RICE UNIVERSITY

Three Variations on Don Juan: Treatments by Ramón María del Valle-Inclán, Manuel and Antonio Machado, and Miguel de Unamuno: 1926-1929

by

April Renee Ewing

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

Master of Arts

APPROVED, THESIS COMMITTEE:

James A. Castañeda, Professor, Hispanic Studies – Thesis Director

R. Lane Kauffmann, Professor, Hispanic Studies

J. Bernardo Pérez, Professor, Hispanic Studies

HOUSTON, TEXAS

DECEMBER 2003
ABSTRACT

Three Variations on Don Juan:
Treatments by Ramón María del Valle-Inclán,
Manuel and Antonio Machado,
and Miguel de Unamuno:
1926-1929

by

April Renee Ewing

This thesis focuses on three theatrical treatments of Don Juan as he is portrayed by four writers of the so-called Generation of ‘98: Valle-Inclán’s *Las galas del difunto* (1926), Antonio and Manuel Machado’s *Juan de Mañara* (1927), and Unamuno’s *El hermano Juan o el mundo es teatro* (1929), with an emphasis on the innovations to the legend contributed by the authors, and the historical, cultural, and religious elements prominent in their plays.

The most significant difference between these three treatments of the 1920’s and the earlier ones, of the seventeenth through the nineteenth centuries, is the theme of redemption. In the earlier versions, Don Juan is punished or expects punishment in exchange for his evil deeds. However, in the modern renditions, Don Juan’s role is redemptive. Valle-Inclán exposes a society in need of redemption in his treatment, and Don Juan both receives and offers redemption in the adaptations of the Machados and Unamuno.
Table of Contents

Introduction 1

Chapter 1
Origins, Treatments, and Religious Elements of Don Juan 3

Chapter 2
Don Juan in the 1920s: The Theme of Redemption in Three Treatments 25

Chapter 3
Ramón María del Valle-Inclán, Las galas del difunto 31

Chapter 4
Antonio and Manuel Machado, Juan de Mañana 41

Chapter 5
Miguel de Unamuno, El hermano Juan o el mundo es teatro 48

Conclusion 62
Introduction

From the time that Tirso de Molina published *El burlador de Sevilla* in 1630, many others have also created versions of Don Juan plays. Some of them have closely resembled Don Juan's debut, while others present quite different interpretations. Each version, while usually retaining some aspects of the original legend, also includes a glimpse of the society and culture in which it was written.

This thesis focuses on three treatments of Don Juan as he is portrayed by four writers of the so-called Generation of '98: Ramón María del Valle-Inclán’s *Las galas del difunto* (1926), Antonio and Manuel Machado’s *Juan de Mañana* (1927), and Miguel de Unamuno’s *El hermano Juan o el mundo es teatro* (1929). Although these four authors have all written more than one work on Don Juan, this thesis studies only three specific works, taking into account that they were written for theater and that the works were written during the period from 1926-1929. Because these treatments have been influenced by prior versions, attention will first be given to the origins of the legend, to the life of Miguel de Mañana, and to four of the most popular adaptations - those by Tirso de Molina, Molière, Mozart, and José Zorrilla (two Spanish versions, a French, and an
Italian version). These four treatments and Mañara’s life were selected because they represent some of the most popular aspects of the Don Juan legend and offer a traditional view of Don Juan. They can be compared and contrasted with three works by certain writers of the so-called Generation of ’98. The early treatments provide a timeline from the early seventeenth century to the early twentieth century. After outlining these earlier treatments, special attention will be given to the treatments by Valle-Inclán, the Machados, and Unamuno, with a focus on the innovations to the legend contributed by the authors, and the historical, cultural, and religious elements prominent in their plays. These works will be compared with each other and with prior treatments.

The most significant difference between these three treatments of the 1920’s and the earlier ones is the theme of redemption. In the earlier versions, Don Juan is punished or, in the case of Zorrilla, expects punishment in exchange for his evil deeds. However, in the modern renditions, Don Juan’s role is redemptive. Valle-Inclán exposes a society in need of redemption in his treatment, and Don Juan both receives and offers redemption in the adaptations of the Machados and Unamuno.
Chapter 1: Origins, Treatments, and Religious Elements of Don Juan

Don Juan has evolved through the centuries, not necessarily becoming a more complete character, but changing with the time, place, and culture in which new treatments were written. He has not evolved in a straight line, but rather starts at one point and goes out in all directions. Even before Tirso wrote his treatment of Don Juan (circa 1630), versions of a Don Juan legend existed in Europe.

Origins

The earliest treatment of the Don Juan legend is found in a Latin manuscript, dating from the fourteenth century (MacKay 117). These early versions are called Double Invitation folktales and “are almost all Christian stories” (114). They are given this name because the protagonist is usually invited to dine with a skull or something representing the dead, and then the protagonist returns the invitation. The only other known manuscript referring to these folktales, also in Latin, was written around 1517 “and is the substance of a sermon delivered against the sins of inebriation and blasphemy by an Augustinian monk
and preacher of the fifteenth century" (117). The legend may have begun

as an episode illustrating the evil consequences of dealings with the dead before it came to be thought of in relation to the Christian teachings regarding the sacredness of the dead and the eternal life of the soul. (115)

The legend was a cultural narrative, exemplifying immoral behavior and addressing its eternal consequences, while applying to it the Christian notion of salvation. The point of most of the early folktales was that one’s behavior or attitude in the present life determines one’s destination in the next life. The most popular early versions include the protagonist (later, the Don Juan character), his disrespect for the dead, and a double invitation. MacKay chronicles eighty-one versions of the Double Invitation folktales. They are tales and ballads from all over Europe, including Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Irish, French, German, Danish, and Slavic versions. She provides an exhaustive outline that categorizes the important elements of the different versions and makes the similarities and differences observable. Twenty-one of these adaptations include a sinner against God and man (49). Seventy-six accounts have a double invitation (52). In twenty-six
versions, the protagonist attains spiritual salvation (57-8). In five of those renderings, he is reformed; in three, his death is blessed; and in the rest he is either pardoned by the dead or learns his lesson well. In nine of the versions, the protagonist is punished supernaturally but does not die (58). In twelve renderings, the protagonist dies on account of the dead man (or whatever represents the dead man) by being dragged away by him or the devil, or by being consumed by flames (59). In four of the interpretations, the protagonist even “dies in spite of protection or prayers” (59).

The story line of one popular version is as follows (Menéndez Pidal 89): As the protagonist is on his way to mass, he encounters a skull on the ground, and he disrespectfully kicks it. The protagonist scoffs as he facetiously invites the skull to dinner. Surprisingly, the skull accepts, meets him for dinner, and returns the invitation. At that meeting, the protagonist is chastised for his behavior and is offered an opportunity to repent. In some versions he does, and in some he does not, a choice that determines his spiritual salvation or damnation.
Miguel de Mañara

Some Don Juan enthusiasts maintain that the Don Juan character was influenced by the life of Miguel de Mañara. Some have even claimed that his life was the basis for *El burlador de Sevilla* (Weinstein 104). However, this could not be so, since Mañara was just beginning his life when Tirso wrote his treatment. Mañara was not born until 1626, just four years prior to the play’s publication. Mañara does resemble the Don Juan character of certain treatments in that, as a youth, he lived the life of a libertine, but he later humbled himself and repented before his death.

Mañara was born to Corsican parents and received strict religious education from his mother, “but the passionate nature of young Miguel soon caused him to enter upon a disorderly path of life” (106). After being married for thirteen years, and the death of his wife, Mañara underwent a spiritual crisis, ushering in his conversion (Goldberg 66). Some legends say that he saw a skull and others say that he saw his own burial (Doll 183), influencing his conversion. His life was changed: he gave to the needy and “devoted himself completely to the sick and poor” (Weinstein 106). This is similar to many of the treatments of the legend in which Don Juan changes or repents after confronting death. Although Tirso’s treatment
obviously could not have been based on Mañana’s life, subsequent versions may have been misled by the inaccurate portrayals of his life.

