia al amor.

Dagmara, ¿tenía esta naturaleza?

Las brujas de Macbeth apareciéndosela en sueños cierta noche entre esculturas esforzadas, en su estudio de París, maloliente a éter, se lo habían preguntado:
– ¡Dagmara Wolenka – la gritaron, alma de cisterna de Dagmara Wolenka!, ¿tienes tu naturaleza propicia al amor? Si abres ahora mismo la ventana y te arrojas de cabeza al patio, es que sí … Si no haces otra cosa que so-llo-zar, es que no. ¡Elige! ¿Eliges?

Dagmara Wolenka había callado, sobrecogida.
– ¡Hércules, no serás rey! – se fueron entonces gritando las brujas armando un estupendo jolgorio, y sobre palos de escoba.

Pero Dagmara Wolenka tampoco había sollozado. Este era el caso.

Ni las brujas se percataron de que la enorme tara judía de Dagmara la impedía, con cierta gracia, el delicado ejercicio del amor. (Pulcritud de corazón incombustible.) (52-3)

Espina gives voice to the statues, allowing them the ability to converse with a protagonist. The questions that the statues present to Dagmara are projections of her own concerns, especially since they are presented in a dream-like state. The voice given to these statues is semi-autonomous, in that while ventriloquism allows the works of art to speak for themselves, but only in part because the words they speak emanate from Dagmara’s subconscious. The reader is not given a detailed description of the statues, but they serve to initiate a dialogue with their creator. Similar to Jarnés’s ekphrastic use of Valdés Leal’s skeletons in *El profesor inútil*, the statues created by Dagmara become activated within the narration to take on the role of protagonists, even if for only a brief flashback.

The antithesis of giving voice to an object through ventriloquism is to take away a protagonist’s ability to speak or to silence that protagonist, which the narrator does in Chapter Five of the second part, “La anunciación.” Espina uses religious imagery, to
establish a connection – albeit ironic and contradictory – between Silvia and the Virgin Mary. Silvia is indeed pregnant, but under different circumstances and with much different results. Instead of the Virgin Mary receiving an announcement about the birth of her child, Silvia is informed about the death of her father. It is not the Angel Gabriel that visits Silvia but rather the “Ángel Cómico.” She hears the shot fired from the gun, but before she is able to react the ghost of her father, acting as the “ángel cómico,” delivers to her the same words that were spoken to Mary by the angel Gabriel: “¡Salve, señora! Llena eres de gracia. El Señor es contigo. Bendita tú eres entre todas las mujeres, y bendito es el fruto de tu vientre” (128).

The narrator uses words associated with immobility and speechlessness to describe Silvia when she sees her father, who has just committed suicide: ritmos estatuarios, muda, estuporosa, alabastral, estatua.

La estatua de Silvia no cayó entonces al suelo rompiéndose en mil pedazos, porque dedos fuertes e invisibles, los que ya en la cueva de Caribdys le habían, sosteniéndola, quebrado todos los ideales en la cintura, la atenazaban ahora, sujetándola con la misma antigua delicadeza por el talle.

Después de sonar el disparo Silvia se dió cuenta de la situación. (129-30)

Silvia is depicted as a statue suspended in time, overwhelmed and frozen from the shock of seeing the corpse of her father. Her eyes confirm what her ears had already witnessed and what she had comprehended only moments beforehand: “después de sonar el tiro, sí. Se dió cuenta perfecta” (126). The combination of the reference to the blessing of the Virgin Mary and this statuesque description serves as a type of pietà scene. The difference
being that Jesus Christ gave up his spirit to accomplish substitutionary, sacrificial atonement while don Enrique took his own life during a moment of inebriation to avoid living through the consequences of Aurelio’s rape of Silvia. Michelangelo (1475-1564) captures Mary’s expression of anguish in his sculptural masterpiece, the Pietà. Now located in St. Peter’s Basilica in the Vatican City, the sculpture was commissioned in 1498 by French Cardinal
Jean de Bilhières (1435-99) and completed in 1499. A seemingly ageless Mary holds the body of her son after it was lowered from the cross.

Espina displays Silvia’s grief in reducing her to a statue, temporarily removing from her the ability to speak or even move. The statuesque description of Silvia is the diametric opposite of ventriloquism but represents a profound ekphrastic moment in which a protagonist is connected to the plastic arts. This moment brings Silvia to the breaking point, and as she regains the ability to speak she makes the decision to live senselessly and irrationally, dressed in animal skins.

– ¡Siempre Aurelio! – murmuró –. Siempre su influjo, cada vez más diáfano dentro de mi alma. ¿Escifo de la sierpe enroscada?, o ¿pobre alma, copa rota, vaso viejo de vidrio, sobre el cual brilla, caído, un solo glóbulo de la divina sangre? Ayer luchaba todavía contra el yugo de Aurelio. Hoy vivo la dicha de sentir atraídas por los rubíes de su tirso la punta de mis pestañas. Y desde hoy cumpliré con la embriaguez de corazón con que Él lo dispone, hasta sus mínimos deseos. Vestiré mi cuerpo con pieles de carnero sin curtir. (131)

Silvia is justified in blaming her father’s suicide on Aurelio. During this declaration she mentions the key element of the novel – “la copa,” but now a broken cup, and wonders whether it could have been the Holy Grail. The chapter and the ekphrastic moment end as she decides to give herself over to what the narrator describes as the intoxication of her heart that began in the cave of Caribdys.

Espina does not make use of allusive ekphrasis in _Luna de copas_ as explicitly as he does in _Pájaro pinto_. Rather than specific artists or their works, this novel includes general
allusions to movements and applies painterly techniques to written descriptions. Congruent with the international character of the Spanish avant-garde, the movements alluded to by Espina were later practiced in Spain but began outside of the peninsula. He does, however, utilize two other techniques associated with ekphrasis to put vision at the service of language. Espina gives voice to protagonist through ventriloquism and freezes a protagonist in space, depicting her as a statue.
CHAPTER 5: EKPHRASIS IN THE WORK OF PEDRO SALINAS

BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO SALINAS: HIS LIFE AND WORK

Pedro Salinas was born in Madrid in 1891. He studied at the Universidad Central and was professor at the Universidad de Sevilla before the Spanish Civil War. During the Civil War, he left the country for a position as a visiting professor at Wellesley College and later worked as a professor at Johns Hopkins in Baltimore. Salinas died in Boston in 1951. After departing to live in exile, he never returned to Spain. Salinas’s literary production spans various genres including narrative, theatre and the essay but, as Díez de Revenga points out, “es en la poesía donde su personalidad alcanza un relieve más significativo y una mayor capacidad de expresión de toda una vida y unos sentimientos” (87). More than his inclusion as one of the avant-garde novelists in the school of Ortega y Gasset, Salinas is noted for his contribution as a poet of the Generation of 27. In addition to Víspera del gozo, Salinas wrote only two other narrative works, La bomba increíble (1950) and El desnudo impecable (1951). His style of prose has been compared to Proust and the selection of Víspera del gozo by Ortega y Gasset not only inaugurated the series “Nova Novorum” but also signified Salinas’s commitment to the “new aesthetic” in the novel in Spain.

253 See Antología comentada de la Generación del 27. Díez de Revenga is responsible for the selection and commentary on the poems by Salinas.
254 Salinas’s most noted books of poetry are Seguro azar (1929), Fábula y signo (1931), La voz a ti debida (1933) and Razón de amor (1936).
255 Fernando Vela discusses the comparison of Salinas to Proust in his review from 1926. Not in total agreement that Salinas is the “Spanish Proust,” his justification for the comparison is as follows:

El estilo no consiste exclusivamente en el vocabulario, la conexión de palabras y oraciones, la ondulación, ritmo y longitud de la frase; en suma, la manera de decir las cosas. Esta no es más que la superficie. Pero si por “estilo” entendemos toda una actitud, conformación o modo de espíritu, su
Salinas’s preoccupation with urban settings, technology and the modern world stand out when assessing his novelistic technique. In discussing a fragment of *Víspera del gozo* entitled “Entrada en Sevilla,” Rodríguez Fischer explains that “la visión de la ciudad es una visión aséptica, cosmopolita, exenta de cualquier veleidad o tentación folklórico-tipista [sic], rasgo mucho más destacable por tratarse de Sevilla, cuyo perfil se nos da en depurada clave: geométricos pasajes, formas, líneas, espacios multicolores y cambiantes, rotos, como los fragmentos de un caleidoscopio” (482). The city is presented as fragmented, multicolored and passing rapidly by the window of the car. Salinas’s vision of the city is a subject discussed by Buckley and Crispin as well: “la descripción de la ciudad vista a toda prisa desde un automóvil es ya una nueva visión cuyo objetivo es superar cualquier típica descripción costumbrista” (64). This scene that takes place in an automobile in particular exemplifies Salinas’s new perspective and approach to writing a novel as well as his preoccupation with a modern means of transportation. Cano Ballesta also identifies Salinas’s attraction to the modern word in his book *Literatura y tecnología. (Las letras españoles ante la revolución industrial: 1900-1933).*