**Tirso’s Don Juan**

Neither the authorship nor the date of *El burlador de Sevilla* is certain. There is debate about whether it was written by the priest, Gabriel Téllez, under the pen name, Tirso de Molina, by Andrés de Claramonte, or by still another author. Tirso is widely accepted as the author, and for the purposes of this thesis, that assumption will be followed. This work was probably written between 1616 and 1630, when it was published.

Students of Don Juan consider Tirso’s Don Juan to be the first theatrical Don Juan. Tirso was the first known playwright to put the legendary character on stage and give him a name that stuck. Most of the writers of the subsequent treatments of Don Juan were influenced directly by Tirso’s characterization.

Don Juan Tenorio is the protagonist of *El burlador de Sevilla*. He is a womanizer who tricks and deceives women. In this account, Don Juan tricks four women - two from the upper class, and two from the lower class. The first woman he tricks is Isabela; Don Juan pretends to be her fiancé,
Octavio, in order to "enjoy" her. He continues his escapades with Tisbea, Ana, and Aminta. While trying to escape from Ana's house, her father, Don Gonzalo de Ulloa, confronts Don Juan and is killed by him. After he is buried, a statue of Don Gonzalo is erected in his honor. Don Juan comes across it one night as he is strolling through the cemetery. He mocks the statue, and jokingly invites it to dinner. Don Juan is shocked when the statue responds affirmatively. Don Gonzalo's statue does indeed arrive for dinner, and he then returns the invitation to Don Juan to meet him in the cemetery for dinner (the double invitation). Don Juan does not seem to fear God and feels that death is far in the future. As Leo Weinstein notes, he may not be a good Christian, but his belief in God is evident: "[. . .] at all times, he is aware of the presence of God and His power. So deeply ingrained is this belief in him that he instinctively asks for confession when death is upon him" (18). Even if he does have some faith in God, Don Juan thinks that he has plenty of time to enjoy his escapades and repent later. His father, Don Diego, warns that God will repay him for the evil he has done:

Mira que, aunque al parecer
Dios te consiente y aguarda,
tu castigo no se tarda,
y que castigo ha de haber
para los que profanáis
su nombre, y que es juez fuerte
Dios en la muerte. (Tirso 264)

Don Juan responds lightheartedly:

¿En la muerte?
¿Tan largo me lo fiáis?
De aquí allá hay larga jornada. (264)

Don Juan thinks he has plenty of time to atone for his sins and believes that doing “good works” would not account for anything. However, when he meets the statue in the cemetery and voices repentance, his father’s warning comes true. “No hay lugar. Ya acuerdas tarde,” says Don Gonzalo’s statue, as he drags Don Juan to death and perdition (Tirso 363).

Because Tirso was a priest and Catholicism was predominant in Spain during this time, it can be assumed that he probably had a religious reason for writing this play. One of the great debates during the Reformation and Counter-Reformation during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was salvation by faith versus salvation by works. Christians had debated this issue for centuries (St. Augustine and Pelagius circa 400, for example), but with the rise of the Reformation in the early sixteenth century, Protestants (led by Martin Luther and John Calvin) took a stance against what they perceived as a Catholic error of emphasis on indulgences and the abuse of rituals and rites as a merit for salvation. The Protestants then reacted
toward the other extreme in promoting what they called a salvation by faith alone. Not only were vain works and meaningless rituals insignificant, but any and all works whatsoever - even good works were irrelevant. In his play, Tirso may have been trying to preach to the public against a perceived Protestant position that one only had to have faith and could commit evil, while expecting to be able to repent on one’s deathbed and enjoy God’s mercy.

Don Juan did expect this easily attainable salvation by taking advantage of God’s grace, which was evident every time someone threatened him. He invariably responded: “¿Tan largo me lo fíás?,” implying that he had plenty of time to repent later. Don Juan’s repentance at the end of the play does not impress everyone as sincere. According to neurologist Gordan Banks, Don Juan’s asking for confession at the end only indicates his acknowledgement of infractions against God’s law, not remorse. [...] Quite the contrary, he glories in his exploits and takes pride in his reputation as El Burlador. There is no plan to change, as he continually reminds Catalinón. (7)

Most critics would agree that a real person such as this Don Juan could never exist. Some people label Don Juan as a psychopath. According to Rosina Navarrete, there are
three main points to his character: he cannot feel love, he
evies those who do love, seeking to destroy their
happiness, and he experiences a complete demoralization
(46). Almost all of the women that he chooses as his
victims have at least the following in common: they are
virgins, and they love and are loved in return (Navarrete
46). Banks agrees; he shows how Tirso’s Don Juan displays
psychopathic tendencies, manifesting such clinical features
as guiltlessness, lovelessness, fearlessness, and
impulsiveness (2-3). Not only does Don Juan destroy lives
with his psychopathic tendencies, but he also enjoys
deceiving people. Don Juan says to Catalinón in Act II,
“Sevilla a voces me llama el Burlador, y el mayor gusto que
en mí puede haber es burlar una mujer y dejarla sin honor”
(Tirso 257).

Tirso’s treatment was the principal Don Juan prototype
on which subsequent versions based their plot, or from
which they took their primary elements.

Molière’s Don Juan

The French writer, Molière, wrote *Dom Juan ou le
Festin de Pierre* in 1665. His protagonist is an atheist
philosopher and also a womanizer who is jealous of the
happiness of the love that couples share. He goes from one
woman to the next, destroying relationships and marrying approximately once a month. The play opens as Dom Juan is abandoning his current wife, Donna Elvira, who left a convent and broke her vows for him. Sganarelle, Dom Juan’s servant, chastises his master for his behavior, wondering if he is “bold enough to mock heaven” and warning that heaven “sooner or later punishes the Impious, that a wicked Life leads to a wicked Death” (Molière 124). Dom Juan nonchalantly states that he and heaven will deal with that. He asks Sganarelle, “Wou’d you have me stick to the first Object that takes me, to renounce the World for that, and have no more Eyes for anybody?” (123).

One of Molière’s innovations is that Dom Juan deceives two women at the same time. After leaving Donna Elvira, Dom Juan deceives Charlotta and Mathurina, two peasant women. Dom Juan speaks to each woman without letting the other hear what he is saying, and so he is able to trick them both. He makes each one believe that he is committed to her alone, and even turns them against each other. Dom Juan and Sganarelle leave abruptly when they find out they are being followed by those seeking to avenge Donna Elvira. As they walk through the forest, Sganarelle confronts his master again about his theological views. Dom Juan impatiently waits for Sganarelle to finish espousing his own beliefs,
and Dom Juan says that all he believes is that “two and two make four” (140). Dom Juan will not admit belief in heaven, hell, or even the superstitious boogeyman. Weinstein writes:

Dom Juan rejects religion as he reasons away everything else that stands in the way of his pleasures: God, marriage, parental authority, conventions. He is not a rebellious dissident who has studied these matters; [...] He is a superficial Cartesian dilettante who either has not read Descartes’s proof of the existence of God or who chooses to ignore it. (31)

Next, they encounter a praying pauper in the woods who shows them their way and asks for money. Dom Juan tries to tempt him by offering him a piece of gold if he will curse. The pauper refuses and in the end, Dom Juan gives him the money anyway “for the love of Mankind” (142). In the forest, Dom Juan and Sganarelle come upon the gravesite and statue of the governor whom Dom Juan killed. As in previous Don Juan treatments, Dom Juan teases the statue and invites him to dinner, which he accepts with a nod. Back at Dom Juan’s residence, Donna Elvira appears again to plead with him to repent. She knows that her brothers are looking for
him to kill him and she is genuinely worried about his salvation.