El intelectual cosmopolita y profesor universitario, nacido en la gran ciudad, está captando realidades artificiosas y tecnificadas en un discurso literario que también es manipulación, técnica y elaboración consciente. El mundo parte más constitutiva son los ‘objetos’ que el escritor ha seleccionado o creado, su ‘mundo’, su tema, su óptica peculiar. En este sentido, apenas cabe mayor diferencia que la que media entre los objetos de Proust y aquellos otros sobre los cuales Salinas modula un lenguaje aparentemente proustiano. Únicamente porque esta diferencia ayuda a perfilar mejor, por contraste radicales, el estilo del escritor español y definirlo por lo que no es, me aventuro a la confronta. De otro modo sería una incongruencia la apelación a Proust. (126)

This “new aesthetic,” experimented and developed by the circle of young writers and encouraged by Ortega y Gasset, is discussed in the first chapter.
Another often-mentioned characteristic of Salinas’s novelistic technique relates to his cosmographical approach. Like other avant-garde authors, Salinas sought to create new worlds within his narrative. Larson affirms this tendency among avant-garde novelists, who “began to write as if they could ‘reconstruct the universe,’ as F.T. Marinetti’s 1909 *Futurist Manifesto* put it” (357). The focus of this chapter then is the images evoked by the author as he attempts to create this new world.
EVOCATIONS AND SEPULCHERS: IMAGES AND IMAGINATION IN

VÍSPERA DEL GOZO

Víspera del gozo, which in 1926 inaugurated the “Nova Novorum,” is a collection of seven distinct stories whose unifying thread is a theme that Ángel del Río describes as “la expectación interior que anuncia el gozo inminente de la posesión – mujer, ciudad, paisaje –, gozo que quiebra de pronto, nunca logrado” (199). Pérez Firmat distinguishes the first story, “Mundo cerrado,” not only as being the first example of avant-garde fiction in Spain, but also as being representative of this type of fiction, in which nothing happens. At the beginning of the story, a man is riding on a train, described to be reading, but with a closed book on the seat next to him: “The closed book, echoing the closed world of the title, signals at once that in this book-world unrealized possibilities will prevail … ‘Mundo cerrado’ anticipates later pieces of vanguard fiction, many of which also evince a predilection for the abortive, the unrealized, or the unrealizable” (68). Johnson concludes that six of the stories are joined by the development of a “perception/art/reality theme through a human protagonist who is spatially and/or temporally separated from a desired woman toward whom he is moving in time and space” (175). The protagonist in the first story is reading on a train on his way to Icosia, a city from his past, which he associates with a woman named Alicia. This association is made clear by a double-sided accounting book he was accustomed

256 At the time of the publication of her book Crossfire: Philosophy and the Novel in Spain, 1900-1934, Johnson noted that Salinas’s book had not been studied as a complete unit, but rather fragments had been analyzed in articles and book-length studies (175, 215n 15). A more comprehensive study of the work has since been done by del Pino, in his Montajes y fragmentos, 103-27. Johnson herself deals with “Mundo cerrado,” Cita de los tres,” and “Aurora de verdad” somewhat superficially on pages 175-7. For other studies that explore segments of Víspera del gozo, see Pérez Firmat, 67-74; Robert Spires, Transparent Simulacra, 130-45; Susan Nagel, 79-86; and articles by Carlos Feal. Similar to Jarnés, Salinas published a few of these fragments in literary magazines before the publication of the book. Ferrero documents the publication information in her article (84n 1).
to keeping, in which on one side appeared an alphabetical listing of his acquaintances and on the corresponding side of the ledger appeared a list of cities. Next to Icosia appeared the name, written and later erased, of Alice Chesterfield, which had been recently changed to Lady Gurney.

This fictional account allows Salinas to announce his narrative project and to introduce a new approach to reading. Andrés is not reading the book that remains closed on the seat beside him, but rather he is reading the landscape that unfolds before him through the window of the train. The third person narrator points out that “porque las dos horas de lectura lo fueron sin libro delante, con la vista puesta en un cristal – el de la ventanilla –, y lo leído, imposible de encajar en ningún género literario: Andrés leía un paisaje nuevo, una nación desconocida” (10).

Due to the nature of this reading, Andrés does not control which pages he can turn to, but is at the mercy of the train engineer, whose direction and velocity determine the route and rhythm of Andrés’s reading. Due to the erratic nature of the journey, Andrés accuses the conductor, whom he suspects is new to that particular line, of ignoring the profound beauty of the surroundings and even drowning out nature by the noise of machinery. Andrés proceeds to metaphorically read the landscape by describing the scenes that appear before him as passages of a book, making use of vocabulary saturated with literary imagery. One tender and moving page sprawls before him “tan clásica en su sencillez cual despedida homérica, escrita con cristalina frase por el curso del río” (11).257 A stop at a third-rate train station represents another page, which despite its realistic slice of life, seems so out of place.

257 In 1993 Bucknell University Press published a bilingual edition of Víspera del gozo, translated by Noël Valis. She notes that at times it was difficult to find “the phrase, the word, the tone, or the rhythm to try to match, or at least approximate, Salinas’s verbal wizardry” (15). I will include English translations of Salinas’s work from Valis’s edition. The passage reads “as classic in its simplicity as a Homeric farewell, written in crystalline sentences by the curve of the river” (23).
that there is no explanation of how this could have sprung forth from the same author, “sospechando en él una interpolación apócrifa” (12). A particular nuisance is a tunnel, which “de pronto se cerró bruscamente el relato y quedó el cristal de la ventanilla ilegible” (14).\(^{258}\)

The tunnel distracts him from his task of reading and he takes the double-sided book of contacts from his luggage. He reminisces about how Alicia’s name came to be added to his book, which opens to him new worlds he was previously too timid to explore. Through his memories he evokes portraits of Alicia. Valis points to this as one evidence of the influence of French writers on Salinas: “The remembrance of things past, of his lost love Alice, is clearly Proustian” (11). The evocation of Lady Gurney also causes him unrest, as he is reminded of her recent marriage to Lord Gurney. This foreshadows an inevitable failure for him to achieve the fulfillment of his desires. Even as he is closing the distance between the two spatially lies the insurmountable obstacle of her marriage between them. Upon arriving at the train station, where he foolishly looks for Alicia’s silhouette, he receives a letter from Lord Gurney informing him of Alicia’s death the day before yesterday. It is her death, rather than her marriage, which proves to be the ultimate obstacle in his pursuit of pleasure.

From the outset of the work, Salinas introduces a theme that is present in most of the other fragments in *Víspera del gozo*, identified by Robert Spires as a “conflict between imagination and reality” (134). Andrés wrestles with his imagination of Alicia, based on his memories, and the reality of what she has become – Lady Gurney, someone he confesses not to know. Spires finds this fragment to be exemplary among avant-garde fiction due to a fusion between new art and old art. In *Transparent Simulacra*, Spires contends that “while invention dominates the first half, empirical reality imposes itself in the second half;  

\(^{258}\) Translated by Valis: “suddenly the story stopped dead in its tracks, as the small windowpane turned illegible” (24).
aesthetics is privileged over plot and character at first, only to give way to the story of Andrés and Lady Gurney as the story approaches its end” (134). He goes on to declare that Salinas is able to focus his vision on both the glass and the garden scene, as per Ortega y Gasset’s metaphor, “having established the focus on aesthetics in the first part, that focus is superimposed on the characterization and action presented in the second half. The result is art for art’s sake in a story about people and events” (135).

In the second section, “Entrada en Sevilla,” a new protagonist, Claudio, visits Sevilla. As he is driven around the city by a lady acquaintance named Robledo, the narrator provides a multicolored and blurred description of the streets and the houses. Claudio is at the same time impressed by the rapidly passing scene and unsatisfied due to his desire to see the city at a closer vantage point.

Estaba viendo Sevilla y aún tenía que seguir imaginándola, y la ciudad le era, tan dentro de ella, algo incierto e inaprehensible como una mujer amada, producto de datos reales, pero dispersos y nebulosos, y unificadora, lúcida fantasía que los coordina en superior encanto. Sintió gana de mirar más de cerca, de bajar del auto. (43-4)

As he is about to suggest that they get out of the car, the car swerves and Robledo’s purse falls to the floor, spilling the contents. Together they collect her things and return them to the purse. He asks if they could walk a little and she responds that the place is ugly.