Most likely, Molière did not know Tirso’s play, but was indirectly influenced by it, through the Italian treatments and the works they inspired in French by Villiers and Dorimont (Weinstein 31-2). Nonetheless, Dom Juan reminds us of el burlador when he tells Sganarelle that they can live licentiously for “twenty or thirty Years longer, and then we’ll take care of ourselves” (155). Later, the statue comes to dinner and then returns the invitation to Dom Juan. He accepts, and subsequently he and Sganarelle meet the statue in the graveyard. A ghost appears to persuade Dom Juan to repent. Dom Juan tells Sganarelle that heaven will have to speak plainer if he is to understand the message. The ghost then clearly states, “Don John has but a Moment’s time to lay hold on the Mercy of Heav’n, and if he do not repent now, his Destruction is certain” (162). Even though Dom Juan is being supernaturally warned about his fate, he continues to refuse to repent. Dom Juan takes the statue’s hand and the statue says, “Obstinacy in Wickedness brings on a fatal Death; and Heaven’s Mercy rejected opens away for its Thunder” (162). Dom Juan is then swallowed up into the
earth by flames. The dramatic ending is lightened as Sganarelle laments his lost wages.

Although Molière's treatment of Don Juan includes the theme of retribution for evil deeds, the work is not very theological in nature. Dom Juan's resistance to faith in God shows evidence of the development of rational thought and the eschewing of supernatural Christian beliefs.

**Mozart's Don Juan**

Mozart and Lorenzo Da Ponte collaborated to write *Don Giovanni o il dissoluto punito* in 1787. This Don Juan is at his worst; he is not even in search of the ideal woman, but instead is out to deceive and conquer any woman he meets. His servant, Leporello, tells Elvira, "He seduces old women for the sheer pleasure of adding them to the list" (Da Ponte 292). The opening of the play mirrors Tirso's treatment. Don Giovanni is fleeing from Anna, whom he has just seduced by pretending to be her fiancée, Ottavio. Her father, the Commander, tries to avenge her, but is killed by Don Giovanni, and later becomes the stone guest. Elvira is also seeking revenge on Don Giovanni, who deceived her by making her his wife and then abandoning her. Don Giovanni and Leporello come upon a country wedding and Don Giovanni seizes his opportunity to try to seduce the bride,
Zerlina, on her wedding day. He almost succeeds, but Elvira interferes by revealing his evil nature. As in Molière's Don Juan treatment, Elvira tries to persuade Don Giovanni to repent. She keeps going back to him, giving him second chances. "Mend your life," she tells him (313), but there is no moving Don Giovanni. As Elvira leaves, the stone guest arrives, fulfilling Don Giovanni's request that they dine together. In return, the statue asks Don Giovanni to dine with him and the protagonist accepts, offering him his hand in pledge. While the Commander grips his hand, he commands Don Giovanni to repent. If Elvira gave him too many chances, the Commander gives him even more. Each time, Don Giovanni defiantly refuses. By this time the reader is more than eager to see the punishment of this stubborn character that shows no sign of remorse. Fire appears, thunder sounds, and Don Giovanni disappears.

Mozart and da Ponte's rendering is the last Don Juan treatment before Romanticism begins. As in Molière, there is the disastrous, self-inflicted demise of Don Juan. Just as in the treatments of Tirso and Molière, Mozart's contains the theme of repentance for salvation, but there is no talk of God, nor anything expressly Christian. Perhaps the Church was not as prominent as in earlier times as a moral force in society. Nevertheless, Don Giovanni is
so despicable that the reader or audience wants to see him get what he deserves. Later, however, the pendulum concerning his salvation would begin to swing the other way.

Zorrilla’s Don Juan

José Zorrilla wrote Don Juan Tenorio towards the end of Spanish Romanticism, in 1844. He is the first among the well-known authors to write a treatment about a Don Juan who really falls in love. “[.. . .] el Tenorio de Zorrilla es el primero que se enamora, que se arrepiente y, en virtud de ello, se salva” (Porta Rivas, 168). In fact, it is this love that saves him in the end. Weinstein states:

On the one hand, Don Juan Tenorio modernizes both hero and action; on the other hand, it is a synthesis of the interpretations and trends which had evolved during the preceding years of the nineteenth century – an irresistible lover, an ideal woman, a religious and mystical atmosphere, and, finally, the logical culmination of Don Juan’s rehabilitation: the saving of the hero through the intercession of a pure woman. (120)

The drama begins with Don Juan being the usual womanizer. At the opening of the play he has tricked
seventy-two women, thereby winning a bet with his competitor, Don Luis. Don Luis proposes two more conquests to make his winning even more impressive: the fiancée of a friend, and a nun. Don Juan meets this challenge, first deceiving Doña Ana, the fiancée of Don Luis, and then Doña Inés, the nun. As arranged by their fathers, Don Juan was engaged to marry Doña Inés, but because her father (the Commander) witnessed the conversation between Don Juan and Don Luis, he decides against the wedding and places his daughter in a nunnery. Don Juan enters the convent, captures Doña Inés, and gains her love. He also appears truly to fall in love for the first time:

No es, doña Inés, Satanás
quien pone este amor en mí:
es Dios, que quiere por ti
ganarme para él quizás. (Zorrilla 160)

Later, when the Commander comes to kill him, Don Juan kneels before him, expressing his love for Doña Inés:

Comendador,
yo idolatro a doña Inés,
persuadido de que el cielo
nos la quiso conceder
para enderezar mis pasos
por el sendero del bien.
No amé la hermosura en ella,
ni sus gracias adoré;
lo que adoro es la virtud,
don Gonzalo, en doña Inés.
Lo que justicias ni obispos
no pudieron de mí hacer
con cárcceles y sermones,
lo pudo su candidez.
Su amor me torna en otro hombre,  
regenerando mi ser,  
y ella puede hacer un ángel  
de quien un demonio fue. (168-9)

The Commander, doubting the sincerity of this profession,  
does not accept it. A fight ensues and Don Juan kills both  
the Commander and Don Luis, who also had come to challenge  
Don Juan. Don Juan then leaves town, escaping the police.  
After five years, he returns to Seville and discovers the  
tombs of those he has killed, including that of Doña Inés,  
who died of grief when he left. Her spirit appears, telling  
him that God told her:

    con don Juan te salvarás,  
on te perderás con él. (188)

Don Juan also sees the statue of the Commander in the  
cemetery and invites it to dine with him and his  
companions, Centellas and Avellaneda. During the dinner,  
both the statue and the spirit of Doña Inés warn him of his  
impending death and the importance of repentance. Don Juan  
does not believe he can be saved, because of his years of  
immorality. After dinner, Don Juan fights with his two  
friends because he thinks they are playing a trick on him,  
while they think Don Juan is playing the same trick on  
them. Although most critics agree that Don Juan is killed  
in the fight, this fact is not apparent until later.
In the pantheon, at the return invitation, the Commander offers him his hand, trying to drag him to hell, but in contrast to the ending of Tirso’s treatment, Don Juan calls out to God to have pity on him. He reaches his arms to heaven and Doña Inés reaches down to save him.