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259 He was seeing Seville, yet he still had to continue imagining it. Even deep inside it, the city was for him something uncertain and elusive like the woman you loved, a product of real details, but scattered and nebulous, even if unified by the lucid fantasy that coordinates them in a higher enchantment. He felt like looking more closely, getting out of the car. (32)
Claudio looks around and realizes the truth in her statement. This section concludes with the metaphor of the city depicted as a desired but elusive nymph.

“Cita de los tres” takes place inside the cathedral of a town called Sarracín. The previous day, Angel established a rendezvous with Matilde for six o’clock in the afternoon and now waits for her to arrive. As he waits, he contemplates time, contrasting the authentic hour with that of San Esteban, which operates ten minutes in advance. Del Pino calls this curiosity “una temporalidad elástica” (Montajes y fragmentos 109). When Matilde does not arrive at San Esteban’s chiming of the six o’clock hour, he reassures himself that she still could arrive, because it isn’t quite six o’clock yet. His confidence wanes, as ten more minutes pass. He confirms in his memory that the date was set for six o’clock, because he remembers seeing six little clouds passing in the sky immediately after hearing her confirm that tomorrow at six o’clock she would come to the cathedral. He also remembers that some of her friends mentioned that six o’clock would be the perfect hour to visit the sepulcher of Alfonso de Padilla, the real reason for her visit, and the explanation of the title, which Valis translates as “Rendezvous for Three.” The three that will meet are a living breathing man, a statue and a woman. Matilde ends up arriving shortly before seven o’clock, but by this time the sacristan announces his intention to close the cathedral. The meeting between the three has lasted only momentarily. Angel leaves in triumph with Matilde, while his rival, the statue of Alfonso de Padilla, remains locked up in the church.

The fourth vignette, “Delirios del chopo y el ciprés,” consists of eight brief prose poems260 in which the narrator, “an unnamed central consciousness” for Johnson (175), contemplates two trees on the Castilian landscape, observed while passing by on a train. In the “Introducción” the narrator observes that from a distance the poplar and the cypress

260 Johnson and del Pino respectively refer to this section as “prose poems” (175) and “prosas poéticas” (107).
appear equal, but at closer range are quite different. Including this introductory passage, seven of the eight sections are merely philosophical ruminations about the nature of the two types of trees, called “Chopo,” “Ciprés,” “Chopo, agua,” “Chopo, otoño,” “Ciprés, ante la muerte,” and “Chopo, cruz de madera.” The last three prose poems depict the trees persecuted by the harsh winter wind, to which they ultimately succumb unto death. The action hinges on the fifth fragment, “Anécdota incidental,” a narration pervaded with a contrast of urban and rural imagery.

Llevábamos ocho días de recorrer por único campo las asfaltadas praderas de la ciudad, y sólo nos reposaban las luminosas sobras de las farolas, con su maravilloso follaje nocturno. Y como sentías nostalgia del suelo y los chopos de Castilla, te llevé al Museo. (79-80)²⁶¹

As they pass through the museum, the longing to feel earth beneath one’s feet and see the sky extend beyond the horizon is only satisfied artificially; the earth substituted for wood floor and “sabias cristalerías” (for Valis, “expert glasswork”) in place of the sky. The vantage point extends only as far as the four walls, with the paintings serving as insufficient peepholes to the horizon beyond. This part ends as they visit the portrait gallery and mock an unknown portrait by el Greco.²⁶²

²⁶¹ We had spent eight days roaming the asphalt meadows of the city as our only countryside, and only the luminous shadows of the street lamps, with their marvelous nightly leafage, gave us repose. And since you were feeling nostalgic for the earth and poplars of Castile, I took you to the museum. (42)

²⁶² This ekphrastic reference to el Greco has been discussed in Feal’s Painting on the Page, 89-93. See also Feal, “Lo real, lo imaginario y lo simbólico en Víspera del gozo,” 325-6.
I took you to the portrait gallery, and there, in the dark eyes of an unknown personage (black suit, limp beard, earth tones) was your tree of Castile, timid and vacillating soul, loving and weeping like the summer poplar just rained upon, all ashake before every little thing, light, air, smoke, poplar. You wrote as a joke, in the catalogue: ‘This picture of an unknown gentleman identified as by El Greco is a portrait of a poplar, vaguely attired, anatomy uncertain. See landscape gallery.’ (42)
Strasbourg. Jorge recognizes in another woman the exact neckline of Aurora. An association with the Mediterranean reminds him of a blue dress worn by Aurora. Jorge pieces all of these components together like a puzzle, but he cannot reproduce through his memories three all-important parts: the look she gives him, her smile and her voice. So he is left with this fragmented figure until she completes the puzzle by her physical presence.

Jorge enters the museum and goes directly to the prearranged meeting place. They plan to meet in a different room each day, progressing through the museum chronologically. As he enters the “paraíso ultraterrenal” (“nonearthly paradise”) of the gallery of English landscape painter Joseph Mallord William Turner (1775-1851), he juxtaposes Aurora with Eve, but expecting her to have arrived already describes her as “la Eva creada al revés, antes que el hombre y esperándole en un mundo recién inventado, vago, cálido y palpitante aún” (97-8). When she arrives, he is surprised by her appearance, which shatters the composite image he has reconstructed in his mind from past memories of her. We see here a vision of the palimpsest, the same image mentioned by the narrator at the beginning of this fragment.

The first person narrator in the sixth vignette “Volverla a ver” is a young man waiting to be reunited with a young woman after three years of separation. He observes a port city from the balcony of his hotel and the first thing he sees is her name written in the sky, each letter representing some aspect of the girl and evoking vivid memories of their time.

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264 “Eve create in reverse, before man and waiting for him in a world recently invented, still blurred, smoking and trembling” (47).
265 When Jorge wakes up to find Aurora absent, the narrator describes trying to see her and remember their conversation from the night before like trying to read “un periplo conservado en un palimpsesto incompleto” (88), “like tracings preserved in an incomplered palimpsest” (44). A palimpsest is a manuscript in which the original text has been erased so that successive texts could be written upon it. Aurora’s image is compared to a palimpsest, which Jorge has erased partially in order to write his own invented and expected image of Aurora, pieced together from his memories of her and his fantasy.
spent together. Approaching the harbor, he sees a steamship, upon the side of which he sees her name written and upon a flag “así ella escrita en los azules cielos matinales ascendía hasta allí tras la previa depuración de su nombre en dos iniciales, P. B., incompleta y esencial, y la blanca bandolera marcaba con dos letras rojas su triunfo definitivo, la posesión celeste” (111-2). He tries to distract himself by visiting a bookstore. He buys a writing pad, composes some lines of poetry but finds that he has written an acrostic using the letters of her name. When he returns to his hotel room, the ringing of the telephone startles him. It is at this point we learn the name that accompanies the letters and initials previously mentioned in the story: Miss Priscilla Beexley. She has come to call on him. As he descends the elevator, the three years that has separated them unravel as he descends in the “momentáneo ataúd del ascensor” (117). The vignette concludes as he reaches the bottom floor to find that the time-in-between has been abolished and he sees her as she was on the day they had parted.

“Livia Schubert, incompleta,” the seventh and final fragment of Víspera del gozo, continues the theme of a male protagonist’s desire for a woman, which is ultimately unrequited and unfulfilling. Time is also an indispensable element in this section. Not only must the reader pay close attention to a narration that jumps from present to past events, but the protagonist is obsessed with time as well. The protagonist’s preoccupation with time stems from his recognition that he has only a few moments left with the object of his affection, Livia Schubert. He also frequently mentions the time for their prearranged meeting at the train station moments before her departure, which Melchor describes as being the hour of his unhappiness.