There is a debate as to whether or not Don Juan was already dead when he finally cried out to God for forgiveness – whether he was saved before or after he died. Guido Mazzeo believes that Don Juan was not only mortally wounded, but in fact, dead, and that Zorrilla therefore weakens his theological foundation by bringing “about the salvation of a soul that was repentant only after death” (Mazzeo 153). Fred Abrams disagrees, saying that although Zorrilla was a Spanish Romantic, he was also a Catholic who would not “take such liberty with doctrine even as an extreme manifestation of Romantic idealism” (42). He asserts that Don Juan was not actually dead, and that the passage that indicates this is commonly misunderstood. When Don Juan asks about the funeral procession that is passing, the statue of the Commander tells Don Juan that it is his funeral and Don Juan exclaims, “¡Muerto yo!” (Zorrilla 215). The statue tells Don Juan that the “capitán te mató a la puerta de tu casa” (215). Abrams says that the confusion is with this preterite form, “te mató.” Some
critics, like Mazzeo, believe that he was truly dead at this point. Abrams, on the other hand, says it implies immediate futurity (43). Another view ascribes to the idea that it is the physical body of Don Juan that has died and that it is his soul that intervenes in the final cemetery scene. In a Romantic theatrical production such as this, could they not simply be looking into the future, seeing Don Juan’s funeral as a sort of warning? This is a romantic play and does not have to follow the rules of reality; instead the imagery is used to extend and heighten the drama to offer a very, very last chance. Don Juan is either not really dead, or only physically dead at this point, because several lines later, he still has one grain of sand left in his hourglass when he cries out to God:

[.. . .] Santo Dios, creo en Ti
si mi maldad es inaudita,
tu piedad es infinita. . .
¡Señor, ten piedad de mí! (217)

As in Tirso’s play, the statue responds with “Ya es tarde” (217). However, it is not too late because Doña Inés comes out from her tomb and tells Don Juan that his faith has saved them both. Whether Don Juan repents before or after he dies is not Zorrilla’s point. The point is that he was saved in the end by his faith and the love of a woman. In this romantic treatment of Don Juan, “Zorrilla has, in
fact, invented a way for human love to be equal to divine love” (Mayberry 129).

Zorrilla makes two points at the end. First, he wants to illustrate that it is not only good works that save a person or bad works that condemn a person, but rather it is a person’s faith in God that will ultimately save. Secondly, because he is influenced by Romanticism, he allows the love between Don Juan and Doña Inés to be a factor in salvation. “Eros merges with Agape and humans save themselves and each other” (Mayberry 132). He introduces the romantic theme of “salvation of a man’s soul through the pure love of a woman” (Abrams 45). Doña Inés did intercede for Don Juan, but would he have been saved if he himself had not turned to God? Zorrilla’s apparent perspective is that personal repentance is essential. Although God is merciful, within the doctrine of sufficient grace, he requires each person to come to him on his own.

Free will reaches its epitome in such a situation, for salvation is totally dependent on the will of Don Juan and whether Inés’s powers of persuasion will be sufficient to bring about the necessary point of contrition. (Mayberry 129)
Even though he doesn’t believe God could pardon him he takes a chance to save both himself and Inés by crying out to God to be merciful.

Zorrilla may also be using Doña Inés to represent the pure love of Christ and the sacrifice of one pure person for a sinful one. She offers her own soul so that Don Juan can be saved. God saves both Don Juan and Doña Inés in the end, sending them to Purgatory. This work dramatizes the Romantic view that many people believed in God, but did not know the doctrines of Christianity. It also shows the way in which emotions dominated reason. According to David Lafferty, one of the ways in which Romanticism manifested itself in literature was to use “religious characters and ideas to directly challenge the Judeo-Christian concept of God” (1). We see this in Zorrilla’s work when he challenges the traditional views of salvation.

José Zorrilla’s Don Juan Tenorio is cited as an example of “religious belief within the framework of Romantic idealism” (Mazzeo 155). Zorrilla’s Don Juan, like Tirso’s, is offered chances to repent throughout his life, but he refuses them. Instead of receiving condemnation for this lack of submission, as did Tirso’s Don Juan, Zorrilla’s Don Juan is saved from hell in the end. Here we
see the atmosphere of Romantic idealism in love turn the fate of Don Juan.

These four works exemplify what some may call the traditional or classic Don Juan. This is the type of character that most people think of when Don Juan’s name is mentioned. In all four works he is a womanizer and rejects God, at least in the beginning. In only one of these four treatments is Don Juan actually saved, and in only two of the four does he at least try to repent – the two Spanish treatments. In the other two European treatments reviewed, Don Juan does not seem to even have a conscience, and appears to feel no remorse, even when being dragged into hell.

These works also show the way in which literature is influenced by culture. Tirso’s treatment was influenced by the Reformation and Counter-Reformation; Molière and Mozart were influenced by the rational trends in Western thought and by the Enlightenment; and Zorrilla was influenced by Romanticism. In the same way, Valle-Inclán, the Machados, and Unamuno may have been influenced by their historical and cultural setting.
Chapter 2:  
Don Juan in the 1920s: The Theme of Redemption in Three Treatments

Las galas del difunto, by Ramón María del Valle-Inclán, Juan de Mañana, by Antonio and Manuel Machado, and El hermano Juan o el mundo es teatro, by Miguel de Unamuno present three very different faces of Don Juan. They are different from each other and from the four works mentioned in Chapter 1. Valle-Inclán ridicules the Don Juan myth, parodying and degrading it. The Machado brothers paint Don Juan to be a saint by the end of the play. Unamuno portrays Don Juan as a philosopher, questioning his own existence and identity. In fact, all three of these works notably exclude two of the traditional characteristics of Don Juan: being a womanizer and rejecting God. Granted, in all three treatments, Don Juan is still a deceiver in one way or another. Also, Valle-Inclán’s Don Juan does show disrespect for the dead, and Unamuno’s Don Juan toys with the idea of rejecting God. Why are these Don Juans so different from the more traditional Don Juans of the seventeenth through the nineteenth centuries?

History and culture play a large role in the literature of the time. Ramón Mariá del Valle-Inclán, Antonio and Manuel Machado, and Miguel de Unamuno were all
autores del fin de siglo, writers of the end of the century, and have long been regarded as members of the so-called Generation of '98. The Generation of '98 is a term traditionally used to describe Spanish authors who lived through the desastre of 1898, and whose works reflected a general sense of the crisis and a reexamination of natural values. In spite of Spain's defeat in the Spanish-American war, many Spaniards continued to live complacently, unwilling to question cherished assumptions and values. The task of many of these writers was to wake up their compatriots and to induce them to take up the project of national "regeneration." These four authors did not, of course, hold the same worldview; their ideas and writings were shaped by individual, as well as collective, histories. In addition to the desastre of 1898, Spain experienced other tumultuous events that influenced the writers and their writings.

According to Inman Fox, transitions at the end of the nineteenth century brought forth an extraordinary group of intellectuals devoted to defining the "problem of Spain" in the context of an historical national identity and to national regeneration through
modernization [. . .] in the spirit of national unity. (21)

Some of these intellectuals were writers of the so-called Generation of '98. However, even before the desastre of 1898 occurred, there was a movement among intellectuals to follow European trends in modernization. According to José Álvarez Junco, "The loss of Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Philippines and other minor remnants of the Spanish empire in the Pacific was not such a tragedy for Spain as contemporaries believed" (73). After this event, common life continued as usual, but pessimism eventually developed from the inability of Spain to change. The desire to transform was evident, but the means were complicated; some people thought education and modernization were needed, while others insisted on returning to the dynastic parties that had characterized Spain when it flourished as an empire (Balfour 28). Crises in the military, the Moroccan war, strikes, riots, crop-burnings, and dictatorships followed (Álvarez Junco 78-80). Primo de Rivera staged his coup in 1923, staying in power until 1930. Valle-Inclán, the Machados, and Unamuno were writing their plays during this period. Unamuno was exiled during most of this time, at first officially, then voluntarily. This disillusionment and crisis of ideals motivated some of the writings of the
authors of the so-called Generation of '98. A parody of Spanish society and the disgust over the activities of the military are seen in Valle-Inclán’s treatment. The fatalistic views that the Spanish may have held are seen in the treatments of the Machado brothers and Unamuno.

Although these events do not cause a group of people to develop the same worldview, they are linked by common experiences, and similar themes may be found in their writings.