266 "Thus written into the blue skies of morning she rose to the top after her name had first been distilled into two initials, P.B., incomplete yet essential, and the white pennant proclaiming with two red letters her final triumph, the taking of heaven itself” (51).
267 Valis labels this “temporary tomb of the elevator” (52).
There are three temporal scenes in this vignette – surrounded by the schedule of a train – two of which lead up the moment of her departure. The first scene takes place at six o’clock in the evening. This coincides with two events: the last meeting between Livia and Melchor, and the beginning of the Paris-Prague Express’s trajectory, which will ultimately carry Livia to Prague. The train is scheduled to arrive in Lecentum, their current location, at 1:32 and depart at 1:35. Livia is asleep during this first scene. While she is asleep, he narrator laments her departure and also complains that she will leave nothing of herself to him. To remedy this, he constructs an ephemeral work of art, which is his projection of her soul. He recognizes that upon waking, she will destroy the image he has created of her and she will erase every imperfection. The imperfections he alludes to are any memories he would have left to her. He describes this process as if she were putting on lipstick to cover any traces of his kisses and brushing her hair to extricate herself from his embraces: “Y se quedará ante el espejo, yo deshecho, rehecha ella, convertida lo que era hace un instante rica y tumultuosa vida en mis brazos, en una biografía correctísima, sin una imperfección” (133).²⁶⁸ He contends that upon waking, she would disassociate herself from the unauthorized biography he has written. Since man is composed of body and soul, he wishes to combine her body, laying there almost lifeless, with the soul he has created; to replace her original soul with the exact and emotional replica that he has reconstituted of her, in the hopes that she would reciprocate the affection he has for her. He decides against adorning her with this soul, fearing that he would wake her up in the process. During her sleep she murmurs two words – his name and the name of a woman, Susana. The introduction of this new woman, of whom Melchor previously had been unaware, ruins his creation. He now must remake

²⁶⁸ “And there she stands before the mirror, I undone, she redone, transformed from what was an instant ago a richly passionate life held in my arms into an authorized biography, all imperfection deleted” (56).
Livia’s soul completely, taking into account this new information. He does not have time to do so, however, because the scene ends as Livia begins to wake up.

In the second scene, Livia announces her desire for Melchor to come to the train station. He proposes meeting her at her house to escort her, but she refuses, allowing him to see her only moments before her departure. She leaves and he spends the rest of this scene contemplating what she meant by “moments before.” He consults his watch, which shows eight o’clock, and calculates the time it will take for him to get ready, eat something and travel to the station. He decides that four hours is little time to waste, and proceeds directly to a restaurant at the station to await her arrival.

The final scene takes place in the waiting room of the train station, where Livia tells Melchor an elaborate story, in which she describes a woman. This woman is none other than Susana, her best friend and the name of the person Livia previously uttered in her sleep. The description allows Melchor to picture her in his mind’s eye. It is such a vivid description that when Livia reaches into her purse, he expects her to extract nothing less than the actual person she has described:

El entusiasmo con que habla de ella Livia (me dice que es su mejor amiga) es tan eficaz, tan activo, que la veo surgir poco a poco de la nada, modelarse, cobrar vida, y cuando Livia mete la mano en el bolso, no dudo que sea para extraer ya completa, lo único que falta, su persona misma, o cuando menos, en fotografía su efigie. (151)

The enthusiasm with which Livia speaks of her (she tells me she is her best friend) is so effective, so infectious, that I see her emerge little by little out of nothingness, assume a form, take on life. And when Livia puts her hand in her bag, I don't doubt that it is to pull out already complete, the only thing missing, the person herself, or at the very least, her photographic effigy. (61)
But what Livia takes out of her purse is not a photo or the actual woman, but rather a telegram in which Susana announces her arrival in Lucéntum at 1:35. The rest of the vignette is almost a blur for the narrator, as the train comes to a stop and Susana emerges. No sooner does Livia make perfunctory introductions as she is quickly carried away. Melchor’s final thought is that the soul he created must belong to this newly arrived woman, leaving Livia “once and for always incomplete” (62).

The representations of the visual arts in Víspera del gozo allow Salinas to create a world in which the protagonists experience an internal and very individual reality. Within this closed world, the protagonists use their imagination to interact with the images they evoke. The first interaction is found in the opening fragment as Andrés is on his way to visit an acquaintance from his past, Alicia, now known by her married name Lady Gurney. The protagonist conjures up an image of her based on his memories. Andrés creates in his mind a doubling of Alicia and Lady Gurney. He admits that he does not know Lady Gurney but he is able to imagine her by superimposing upon this recently married woman his nostalgic reflections of Alicia. He recalls two photographs of the many that he has of her, and then pictures them in his mind. In the first one, she is wearing the evening dress that he asked her to wear to a dance. The other he considers to be the best photograph, because it depicts the two of them at the regatta between Oxford and Cambridge, the day they exchanged a kiss. The memory of these portraits of Alicia gives him a point of reference to begin to imagine

270 María Pao has noted the connection between the title and the Unfinished Symphony by composer Schubert (443). The protagonist will remain like the masterwork of the composer, unfinished. Pao uses this connection to support her investigation on the nature of time in Salinas’s text.

271 I use here the title of the first story in Víspera del gozo. I take my cue from Pérez Firmat, who uses this label to describe all of the production of avant-garde fiction in Spain.
how her marriage has changed her appearance. He speculates on the appearance of Lady
Gurney’s eyes, her gait and her smile:

¿Cómo sería Lady Gurney? Ojos pardos, ¿de qué color ahora? Andar suyo, brev e, enérgico, y quizá hoy conquistado, cual por un ritmo misterioso y lejano, sólo por ella percibido, a insólitas lenguideces y ritardandos. ¿Y la sonrisa de ayer, seca, intermitente, sin misterio, quizá, agrandada, expresiva y honda, clavada siempre en el rostro, disponible a cualquier momento, sin necesidad de acecho y salto, como antes? (21)²⁷²

The evocation of Lady Gurney disturbs Andrés. Removing the silk mask from the face of his friend Alice Chesterfield, “rostro amado y sabido,” he finds the strange and unfamiliar image of Lady Gurney. He explains the process of discarding her image in similar terms to scratching out the names from his book of names and locations. In the same way he erased her previous designation, to be replaced later with her married name, the cherished image of her from his memory must be painfully crossed out. Reality sets in as he comes to terms with her recent nuptials. He must remove from his heart the two years spent with her.

Aunque era inútil querer engañarse, y el cuaderno decía la estricta verdad, Alice Chesterfield escrito antes y al lado, borrado aquello, Lady Gurney. Habría que pasarse la realidad como una punta de acero, aguda y dolorosa,

²⁷² What would Lady Gurney be like? Those brown eyes – but would they be that color now? That walk of hers, quick, energetic, and perhaps overtaken by now, through some mysterious and remote rhythm only she perceived, by a rare and languorous ritardando. And that smile she had – dry, intermittent, without mystery perhaps, widened, expressive and deep, fixed forever on her face, available at any moment, with no need to stalk it – was it the same? (26)
A train employee speaks up to inquire about his final destination, which interrupts Andrés’s inner monologue, along with his mental evocation of Lady Gurney. The protagonist attempts to piece together an image of the newly married Alicia from his memories of her, concentrating on certain features. This ekphrastic exercise fails because his memories only allow him to reconstruct an incomplete image of Lady Gurney, who instead appears more like a Cubist portrait with disproportionate and ill-defined features. His only recourse is to erase her image completely and anticipate the moment when he can see her in person, as the newly married woman. This encounter would not occur, however, because upon his arrival at the station he receives a letter from Lord Gurney informing him that Alicia passed away two days ago. If, as del Pino asserts, the city is the fundamental backdrop for the avant-garde adventurer, the locus amoenus for the avant-garde protagonist, the car that transports Andrés from the train station to the cemetery, “sin penetrar la ciudad,” represents a final confirmation that his reunion with Alicia will not be fulfilled. Therefore, the fragmented appearance of Lady Gurney, which he has conjured in his imagination, does not materialize in the flesh.

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273 It was useless to continue deceiving himself; the notebook spoke the strict truth, Alice Chesterfield written below and then erased, and to the side, Lady Gurney. He would have to take reality, sharp and painful as the steel point of a pen, and pierce his heart, like scratching out the text of a notebook. He would be scratching out two years of his life, in London, Cambridge, Ramsgate, two years of … (26)

274 See Montages y Fragmentos. “La ciudad, como ya he dicho, es el espacio donde se desarrollan las aventuras de la narrativa de vanguardia” (94).
Another moment abundant with visual imagery occurs in the second fragment of *Víspera del gozo* as Claudio experiences the city of Sevilla for the first time. Salinas combines a fixation on technological advances of the modern world with a description of the city, described as Robledo and Claudio race through the streets of Sevilla in a car. The result is a disorganized image, filled with fragments, lines and colorful objects. The car’s progression through the city is a dizzying activity, compared also to a cinematographic production. Unfolding before them are “formas, líneas, espacios multicolores y cambiantes, rotos, reanudados a cada instante, sin coherencia alguna” (36-7).\(^275\) Claudio’s ability to view the city as a spectator is complicated by the speed of the automobile. Therefore, instead of a panoramic view from a distance, Claudio experiences the city in a series of disassociated and incomplete images, subjected to the whim of the automobile.

\[\ldots\] por ahora no se veía ni ciudad, ni calles, ni siquiera sus últimos elementos, casas. Todo lo que aprehendían los ojos eran fragmentos, cortes y paños de muros, rosa, verde, azul, y de trecho en trecho, como un punto redondo y negro que intenta dar apariencias de orden a una prosa en tumulto, un portal en el que se hundía la mirada siempre demasiado tarde \ldots (37-8)\(^276\)

Salinas uses allusions to techniques from the fields of cinematography and avant-garde art in order to present a distorted and confusing image of the city. Claudio’s vision is
limited and therefore he must use his imagination to piece together the fragmented scenes he views from the perspective of the automobile. His role as spectator becomes an act of collection and interpretation of data in order to envision a more complete view of Sevilla.

Se le desvanecía a Claudio la Sevilla convencional de los panoramas, definición lejana en el paisaje con dos líneas – caserío, Giralda – que se cortan con una belleza estrictamente geométrica. La ciudad no se definía, lejos, depurada y distinta, sino que vivía, cerca, complicadísima, esquiva siempre a la línea recta, complacida como cuerpo de bailarina en gentiles quebros y sinuosidades. (40)\textsuperscript{277}

In \textit{Montage y fragmentos}, del Pino has noted this moment as a disconnection from the nineteenth-century model of description and visual observation: “La visión decimonónica – acaparadora, aglutinadora, orgánica – de los panoramas, cede su lugar a una que acude a los ojos del contemplador en sucesión vertiginosa y fragmentaria” (97). Buckley and Crispin come to a similar conclusion when they assert that “la descripción de la ciudad vista a toda prisa desde un automóvil es ya una nueva visión cuyo objetivo es superar cualquier típica descripción costumbrista” (64). In addition, this new mode of perception conforms to Ortega y Gasset’s metaphor of vision. Claudio modifies his ocular accommodation in such a way that allows him to describe the city in a fragmented manner. Therefore, the reader will

\textsuperscript{277} For Claudio the conventional Seville of panoramic vistas was disappearing, a distant definition in the landscape with two lines – cluster of houses, the Giralda tower – cutting across one another in a strictly geometrical ideal. Remote, the city itself could not be defined, thus purified and particular; it simply existed, close to you, very complex, always shying away from the straight line, pleasing like the body of a ballerina with subtle breaks and sinuosities. (31)
not be able to picture a mimetic reality, but rather the ekphrastic description will be a distorted vision based on the protagonist’s experience.

Realizing that it is impossible for Claudio to organize all of the elements that are arbitrarily arranged in his imagination, the city becomes a fragile image, which may collapse at any moment. The city is transformed in the mind of the narrator into a Cubist landscape painting.\(^{278}\)

Y por eso la ciudad, tan real, tenía un temblor de fantasmagoría, un inminente peligro de que al no poder tenerse juntos, arbitrariamente ensamblados en la imaginación todos aquellos fragmentos que en realidad estaban perfectamente unidos, se viniera todo abajo, en un terremoto ideal y pintarrajeado como los que se muestran con commento de romances en los cartelones de las ferias. (43)\(^{279}\)

The narrator draws a visual comparison to posters that announce information about the fairs to describe the disintegration of the city in the imagination of the protagonist. Espina combines elements of landscape with images of posters within his composition. The result is a disjointed presentation similar a number of Cubist works, especially the synthetic forms introduced by Picasso and Braque. In 1912, Picasso experimented with the inclusion

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\(^{278}\) This brings to mind the image chosen for the cover of the Cátedra edition of Espina’s novels, a detail of the Cubist landscape painting by Albert Gleizes.

\(^{279}\) That was why the city, which seemed so real, trembled like a phantasmagoria, in imminent danger that all those fragments, which in reality were perfectly united, might not hold together, arbitrarily assembled as they were in the imagination, and that everything would come tumbling down, in a crudely painted, fake earthquake like the ones they show with rhymed comments on fair banners. (32)
of real everyday items pasted onto his canvases, known as *collage*. Another technique, *papier collé*, involved pasting paper onto the canvas and included elements of *trompe l’œil*, objects painted onto the canvas to give the illusion that they are real with the intention of tricking
In his *Bottle of Suze* for example, Picasso pasted strips from the newspaper *Le Journal*, as well as pieces of wallpaper to depict a bottle of Suze liquor, a glass and an ashtray sitting on a table. This pictorial construction moves away from mimetic virtuosity and towards abstraction. Although the elements are present, the spatial composition differs greatly from that of a still-life painting. Salinas’s verbal representation of the city is similar in approach to Picasso’s *papier collé*. Instead of appearing like a mimetic work of art, the effect of the rapid movement of the automobile through the city has produced a sloppy, unorganized and unsophisticated representation of Sevilla in the mind of the narrator. Salinas continues to put vision at the service of manipulation. The purpose is not to present a mimetically accurate, conventional panoramic view of the city, but rather to describe it in such a way as to distort the image.

In the third vignette, “Cita de los tres,” the narrator describes the sepulcher of Alfonso de Padilla, who becomes the protagonist’s rival. Angel is waiting for Matilde to arrive at the cathedral because she has been assured that six o’clock is the perfect time for viewing the statue. As Angel waits, the minutes pass without any sign from her. In his disappointment, the realization that he is not alone in the cathedral leads him to visually

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280 This technique differs from *collage* in the material used in its application. *Collage* includes a wide variety of materials, while *papier collé* strictly refers to pasted-paper. Picasso’s *Still Life with Chair Caning* from 1912 would be an example of *collage*. Picasso said of his *papiers collés*: “We tried to get rid of ‘trompe l’oeil’ to find a ‘trompe l’esprit.’ We didn’t any longer want to fool the eye; we wanted to fool the mind. The sheet of newspaper was never used in order to make a newspaper.” See Gilot and Lake, 77. An example of *trompe l’oeil* is Braque’s *Still-life with Violin and Palette* (1909). At the top of the painting, Braque painted a nail and its shadow, giving the illusion of a three-dimensional nail holding the entire canvas to the wall.

281 Both Leighton and Cottington note the importance of the content of the newspaper clippings, which related events in the First Balkan Wars of 1912-13, and Picasso’s deliberateness to make a political statement. See Leighton, 665 and Cottington, 355.

282 Twice in the story, Angel is referred to as Jorge, creating an ambiguity of identity. Carlos Feal asserts that this name change “removes the character from an angelic paradise and instead associates him with the legendary Saint George, destined to battle the dragon and the forces of evil” (80).
inspect the statue. He is surprised as he gazes upon statue on the stone slab of the sepulcher. The man is reclining with an open book in front of him. The book gives this young man of military accomplishment an air of intellectualism and also parallels the metaphor of reading established from the first scene of the novel. Although the book is open, it remains unread.

Tenía en la mano derecha un libro abierto, pero sin leer, con un ademán vacío e inútil, de esos que sobreviven a las acciones, que perduran cuando ya se marchó su alma, la voluntad de ejecutarlas, dejando tras sí un espacio imposible de llenar con el ademán mismo, igual que ese hueco blanquísimoy suave que queda en el aire de la tarde cuando han pasado unas palomas. (66-7)

The description provided by the narrator gives semblance of life to the static, motionless statue. Alfonso is said to have a useless gesture on his face and a posture of disdain for his surroundings. The narrator presents a description of the statue in media res, speculating on the events that caused him to pause and subsequently become frozen in that position for centuries.

Probablemente para esperar mejor, se había reclinado, tendido casi, en la piedra, reposada la mejilla en la mano, con tan elegante desprendimiento de las cosas ambientes, que cuando el sacristán pasó por allí, hizo como que no

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283 In his right hand he held an open book, but unread, with one of those empty, useless gestures that persist, leftover even after the soul and the will to act have departed, leaving behind a space impossible to fill with the gesture itself. A space just like that soft, very white hollow lingering in the afternoon air when doves have passed over. (38-9)
le veía, intimidado por su señorío y cual si estuviese ya acostumbrado a postura tan poco respetuosa en un templo catedral. Y los más sorprendente de todo es que ni siquiera se atrevió a ahuyentar aquel perro que, atravesado y dormido, con unas blancas lanas a la luz crepuscular tenían raros reflejos marmóreos, estaba, fiel y emblemático, a los pies de Alfonso de Padilla. (67-8)

The description of the stationary object is accompanied by a flurry of activity, such that the statue of the pensive young man is seemingly but impossibly alive. This passage is representative of enargeia mentioned in Chapter Two, eliciting a strong appeal to vision. Furthermore, it coincides with enargeia in its achievement of verisimilitude – the strong resemblance to a natural element, in this case the historical figure of a nobleman. Recalling Zanker’s explanation of enargeia in the context of Ancient rhetoric, this descriptive representation, in addition to its “vivid appeal to the senses,” is enveloped within the action and provides an interaction with the protagonist. More than merely descriptive, the statue plays a prominent role in the development of the narration, becoming a protagonist himself – at least in the imagination of Angel – that vies for the attention of the female protagonist, Matilde. Due to her tardiness, Matilde heightens the competition between the two “suitors.” The mention of marble reflections at the end of this vivid and lively description reminds the reader that Angel’s rival is not a real man, but rather a motionless statue. Carlos Feal finds