Porta Rivas says that the writers of the so-called Generation of '98 moved away from self-centered romanticism (169). Due to the crisis of ideals and values, their works were characterized more by human solidarity than by individual profit:

El Don Juan de la generación del 98, concebido en una época de crisis de ideales, exige, como consecuencia de ello, una dimensión humana y solidaria en la cual los valores del yo se subordinen a la consideración de la existencia del otro. De esta forma se supera el egocentrismo romántico. (Porta Rivas 169)

In these three works the protagonist either plays a unifying role or displays an unselfish attitude. Valle-Inclán’s treatment of Don Juan is a parody of Spanish
society as a whole. The author uses the character of Don Juan and his surroundings to “dis-illusion” (desengaño) the author’s contemporaries, in an attempt to reveal the actual condition of Spain. In the Machados’ treatment, Juan becomes a sacrificial savior, and at the end of the play, as he is dying, he brings Elvira and Beatriz together; in his mind, the two women at opposite extremes become one woman. In similar fashion, el hermano Juan of Unamuno becomes a redeemer; in his death he unifies the other characters.

Besides being influenced by history and culture, these four authors are influenced in their treatments of Don Juan by the plots and theological perspectives of the earlier treatments described above. Valle-Inclán’s parodic treatment reveals a remarkable resemblance to Zorrilla’s Don Juan. In the Machados’ work are traces of the life of Miguel de Mañara, and perhaps the influence of pure love, and the character of Inés from Zorrilla. Additionally, the Machado brothers present a selfless, sacrificing Don Juan in their rendition. In Unamuno’s account of Don Juan are also hints of the life of Miguel de Mañara, the character of Elvira from Molière and Mozart, and the sacrificial love from Zorrilla. Furthermore, Don Juan is trapped in a seemingly hopeless role, but he sacrifices his life for
others. In the works studied from 1926-1929, Don Juan is respectively parodied, sanctified, and immortalized.

The unifying idea that distinguishes these three Don Juan treatments of the 1920's from the early, traditional versions is the theme of redemption. In the first three accounts mentioned in Chapter 1, Don Juan receives retribution for his crimes. In Zorrilla's rendition, Don Juan expects punishment, but is pardoned in the end. The three treatments of the 1920's, however, deal with redemption. Valle-Inclán uses the Don Juan myth to show Spain's need for redemption. In the Machado and Unamuno treatments, Don Juan acts as a redeemer for other characters.
Chapter 3:
Ramón María del Valle-Inclán,
Las galas del difunto

Ramón María del Valle-Inclán wrote twelve works that include the Don Juan theme (John Hook 265-7). According to Benjamin Ogden, only two of these works focus on the theme as it appears in Zorrilla’s Don Juan Tenorio: El marqués de Bradomín and Las galas del difunto. Although Las galas follows the model of Don Juan laid out by Zorrilla, it is a parody. Something to note is that this Don Juan play cannot be understood properly unless one is familiar with the traditional treatments, particularly Zorrilla’s. The meaning and point of this Don Juan account lie in its alterations to the characters, relationships, and elements found in Zorrilla’s rendition.

In the opening of Las galas del difunto, Juanito Ventolera is just returning from the Cuban War of 1898. He meets La Daifa (meaning “prostitute”), who is in a traumatic situation. She is carrying the baby of her boyfriend, Aureliano, who was killed in the war. Because of her condition, her pharmacist father, Sócrates Galindo, has forced her out of the house with no support, causing her to become a prostitute. Juanito meets La Daifa and tries to seduce her, but since he can not pay at the moment, he sets
an appointment for the next day, also agreeing to tell the young woman about her Aureliano, whom Juanito knew in the war. Meanwhile, La Daifa writes a letter to her father asking for support and for permission to move back home. Upon discovering that his daughter has become a prostitute, the pharmacist falls over from a heart attack and dies. Ironically, Juanito has been lodging at the pharmacist’s house, but is not aware that La Daifa is the man’s daughter. After the pharmacist is buried, Juanito’s friends challenge him to dig up the body and steal his clothes. Because he is poor and likes the thought of having a new wardrobe, Juanito relishes the challenge and succeeds. His friends invite him to dinner, and there they challenge him again. Since he lacks the hat and cane used by the pharmacist to complete the outfit, Juanito sneaks into the house to retrieve the items, discovering the pharmacist’s wife in bed with her lover. The wife feels she is being haunted by her late husband, since Juanito is dressed in his clothes. Juanito takes what he came for and goes for his appointment with La Daifa, impressing her with his new attire. She does not know about her father’s death and is startled when Juanito takes her letter from his coat pocket and begins to read it. The play ends anti-climatically when
he finishes reading the letter and realizes the connection between the pharmacist and La Daifa.

Most of the Don Juan treatments are tragic, especially if Don Juan does not repent and experience salvation at the end. They are also tragic because of the mistreatment of women, the murders, and the disrespect for the dead. Valle-Inclán wrote this esperpento possibly to make fun of the tragic, to find something humorous in an inescapable tragedy of life. Dru Dougherty cites Valle-Inclán in El Heraldo de México, the 21st of September, 1921: "The esperpento consists in searching for the comic side of life's tragedy" (44). This satirical Don Juan was a way to express humorously the degradation of Spanish life. Even before this play, Valle-Inclán was experimenting with travesty. Apparently, he became disillusioned with life after World War I, and expressed these views through parody (Hook 256). According to Dougherty, some critics argue "that the play is a parody of Zorrilla's famous Don Juan Tenorio" (45). Others say that it "is an assault on the Don Juan myth itself," one which definitely degrades it (45). Still other people believe that Las galas is a burlesque of Valle-Inclán's former Don Juan characters, and that he is making fun of himself. Regardless of the reason why Valle-Inclán degraded the myth, his is truly a parody.
In Valle-Inclán’s treatment there are many of the traditional elements of the Don Juan legend, such as his deceptions and meeting with the dead. But, although it recognizably follows Tirso’s and Zorrilla’s treatments, it parodies and degrades the myth, presenting it in a comically grotesque way (Doll 184-5). Valle-Inclán’s perspective is most likely influenced by the general disillusionment experienced by the society in which he lived:

[. . .] todos los elementos del drama - estructura, escenario, lenguaje, gestos, vestidos, luces - convergen para poner en cuestión el mito de don Juan en la España de los años 20. Pero el resultado de la desmitificación valle-inclanesca no es un rechazo del mito de don Juan, sino una crítica severa de la sociedad moderna que prohíbe el heroísmo y que crea la degradación escenificada. (Doll 186)

Ogden observes that Valle-Inclán goes from a “mitificación del mito donjuanesco a una desmitificación del mismo” (46). This means that he takes the original ingredients of the legend and reworks them in a parodic way. Ogden states:

A través de Juanito Ventolera el mito
donjuanesco queda sistemáticamente reducido y
destruido, porque en cada aspecto donjuanesco
Juanito llega a ser nada más que una imitación
grotesca y vacía del don Juan verdadero. (46)
Eliane Lavaud-Page states that Juanito subverts such values
of society as love, family, and military (141). This is
ture: in Las galas there is no love between Juanito and La
Daifa - only a sexual arrangement. The family unit is also
degraded in this work. The one family we see in the play is
disjointed and dysfunctional. The father forces his
daughter out of the house, and the only work she finds is
prostitution. The wife is in bed with her lover practically
before her husband is settled in his grave. The military is
also portrayed in a negative light. Juanito tells La Daifa,
"Allí solamente se busca el gasto de municiones. Es una
cochina vergüenza aquella guerra. El soldado, si supiese su
obligación y no fuese un paria, debería tirar sobre sus
jefes" (48).

This is a degradation of the Don Juan myth because
instead of portraying Don Juan as a confident young
nobleman who gets whatever he wants, he is a soldier who is
not in any way looked upon as a hero, and he must pay for
the woman, not conquer her with his charm and deception.

Some critics, such as Rodolfo Cardona, Anthony
Zahareas, and Hook, believe that there is no human
parallelism between Juanito Ventolera and Don Juan, except for his disrespect for the dead (Ogden 45). According to Ogden, Juanito’s impiety is not even the same as that of Tirso’s Don Juan. However, keeping in mind that this is a parody, the attitude or point of view is not the same, and there can be a direct parallel.

Parody and degradation of the myth are seen in this Don Juan treatment throughout the work, from the major points to the details. In addition to the ones just mentioned, there is satire in the name of the protagonist, in the death of the father, in Juanito as representation of the stone guest, in the invitation and banquet, in the letter, and in the woman that Juanito pursues. Ogden says that the name Juanito Ventolera invokes an image of an inept soldier - using the diminutive form of Juan and a blast of wind as his last name. In the play, Juan returns from the Spanish-American war as a hero, but, paradoxically, the war is nothing to be proud of, so the heroism is worthless. "Claramente, Juanito Ventolera es [. . .] el heredero del mito de don Juan, pero en la sociedad en que vive el único heroísmo posible es el grotesco, paródico, esesperpéntico” (Doll 186). When Juanito tells La Daifa about Aureliano, she is expecting to hear how he died heroically, but instead Juanito cynically tells her how
disgraceful the war is (48). In most Don Juan treatments, if there is a murder by Don Juan, the victim is usually the father of one of the noble women he is pursuing. In this case, the father of the girl that he desires does in fact die in front of him. However, it is not because Juan has performed a spectacular swordfight; rather, the father dies of a heart attack unprovoked by the main character. 

"[...]

el don Juan esperpéntico no ha matado al Boticario-
Comendador y sólo ha sido casual espectador de un ordinario ataque cardíaco" (Avalle-Arce 33). Then, instead of the boticario becoming the stone guest, Juanito, in a sense, becomes the convidado de piedra. The friends that challenged him to take the clothes invite him to dinner, and Juanito even makes reference to Don Juan Tenorio, "Parece que representáis El Juan Tenorio. Pero allí los muertos van a cenar de gorra" (66). So there is still the invitation in the cemetery to dine, but it is directed toward the living, not the dead. Juanito arrives that evening, dressed in the pharmacist’s clothes, representing the dead man. Dougherty says that this combines two persons in one - "Don Juan and the invited statue" - and includes "the traditional warning - that his sacrilege assures his damnation" (Dougherty 47). As in Zorrilla’s Don Juan Tenorio, there is also a letter involved in Las galas. "No
es carta de don Juan a doña Inés, sino de la Daifa a su padre, y tampoco es exaltada declaración amorosa, sino, más bien, dolorida admisión de bancarrota física y moral” (Avalle-Arce 34). Both letters shock the young women, but Inés is shocked by Don Juan’s love and La Daifa is shocked by the realization of her father’s death. Another reversal is that Juan seduces a prostitute instead of a chaste woman. Even the way he describes the setting at the beginning of Scene I mocks the purity of the convent where Zorrilla’s Doña Inés lives. At “la casa del pecado,” Valle-Inclán depicts the night with the moon and stars shining, representing the divine (43). “La combinación de lo sagrado con lo profano plantea un tono crítico, satírico, paródico y juguetón” (Ogden 45). Juanito calls to the lady in charge of the brothel that he wants to take one of the girls and redeem her - “¡Redimirla!” - he shouts (96). This parodies the way in which Zorrilla’s Don Juan also wanted to redeem Doña Inés and set her free from the convent:

Just as [Valle] delights in punning on the Daifa’s reference to the military “crosses” on his tunic (“Go to bed with me and you can have the whole Calvary”), he here plays on “redeem” as meaning both the “salvation” of the soul and the “redemption” of a pawnshop ticket. Recalling that
Doña Inés saves Don Juan’s soul at the close of Zorrilla’s classic, Juanito inverts the relationship of the characters while proclaiming, with degrading bluntness, his ability now to pay cash for the girl’s body and thereby cancel any debt to her. (Dougherty 52)

Juan Bautista Avalle-Arce also notes this parody: “así como don Juan Tenorio va a raptar a su amada y libertarla de la opresión conventual [. . .], así va nuestro anti-héroe a redimir la Daifa del lupanar” (35). All of these examples show how Valle-Inclán maintains the traditional elements of the Don Juan theme but transforms them through parody.

In addition to mocking the Don Juan myth, this treatment is also a parody of contemporaneous Spanish society. When Juanito shouts “redimirla,” Valle-Inclán is speaking about more than the relationship of the characters in his play. This scene “carries us toward the overall statement of the work: the writer’s dramatization of a world in need of spiritual redemption but blind to its own corruption” (Dougherty 53). Seeking redemption in the midst of disillusionment, Spanish society turned to that by which it could be destroyed, rather than healed. In his parody of Zorrilla’s Don Juan treatment, Valle-Inclán does not parody the doctrine of Christian salvation but rather
[. . .] alludes to it so as to place in the background of his characters' profane actions the classic norm which they no longer see - the schema of fallen humanity restored to grace by the undeserved, and hence mysterious, love of God. Far from mocking that "correspondence" between the human and the divine, the writer conjures it forth so as to place in sharper relief the desperate condition of his characters.

(Dougherty 53)

Las galas del difunto is a cleverly written parody and succeeds in making a statement about Spanish society. It takes almost all of the elements of Zorrilla's Don Juan Tenorio and mocks or inverts them, creating an entirely new treatment. Not only does Valle-Inclán create an innovative treatment of Don Juan, but also through the imagery of disillusionment he explicitly shows the general despair experienced by the Spanish people during this period.
Chapter 4: 
Antonio and Manuel Machado, 
Juan de Mañara

As the title of their play indicates, the Machado brothers combine the legend of Don Juan with the legend of Miguel de Mañara. In this interpretation Don Juan becomes San Juan. The point of Juan de Mañara is the conversion of the protagonist. In the Machados’ play, Mañara is supposed to be a grandson of the old Don Juan of Spanish theater (Dominicis 730). As in Zorrilla’s treatment, the Don Juan character is saved on account of a woman. However, unlike the Zorrilla version, in which Don Juan repents because of the pure love of a woman, Mañara repents because of the rebellion of a woman. Instead of the woman saving Don Juan’s soul, Juan de Mañara saves the woman’s soul.

There is a love triangle present in the Machados’ play. Juan and Beatriz are cousins who have grown up together. Beatriz is getting ready to enter the convent, but her love for Juan is rekindled when he comes back to town. He nostalgically talks about their youth, invoking memories of their love, and eventually persuades her to marry him. Juan promises himself to Beatriz as her husband and plans to meet her that evening. On the way to their rendezvous, he bumps into Elvira, one of his ex-lovers with
whom he had a child. Beatriz witnesses their encounter and is crushed when she hears Juan change his plans and leave with Elvira. Elvira has just killed her abusive husband, and Juan feels responsible for her crime because of his negative influence on her. Because of this, Juan departs with Elvira to protect her from any punishment and take the blame for her crime. Beatriz tries to protect Juan’s honor by leaving town, so people will not think Juan abandoned her after promising himself to her as her husband. Esteban, the painter, and Don Gonzalo, the father of Beatriz, go searching for her. They find hints, like her rosary in his jacket pocket, that tell them she left with Juan. Esteban later finds Juan in Paris, but learns that Beatriz is not with him. Meanwhile, Elvira is trying to leave Juan, because she claims that she is no longer capable of love. Juan is trying to convince her to stay because he is desperate to be with her and to offer her his love: “Seré tu perro para salvarte . . . o perderme contigo, si es que te pierdo” (231). Elvira does not accept this, and as she is leaving, Beatriz appears. In Scene IX of Act II, Juan and Beatriz are discussing whether or not Juan loves Elvira, and Beatriz is jealously trying to win him over. Juan feels resigned because he is not able to convince Beatriz that they are not destined to be together and that
he would not be good for her. He gives Beatriz a dagger that had been lying on the table and tells her to plunge it into his heart (241). She does not heed his command, but in the last scene of Act II when Juan tries to leave to follow Elvira, after finding out that she went to turn herself in to the police, Beatriz stabs him, saying, "Antes muerto que de ella" (242). Then she tries to stab herself but Esteban stops her. In Act III, Juan is still trying to convince Beatriz that he does not hate her, but that love without charity is a fantasy that doesn't exist:

Existe el mal, que es el odio;  
la vida humana es pelea  
contra el mal: el que llevamos  
dentro y el que vemos fuera.  
Existe el dolor, que al hombre  
impone Naturaleza  
sólo por haber nacido  
de sus entrañas de piedra.  
Pena sin culpa; mal hace  
quién no la alivia o consuela.  
Y hay la muerte; sobre todo  
la muerte, que nos espera,  
nos sigue y nos acompaña;  
sólo Dios puede vencerla  
[. . .] Hoy digo:  
no vive el amor, lo sueña  
quién ama sin Dios; amores  
sin caridad son quimeras. (256)

Although Juan de Mañara does not hate Beatriz, he cannot remain with her because he does not feel benevolent towards her; he does not have agape love for her. On the other hand, he can help Elvira, and this combination of loving
someone along with charitable acts is what Juan is looking for. He found someone not only to love, but also to genuinely help and save.

Even though Elvira has left Juan after he took the blame for her crime, Beatriz tells him not to worry, that she will be back. In Scene V of Act III, Elvira does come back, claiming to love Juan, but not in a romantic way.

Adoro al que me salvó
del mal y el crimen, al hombre
que vida, fortuna y nombre
por redimirme arriesgó. (260-1)

This evokes the story of the sinful woman in Luke 7 who was forgiven of her sins by Jesus, and who bathed Jesus’s feet with her tears:

And a woman in the city, who was a sinner, having learned that he was eating in the Pharisee’s house, brought an alabaster jar of ointment. She stood behind him at his feet, weeping, and began to bathe his feet with her tears and to dry them with her hair. Then she continued kissing his feet and anointing them with ointment. (Luke 7. 38-39)

Elvira’s words paint a similar image:

Estas lágrimas que ves
son puras [..]
Déjame bañar tus pies
en este llanto, que es tuyo. (261)
At the end of the play, when death is upon Juan, he confesses his belief in God and dies.

Besides there being a love triangle, there is also a salvation triangle among the three main characters. Beatriz is trying to save Juan’s honor, since he left her after a promise to be her husband. Furthermore, she has waited for him and saved all of her passion for him. Juan is trying to save Elvira from loneliness, and most importantly from her sins. Elvira is even trying to save Beatriz from being an “object” of Juan: “¿Qué haría usted por él? [. . .] Ser su almohada, su espejo, su sombra, un objeto suyo?” (235).

Rita Goldberg asserts that although the Machado brothers tried to create a Don Juan character, Juan de Mañara is not a true Don Juan, but rather that he has much more in common with his ancestor, Miguel de Mañara. In most versions, even if Don Juan converts, he is not considered a saint. This Don Juan is much different from the traditional Don Juan - so different in fact, that it is difficult to even use “don” in front of his name. He is so charitable and sacrificing that he has truly earned the title of “San Juan.”

The Machado brothers offer a new interpretation to the literary tradition, which is that Don Juan can be a moral
figure, not concerned for himself. Compared to other adaptations of Don Juan, Juan de Mañara’s conversion is more sincere. Instead of repenting at the last minute out of fear of hell, Mañara repents out of a genuine regard for another’s soul:

La salvación no llega aquí por el temor al infierno, no, este arrepentimiento es más sincero: le basta contemplar su obra en Elvira y comprender que es reflejo suyo, para querer enmendarla. El sacrificio de esta mujer, mezcla de santa y pecadora, y la cercanía de la muerte - al ser herido - completan la conversión.

(Dominicis 732)

Dominicis goes on to say that, "el tema clave no es la redención o la perdición de don Juan, sino su preocupación por la redención de su víctima," (184). As in the treatments of Molière and Mozart, Elvira is one of the main characters. In both of those works, she pursues Don Juan, fearing for his salvation. However, the Machados invert this relationship by having Juan pursue Elvira, fearing for her soul and seeking to secure her salvation. The traditional roles of Don Juan and Elvira are reversed. Juan is the one who feels, and he tells Elvira she should be crying about killing her husband (Machado 215). Porta Rivas
echoes this thought, comparing Juan de Mañara with Christ - the man who forgives the sinful woman (172).

The Machados bring their Juan into a direct parallel with Christ. Juan becomes the redemptive Christ figure as the savior who offers salvation to Elvira. In the first three plays reviewed in Chapter 1 (Tirso, Molière, and Mozart), the theme was retribution instead of redemption. Don Juan was punished for his crimes, and in general the reader was happy to see him get what he deserved. In the Machados' play, however, the reader feels sympathy toward Juan because he has changed. He no longer deserves punishment, and the one character that does deserve punishment, because of her wayward and unrepentant heart, changes and receives redemption from Juan. Unlike Christ, who could take the woman's sin upon himself and forgive her, telling her to go in peace (Luke 7.50), Juan redeems Elvira by following her, looking after her, and taking the blame for her crime. The theme of sacrifice and redemption, instead of retribution, will be dealt with again in the next chapter.
Chapter 5:
Miguel de Unamuno,
*El hermano Juan o el mundo es teatro*

The Don Juan of Unamuno is quite different from the usual *mujeriego* of so many interpretations. In the prologue to *El hermano Juan o el mundo es teatro*, Unamuno prepares the reader: "No se trata de biología, sino de biografía: no de material, sino de espíritu; no de física, sino de metafísica" (11). Unamuno explains from the beginning what type of Don Juan he will portray. This Juan is "Brother Juan" (*el hermano Juan*). Although he lives in a monastery, serving the Church, Juan has platonic relationships with many women. It seems that he repeats a cycle with each woman: a woman becomes attracted to him, they form a relationship, and then Juan pushes her away when she desires more than a spiritual relationship. According to Fajardo, this is why Juan is called *el hermano* instead of *don*. He does not experience *eros* love with the women he meets, but rather, *agape* love, which is "fraternal o maternal o paternal" (Fajardo 374).

Another important difference in Unamuno’s Juan is that he struggles throughout the play with issues of existence and determinism, feeling trapped in one role. He is more
deliberate regarding his actions than the Don Juan of so many other treatments, who is spontaneous and carefree.

The play opens with a conversation between Inés and Juan. Although Inés still loves her boyfriend, Benito, she chooses to leave him to be with Juan, but Juan does not accept this love from her. He feels condemned to one role, and that role does not include being a lover or husband. He thinks he cannot make a woman feel like a woman nor he, himself, feel like a man: "nací condenado a no poder hacer mujer a mujer alguna, ni a mí hombre" (43). Benito joins Juan and Inés in Scene II, accusing them both of unfaithfulness. Juan tries to persuade Inés to go back to Benito, insisting that this is the role for which she is predestined: “quierele, pues que es el tuyo, el que Dios te tiene destinado” (59). Elvira, Juan’s cousin, joins the group in Scene III. She claims that she is there to rescue Juan, and Benito shows Inés that she is not the only woman that Juan is seeing (60). Doña Petra enters in Act II, Scene II, threatening Juan by telling him that God (el “Vengador Supremo”) can see the depths of our heart (115). Her daughter, Matilde, has died recently and the text alludes to the fact that she may have killed herself because of her love for Juan, who most likely did not return her love. She tells him, “¡No hay plazo que no se
cumpla!" (110), which is a direct reference to a line in Tirso’s play and later used in the title of Antonio de Zamora’s treatment (1744) of the Don Juan theme. “No hay plazo que no se cumpla” can be translated, “There is no deadline that will not be met.” In other words, time is short and revenge will be had.