284  Probably to pass the time he had lain down, nearly stretched out on the stone, resting his cheek on his hand with such an elegant disdain for everything around him, that when the sexton passed by he made out as if he didn’t see him, intimidated by his hauteur, and as if he didn’t even attempt to chase away the dog, stretched across the stone and asleep, with a fleecy white coat that in the twilight gave off strange marble reflections. There he was lying faithful and emblematic, at the feet of Alfonso de Padilla. (39)
the description of the sepulcher of Alfonso de Padilla to be identical to the statue of Martín Vázquez de Arce (1461-86) in the Cathedral of Sigüenza, Spain. While this may well have been the inspiration for Salinas’s Alfonso de Padilla, it is impossible to say for sure because the town mentioned in the story is not Sigüenza, but rather the fictional town of Sarracín. This association is, however, helpful at the moment of visually imagining the statue described by the narrator. Apart from the verbal description itself – which Feal asserts, “corresponds exactly to one of the most famous sepulchral statues in the history of Spanish sculpture” (83) – the exploits of Martín Vázquez de Arce outlined in the inscription above the statue resemble those attributed to Alfonso de Padilla at the conclusion of the vignette, especially in the manner in which each died.

285 This observation is found in the book, Painting on the Page (83), which he co-authored with his wife Rosemary Feal, as well as his article “Lo real, lo imaginario y lo simbólico en Víspera del gozo de Pedro Salinas” (322, 323n 9).
Aquí yace Martín Vázquez de Arce, caballero de la orden de Santiago, que mataron los moros, socorriendo al muy ilustre señor duque del Infantado, su señor, a cierta gente de Jaén, a la Acequia Gorda, en la vega de Granada. Cobró en la hora su cuerpo Fernando de Arce, su padre, y sepultólo en esta Capilla año 1486. Este año tomaron la ciudad de Loja, las villas de llora, Moclín y Montefrío por cercos en que padre e hijo se hallaron.\footnote{A website maintained by the Cathedral of Sigüenza translates the inscription as follows: Here lies Martín Vázquez de Arce, knight of the Order of Saint James, who was killed by the Moors, when coming to the aid of his illustrious lord, the Duke of El Infantado, and certain people from Jaén, at La Acequia Gorda, on the plains of Granada. His father, Fernando de Arce, took his body and gave it burial in this chapel in 1486. The city of Loja and the towns of llora,
The words of the inscription above the tomb describe the circumstances of the last moments of the life of this young man, written in homage by his father. Vázquez de Arce was killed on a battlefield in Granada, which is strikingly similar to the report of Alfonso de Padilla’s death given by the narrator.

Salieron juntos, perseguidos, echados, como de un frustrado paraíso, por las llaves y el paso del sacristán. Pero Angel sentía un placer satánico y secreto, porque él se marchaba con Matilde, andando a su lado, de carne y hueso, por una tarde palpitante y verdadera, mientras que su bello rival aborrecible, Alfonso de Padilla, señor de Olmos Albos, paje de la reina Católica, muerto en un romance fronterizo, frente a la Vega de Granada, se quedaría encerrado en la iglesia, a la sombra de un florido dosel de piedra, en su sepulcro gótico, deshecha ya la cita de los tres. (71)

The vignette ends when the sexton ushers them out of the cathedral. This meeting between the three – a living breathing man, a statue and a woman – never materializes because, as mentioned earlier, Matilde has arrived too late to be able to observe the statue.

Moclín and Montefrío were taken that year in sieges in which father and son took part. See “Chapel of the Doncel, Catedral of Sigüenza,” http://www.lacatedraldesiguenza.com/en/portfolio/chapel-of-the-doncel/.

They left together, pursued, ejected as from a frustrated paradise, by the keys and footsteps of the sexton. But Angel felt a secret, satanic pleasure, because he was leaving with Matilde, walking by her side, in flesh and blood, on this pulsating, pure afternoon, while his gorgeous hated rival, Alfonso de Padilla, lord of Olmos Albos and page of Queen Isabella, having met death in a frontier ballad, before the Plain of Granada, would lie shut up in the church, in the shadow of a flowery canopy of stone, in his Gothic grave, the rendezvous for three now ended. (40)
Angel is seemingly victorious over his rival when he leaves with Matilde by his side. The statue returns to a lifeless state, described as being incarcerated within the confines of the cathedral. Angel represents an antithesis of Alfonso in many respects. This vibrant man relishes in his victory over the lifeless statue imprisoned within this religious setting. The description of Alfonso de Padilla in the conclusion of this fragment could have been written to serve as an inscription to accompany his tomb. Through this ekphrastic description Salinas introduces a rival to the male protagonist, creating a triangle between the two men and a desired woman. Angel and Alfonso are also contradictory counterparts to one another. Alfonso represents virtue and courage, although as a protagonist and a statue he is unable to act. Angel, whose name should be synonymous with religious virtue, seeks to gratify his carnal desire for Matilde. The two of them are exiled from the “paradise” of the cathedral. This could be a reference to the casting out of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden, but more likely refers to Lucifer being cast out of Heaven, especially because of the mention of “satanic pleasure” as well as his name being Angel. While the statue takes on life-like characteristics, in the end it returns to its condition of immobility. The ekphrastic moment, however, has served the purpose of evoking in the protagonist a sense of rivalry.

In the fifth vignette, the protagonist Jorge is an artist, who is mentally reconstructing an image of Aurora from both his memories of her and the things he sees around him. This exercise of constructing a mental picture of her from an eclectic gathering of disparate images is successful up to the point when she appears, shattering his creation by her presence in the flesh. It is the absence of Aurora that triggers Jorge to begin reconstructing her image from what he remembers. From the outset of this mental exercise the narrator establishes metaphors of writing and vision. Although Jorge had seen Aurora during the

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288 In another vignette, the protagonists meet in a gallery, which the narrator describes as being an Eden-like paradise and the woman, Aurora, is mistakenly referred to as Eve.
night in his dreams, upon opening his eyes he is unable to see her. The narrator uses the analogy of an incomplete palimpsest to compare Jorge’s inability to picture Aurora. It is as if her image has been partially erased from his memory, leaving only traces behind. It is from this manuscript that Jorge will begin to piece together her image from his memory. The narrator recognizes a parallel relationship between two Auroras.

Entre la Aurora del sueño irreal y discursiva, recién abandonada entre las sábanas, a la otra verdadera y silenciosa que iba a encontrar muy pronto en el Museo, corrían como entre dos orillas gemelas y separadas, noventa minutos, hora y media, lentes aguas. (89-90)

As Jorge sets out for the museum to rendezvous with Aurora for one of their routinely established meetings, she begins to materialize before his eyes. Objects he observes in the streets converge with memories of time spent with Aurora. Like pieces of a puzzle, Jorge begins to compose an image of her as the time progresses toward their prearranged encounter. The narrator notes that the time is 9:30 as Jorge steps out onto the sidewalk, thirty minutes until their scheduled rendezvous. During the next thirty minutes, Jorge compiles different parts of an image, based on objects that evoke memories of Aurora. This apparition does not appear suddenly before Jorge, but rather the mental construction forms slowly and deliberately, piece by piece.

289 Between the dreamlike, talkative Aurora who had just left his bed and the other real but silent Aurora whom he was going to meet very soon in the museum, flowed ninety minutes, one hour and a half like sluggish waters between two twin yet separate river banks. (44-5)
Y aunque la reunión con Aurora era para treinta minutos más tarde, en cuanto salía al bulevar empezaba ya a encontrársela. Porque no hallaba a Aurora de pronto, de una vez, por súbita aparición ante la vista, sino poco a poco, por lentos avances, como da el filósofo con la verdad, a fuerza de elaboraciones interiores prendidas en severos datos reales. (90)  

Jorge finds that some elements of Aurora can be represented and visually substituted for the real Aurora. The shadow of a dressmaker, for example, is identical to that of Aurora from the previous day. A woman’s straw hat is similar to one that Aurora purchased on a trip to Florence. Jorge is reminded of a pose that Aurora struck to mimic a sculpture of Strasburg as one woman contorts her body to keep her balance. Another physical quality is adorned upon a young woman that reminds him of Aurora’s décolletage. The undulation of the Mediterranean Sea reminds him of a blue dress that Aurora had worn. These elements and fragmented memories combine in the same way a puzzle would be pieced together, a fact that is acknowledged by the narrator.  

Poco a poco la figura aún invisible y distante se formaba por la coincidencia de aquellos abigarrados elementos exteriores que la ciudad le ofrecía sueltos, incoherentes, pero que él, gracias al modelo, a la imagen ejemplar que llevaba  

290 And although the rendezvous with Aurora was for a half-hour later, as soon as he came to the boulevard he was already running into her. Not that he found Aurora suddenly, all at once, or that she unexpectedly materialized before his very eyes. No, it came little by little, advancing slowly, the way the philosopher happens upon truth, by laying the inner groundwork based on accurate, real data. (45)
Despite his ability to arrange the elements that he has mentally collected, he is unable to reproduce a complete image of Aurora because of three unique and irreplaceable pieces: her look, her smile and her voice. The narrator recognizes that because of those three essential elements, Jorge will not be able to have a complete Aurora until she appears in the flesh before him, which heightens the conflict between absence and presence. As long as she remains absent, Jorge is only able to conjure up a visual picture from his imagination and memories, but the image would remain a faded trace of reality. Ironically, her absence allows Jorge’s imagination to have the freedom to make connections between Aurora and random objects, but at the same time restricts the image he is able to piece together. For Jorge, this image is like a doll or a statue, into which he must infuse life.

Y sin embargo, a pesar de aquella opulencia de recursos y a pesar, sobre todo, de lo claro que estaba el original deseado en su corazón, Jorge no podía encontrarse realmente con Aurora entera y cabal hasta que la tuviera delante, porque siempre le faltaban unas cuantas cosas esenciales, huecos que no podría llenar mientras que ella con su primer saludo no le diera, en la sencilla fórmula del ‘Buenos días’, aquellas tres piezas únicas e insustituibles: mirada, sonrisa y voz.

291 Little by little the distant and still invisible figure was taking shape out of the scattered and confused coincidence of all those diverse external elements the city had to offer. But, thanks to the original model, to the exemplary image he wore engraved in his heart, he was able to arrange each element in its place like the pieces of a puzzle. (46)
Ya se iba acercando al Museo, llevando aquella figura descabalada, una estatuilla deliciosa e incompleta a la que había que poner ojos, dibujar labios e infundir palabra, hacerla obra vivificada y perfecta, cosa que no lograría sino con la colaboración de Aurora, colaboración fácil, y sin pena, simple presencia. (95-6)

In the same manner as Homer’s Vulcan before the forge, an artist creating the image that would then be infused with life – the description of the shield of Achilles that is foundational to a definition of ekphrasis – the protagonist in Víspera del gozo serves as an artist creating an object. Not only does the object appear before the reader, but the reader is also invited to observe the making of the object, to peek into the artist’s studio to see how the object, in this case the image of Aurora, is created. Del Pino asserts that this protagonist is constructed with the use of montage. Similar to other avant-garde texts, this novel must be approached by what Antonio Candau identifies as a “compound and two-faced reader.” This “lector bifronte, compuesto” must be able to perceive two points of view at the same time: “perseguir el relato al modo realista y, al tiempo, ser capaz de gozar de la imposibilidad

292 And yet, such rich resources aside, no matter how clearly he saw the desired original in his heart, Jorge couldn’t really have Aurora complete and of a piece until she was standing there before him. He would always be missing certain essential things, empty spaces he couldn’t fill until she gave him with her first words of greeting, in the simple form of ‘Hello,’ those three unique and irreplaceable pieces: the way she looked at him, her smile, and her voice.

He was now drawing near the museum, carrying with him that fragmented figure, a delightful, incomplete little statue to which he still had to give eyes, draw lips and pour in speech, to make her a living and perfect work of art, something he couldn’t achieve without Aurora’s collaboration, an easy, painless collaboration at that: merely her presence. (46)

293 See Montages y fragmentos 116. “Salinas reproduce la búsqueda de la mujer por parte del protagonista como si se tratara de la persecución de una totalidad llena de significado y que sólo tomará forma cuando todas las imágenes confluynen en la mujer de verdad” (116). This mental Aurora for del Pino is a montage of the series of images that Jorge collects both from his dream and from reality.
de atraparlo con tal actitud, gozar con la falta de sentido o la realidad transmutada, con la metáfora. Candidez costumbrista más nueva sensibilidad de vanguardia.”

The ability to perceive two points of view simultaneously is similar to the ocular accommodation necessary in order to view the windowpane and the garden scene, explained in Ortega y Gasset’s important essay. Due to this double vision required to read the novel, Candau attributes Salinas with a slight of hand, in which a magician shows an object with one hand and makes it disappear with the other.

After a month of habitually meeting in the museum and visiting each artist’s gallery in chronological order, they plan to meet in the Turner gallery. Jorge enters expecting to find Aurora, whom he now associates with Eve. The gallery is compared to the Garden of Eden, but there are some differences between this world and the Biblical account of creation. Jorge anticipates finding Aurora, “la Eva creada al revés, antes que el hombre y esperándole en un mundo recién inventado, vago, cálido y palpitante aún, y que tenía por árbol de la ciencia un espléndido pino de Italia” (97-8).

The Turner gallery becomes the created world into which Jorge inserts his own creation. Unlike Eve of the Bible, Jorge expects Aurora, his Eve, to be present when he enters.

This moment culminates with the appearance of Aurora, whose presence is announced verbally. Before Jorge even sees her, he hears her voice – one of the irreplaceable elements in his own reconstruction of her. This flesh and blood version of Aurora, the authentic representation, contrasts greatly from his imagined representation of her. She is not wearing the same clothes, nor is her shadow the same. Jorge’s representation of Aurora has been built on his subjective past memories. The presence of Aurora in the flesh, based

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295 “Eve, created in reverse, before man and waiting for him in a world recently invented, still blurred, smoking and trembling, with a splendid Italian pine as the tree of knowledge” (47).
on a present tense reality, shocks him and subsequently brings about the sudden
disintegration of the “figura inventa y esperada” (100) that he has conjured up in his mind.

The final vignette, “Livia Schubert, incompleta” provides another ekphrastic
moment, which combines two elements vital to ekphrasis. The first element occurs as the
protagonist, Melchor, acts as an artist, mentally restoring a work of art, and providing the
reader with an opportunity to visualize the image that he describes. The second element
involves the protagonist receiving a description, thus experiencing ekphrasis from the
opposite perspective. The woman he loves, Livia Schubert, talks of another woman and as
he listens to the description, the image comes to life before his mind’s eye. The protagonist
experiences the exercise that normally is reserved for the reader – that of receiving the
description and mentally picturing it. Within the story, the author filters this second
description through a secondary character, presenting it to the reader through the lens of the
protagonist.

During the second fragment of this vignette, Melchor observes Livia while she is
asleep. Realizing that “the hour of his unhappiness” – the time her train is scheduled to
depart – is rapidly approaching, Melchor begins to say goodbye to her, which involves him
reconstructing a representation of her soul. Melchor acknowledges his role as an artist
constructing an internal, subjective representation, which would certainly crumble if she
were to wake up. He recognizes that once she wakes up, she will begin to destroy the
ephemeral work of art he has created. Their memories together and the kisses he gave her
are the things she would be erasing from her body. He uses a metaphor of Livia putting on
makeup in front of a mirror to depict his being removed from her body. She will remove any
trace that he has left behind.

296 In Valis’s words: “figure invented and expected” (48).
Estoy en ella por última vez. Porque en cuanto Livia despierte empezará, lenta y minuciosa, mi destrucción, la ruina de mi efímera obra. Lo primero que se quitará Livia será la desnudez que yo la puse sobre el cuerpo. Y luego, frente al espejo, encarnizadamente, sin un descuido, irá, a fuerza de lociones, de crema, de lápices, arrojándose de su rostro, arrancando sin piedad, beso a beso, todo mi amor, que estaba allí cubriéndolo. Con una barrita roja se pintará encima de mis labios, que se quedaron allí en su boca, dobles, indelebles, con el último beso, otros labios terceros y artificiales. Y por fin blandirá, todo metálico y brillante, como un arma invencible, el peine de plata para desprenderse de esa pobres caricias enredadas, lo más conmovido y secreto de mi amor, que estaba allí, refugiado en los laberintos de cabello que yo le inventé. Y se quedará ante el espejo, yo deshecho, rehecha ella, convertida lo que era hace un instante rica y tumultuosa vida en mis brazos, en una biografía correctísima, sin una imperfección. (131-3)

I am in her for the last time. Because as soon as Livia opens her eyes, my destruction, slow and exhaustive, will begin, the ruin of my ephemeral work. The first thing Livia will take off will be the nudity that I spread over her body. And then, in front of the mirror, aided by an arsenal of lotions, creams and pencils, with great care she will furiously scrub me off her face, ruthlessly plucking out, kiss by kiss, all the passion I had lavished upon her. With red lipstick she will paint over my lips, pressed to her mouth and doubly indelible with that last kiss, a third draft of her lips, artificially penciled in. And finally, she will brandish, all metallic and gleaming like an invincible weapon, a silver comb in order to extricate herself from those poor, entangled embraces of mine, those deeply felt, secret spaces of the heart that had taken refuge in the winding strands of her hair, my own private maze. And there she stands before the mirror, I undone, she redone, transformed from what was an instant ago a richly passionate life held in my arms into an authorized biography, all imperfection deleted. (56)
The work he has done as an artist to leave traces of himself upon her body, as a painter would brushstrokes on the canvas, would be completely erased upon her waking up. He, himself, represents the imperfection on her face and skin that she will erase. He reasons that since “man is compounded of body and soul,” and she will not leave any bodily remembrance of him, he then turns his focus to fabricating a soul for Livia. Melchor equates this process not with the creation of a work of art, but rather with its restoration. As she lay sleeping, he wishes to be able to replace her authentic soul with the replica he has created, as if to try on a dress to see if it fits. Melchor finds this to be impossible because he would have to move her and situate his replica lined up with her body. He identifies the eyes of the soul as the central element of his reconstituted work of art. He would have to raise her eyelids to be able to see if they match up. Unfortunately for him, moving her would wake her up and, subsequently, begin the destruction of his created masterpiece.

This moment ends as Livia begins to stir and speaks two words, his name and the name of another woman. Her voice, similar to the irreplaceable element in the fragment “Aurora de verdad,” creates a problem for the replica he has created. This new information, introduced subconsciously and spoken in her sleep, requires Melchor to completely remake her soul. He doesn’t have time to do so because she wakes up.

The second element of ekphrasis found in this fragment includes an invitation for Melchor to participate in the visualization of a description. The name that Livia spoke in her sleep corresponds to a woman who will arrive on the very train that will escort Livia out of Melchor’s life. During the final scene of this fragment, Melchor and Susana meet at the train station “one minute before” her train is scheduled to arrive.298 In the few moments that

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298 This “un momento antes” refers to the limited amount of time Livia agrees to extend to Melchor before her departure. She arrives at the train station at 1:25 and the train is scheduled to arrive at 1:35. During part of this fragment, Melchor calculates what she means
Melchior and Livia spend together in the waiting room of the train station, Livia evokes a description of a woman whom she claims to be her best friend. Her animation and excitement with which she describes this woman is so intense that Melchior declares that he can begin to see the image appear before him; “El entusiasmo con que habla de ella Livia (me dice que es su mejor amiga) es tan eficaz, tan activo, que la veo surgir poco a poco de la nada, modelarse, cobrar vida,” (151). Instead of including the vivid description itself within the text, the author allows the protagonist and first person narrator to experience the ekphrastic moment, thereby concealing it from the reader.

This description is infused with the kind of *enargeia* prevalent in the definitions of ekphrasis. This description is not static, but rather is activated and teeming with life. The activated description is not shared with the reader, however, but exists within the narrative exclusively for the main character. Melchior, in his role as a first person narrator, describes a story that Livia shares with him. Livia, acting as Scheherazade from the *Thousand and One Nights*, tells him a story in which she describes a beautiful woman. The reader is left to imagine the scene in which the story is related, but the description itself remains a gift for Melchior, who does not pass the description on to the reader. The description is so vivid and life-like that “cuando Livia se mete la mano en el bolso, no dudo que sea para extraer ya completa, lo único que falta, su persona misma, o cuando menos, en fotografía su efigie” (151). Instead of the actual woman, or even a photo of the woman, what Livia actually pulls out of her purse is a telegram from Susana announcing that she will arrive on the 1:35 by “a few moments before” in order to determine when he should leave for the train station and how much time it will take for him to arrive.

299 “The enthusiasm with which Livia speaks of her (she tells me that she is her best friend) is so effective, so infectious, that I see her emerge little by little out of nothingness, assume a form, take on life” (61).

300 “when Livia put her hand in her bag, I don’t doubt that it is to pull out already complete, the only thing missing, the person herself, or at the very least, her photographic effigy” (61).
train. Melchor is left in a state of confusion, as Livia is whisked away on the train and he stands on the platform with only Susana by his side. Melchor muses that perhaps the soul that he made, which he intended for Livia, corresponds better to this new woman. Since Livia spurned him and rejected the soul he created for her, she will remain forever incomplete, especially from his point of view.

Instead of including references to artists in the way that Espina and Jarnés utilize allusive ekphrasis, Salinas’s use of ekphrasis employs techniques that artists would use in order to bring objects to life and have them interact with his protagonists. The statue of Alfonso de Padilla is one example in which a vivid description of the object serves not only for the reader to create a mental picture of it but also serves to allow the statue to become a protagonist within the story. While the museum figures prominently in more than one of the fragments of Víspera del gozo and the names of a few artists are mentioned, the intent is not to reproduce any of the visual representations with words, but rather for the protagonist to serve as an artist using his imagination to create his own masterpiece.
CONCLUDING REMARKS

The authors in the “Nova Novorum” collection employ literary devices and tropes that are characteristic of Ortega y Gasset’s notion of the avant-garde. This dissertation has analyzed a limited corpus of texts with a focus on the inclusion of verbal representations of visual representation. I have employed a more broad conception of ekphrasis due to the hybrid nature of avant-garde prose, as evidenced in the suturing of genres and incorporation of artistic techniques within the narrative. Jarnés, Espina and Salinas use their prose works to present their unique perspectives on art and the novel, which they had articulated in cultural and literary magazines in which they collaborated, such as *La revista occidente* and *La gaceta literaria*. In many cases of ekphrasis found in the collection, the representations of art are deployed in the same way in which the authors utilize metaphor, as a means of digression. The digression does not indicate a complete pause in activity, but rather a diversion from the narrative progress. The images evoked are manipulated and in some cases, interact directly with the protagonists and/or first person narrators. Not only do these ekphrastic moments allow the author to withdraw from the narration, but they also provide the author with the opportunity to focus on the use of language. According to Ortega y Gasset’s metaphor, the focus remains on the windowpane rather than the garden scene. These moments interrupt the events of the narration to permit the author to philosophize about the nature of art and life. Furthermore, there exist many points of contact between Ortega y Gasset’s essay and the theorization of ekphrasis.

Espina contributed an article entitled “Momentos de Goya” in which he described and analyzed several paintings by the Spanish painter. He and Jarnés would have been familiar with other articles about paintings and art exhibitions published in the aforementioned magazines as well as others to which they contributed.
However static these descriptions may seem, there remains a narrative impulse within these ekphrastic moments. The images often are activated, coming to life to serve as a new character, even though the interaction may be confined to the mind of the narrator or protagonist. In the case of the sepulcher of Alfonso de Padilla, the statue becomes a villainous protagonist – “bello rival aborrecible” – contrasted with the hero, Angel, who is victorious at the end of “Cita de los tres,” a vignette in Salinas’s *Víspera del gozo*. His victory is sealed when he exits the cathedral with Matilde, leaving behind the lifeless statue. The professor manipulates the representations of Valdés Leal’s skeletons, superimposing them over the image of his pupil in *El profesor inútil*. In this case, rather than becoming a new figure in the story, this ekphrastic description momentarily replaces a protagonist in order to serve an ascetic purpose during his interaction with his pupil.

Espina utilizes allusive ekphrasis in his novels, occasionally providing no more than a neologism that incorporates the name of an artist. The reader is required to interpret the artistic references in order to understand the aesthetic purpose within the context of the narration. Recognizing and decoding the references allows the reader to interpret the narration at a deeper level than merely identifying motifs, which represents the basic level of interpretation in Panofsky’s strata of iconology. Furthermore, the interartistic references illuminate the international character of the Spanish avant-garde, whose authors in this particular collection more often than not allude to artists who are from outside of but have a connection to the peninsula.

Ekphrasis is used by Salinas, as well, to establish a more desirable outcome in the relationship between a man and his unrequited love interest. In “Livia Schubert, incompleta” Melchor equates creating a mental image of Livia to restoring a work of art. He tries to reconstitute an image of a happier moment spent between the two of them, while at the
same time she seeks to remove all impression of him from herself. In “Aurora de verdad,” Jorge reconfigures the image of Aurora from both his memory as well as the things he sees in the streets, thus creating a replica. He juxtaposes the invented and imagined Aurora with a flesh and blood Aurora, with whom he reunites at the end of the story. When she appears, her very presence destroys the Cubist-like representation he had created in his mind.
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