In Zamora’s account, it is the stone guest who says these words. Doña Petra may be an Unamunian variation of the stone guest. Her name points to that assumption, since Petra comes from the Latin word rock. Other characteristics also indicate this. For example, she blames Juan for wronging her daughter (in this case by death), just as the stone guest does in other Don Juan treatments. In other versions the stone guest is normally the father of one of the women that Don Juan has deceived. The murdered father usually comes back to haunt Don Juan as a stone statue. In this case, Doña Petra is alive and her daughter is dead. In a way, Juan feels that he is being haunted by Doña Petra’s many interruptions, just as Don Juan is “haunted” by the stone guest in other treatments. As in other versions where Don Juan teases the statue or skull (or in some way shows disrespect for the dead), so also Brother Juan teases Doña Petra (Unamuno 163). A big difference, however, is that the traditional Don Juan jokes about death or shows disrespect
for the dead, whereas Unamuno’s Juan agrees with Doña Petra that death is not a trivial matter: “con la muerte no se juega” (Unamuno 163).

Antonio, the doctor, enters in Act II, Scene III, intending to "cure" Juan and Elvira of their madness, and to take Elvira back. Juan is agreeable, and persuades Elvira to go with him: "él te hará mujer cabal; él y no yo" (118). Elvira, on the other hand, is very stubborn, claiming to have loved Juan since they were children who used to sleep together in the same crib (119). Antonio tells Elvira to wake up from this dream, and she responds with: "Despertar es salirse de sí" (120). She seems to prefer to live in her fantasy world, unaware of reality. Antonio accuses Juan of letting women fall in love with him and then leading them on: "Engañas a la una con la otra y a las dos con tu quimera. Y sobre todo te engañas a ti mismo y trabucas tu papel" (125). Antonio seems to know Juan and what he is thinking. Not only is Juan deceiving others, but he is also deceiving himself and confusing his role. Antonio pleads with Juan to stop trying to play this role for which he feels predestined, and to just be himself. Antonio says the good actor is one who acts on stage as he does at home or on the street, while Juan says that it is he who acts at home and on the street as he does on the
stage (133). In other words, Juan feels he must always wear his mask and play the part for which he believes he is destined. In Act III, Padre Teófilo enters the scene, and Juan begins to promote his beliefs that humans are God’s toys, his puppets, and that we would do well to play our part (145). They discuss Juan’s lineage from Don Juan Tenorio, and the fact that Don Juan continues to live even after he dies. Padre Teófilo asks him what happens to Don Juan after he dies, and Juan replies that he is condemned to always be the same, not able to be another or give himself to another: “¡un solitario!... ¡un soltero!... ¡y en el peor sentido!” (154).

Don Juan may have immortal characteristics, but each treatment shows that he is not always the same. This Juan is a reincarnated Don Juan who carries the sins of all the Don Juans before him (169). Because of this burden and guilt, he feels condemned to one role, and his only suitable penance is death, his “novia eterna.” Juan feels he must die in order to reunite (to give life to) the two couples: “Debo morir, pues de otro modo no os habrías unido. . . . Debo morir para que viváis” (180). In Scenes VII and VIII, Juan asks for forgiveness from Benito and Inés, and ends by reuniting them as well as Elvira and Antonio. According to Fajardo, the function of Unamuno’s Don Juan is
that of celestino, or mediator. Some have compared Unamuno’s Don Juan to Cupid, who never has a love of his own, but unites others (Fajardo 374). "Mi destino no fue robar amores, no, no lo fue, sino que fue encenderlos y atizarlos para que otros se calentaran a su brasa... Los antiguos, que fueron unos niños, me llamaron Cupido, el arquero" (Unamuno 187).

In this Don Juan treatment, there are allusions to Zorrilla’s Don Juan Tenorio. For example, this Unamunian Don Juan claims to be a descendant of the Don Juan of Zorrilla. Feal notes that Don Juan talks about being reincarnated and dressing in the romantic style of the 1830’s (293). When Doña Petra and Juan are conversing, Juan exclaims in verses from Zorrilla:

¡Llamé al cielo y no me oyó,
y pues sus puertas me cierra,
de mis pasos en la tierra
responda el cielo y no yo!
(Zorrilla 172 and Unamuno 113)

With this phrase, el hermano Juan, just like Don Juan Tenorio, is blaming God. He says that he called out to heaven but its gates were shut to him. Since God did not answer, Juan reasons, He is responsible for Juan’s actions on earth. According to Gloria Domeque, these allusions to Zorrilla’s treatment serve to emphasize the difference between Zorrilla and Unamuno’s Don Juan:
El de Unamuno nos muestra un hombre lleno de
dudas, aspiraciones y problemas personales que no
tiene mucho que ver con el jactancioso y
libertino Don Juan de la leyenda que aparece en
la obra de Zorrilla. (150)

On the other hand, María Amparo Porta Rivas does not
believe that Unamuno’s Don Juan is so selfless:

[. . .] es el Don Juan de la vanidad, y no el de
la 'humilitas' franciscana de los hermanos
Machado. Es el hombre que caza hembras para
jactarse de ello, porque pretende dejar fama y
nombre, porque, por encima de todo, como el de
Baudelaire, quiere ser admirado. (169)

Diógenes Fajardo says that Unamuno believes that “lo
esencial en el donjuanismo no es lo sexual, no es el amor,
no es ni siquiera la fascinación que ejerce sobre sus
víctimas, sino el deseo de dejar fama y nombre” (371). In
prior versions, Don Juan may also possess this desire for
immortality, but Unamuno emphasizes it as one of the most
important aspects of his Juan. This Don Juan desiring
immortality wants to be looked at, admired, to be known and
leave a name for himself (Unamuno 16, “Prólogo”). “Unamuno
desmitifica a don Juan al despojarlo de todos los rasgos de
auténtico Tenorio, pero, al mismo tiempo, enriquece el mito
al revestirlo de un profundo sentido existencialista”
(Fajardo 378).

Unamuno is innovative in several ways in his treatment of Don Juan. As previously mentioned, Unamuno’s Don Juan has a different concept of love than the traditional mujeriego. Ricardo de la Fuente says that Unamuno “Distingúe [.. .] el amor sexual del amor espiritual” (69). He loves with agape, not eros. This Don Juan is also more philosophical than the Don Juan of the traditional versions. Juan questions existence and wonders who actually exists outside of “este teatro del mundo” (185). He deals with the question of predestination and free will. In Niebla, Unamuno writes about his character, Augusto Pérez, and his attempt to rebel against the author when he realizes that he is only a fictional character. Juan, on the other hand, is conscious of being a theatrical character from the beginning. Domeque states:

Juan es por el contrario consciente de ser un personaje teatral desde el principio de la obra y lo que está intentando es reafirmar el Juan íntimo que lleva dentro de sí frente a la personalidad externa, teatral, que los demás ven y que le ha sido impuesta por un autor. Esta superposición de personalidades le hace pensar
que no tiene libre albedrío, que lo que hace o no hace no proviene de su voluntad y en el último acto, resignado ya a morir y rodeado por los demás personajes, tiene aún un momento de súbita rebelión en que culpa a Dios, su autor. (153)

This may seem like blasphemy, but it is a relationship, through free will, which indicates his belief in God. In many instances throughout El hermano Juan, Juan states his belief that he is destined to one role in life. He is a character created by an author and does not have his own free will. He tries to explain to Inés that he cannot be a lover or a husband, because that is not how the author created him. He tells Inés, “[e]n este teatro del mundo, cada cual nace condenado a un papel” (46). Juan claims he does not know how to love, does not want to love, and should not continue to lead Inés on with her hopes (49). It is as if he were trying to fulfill the role for which he believes he was created. It is a self-fulfilling prophesy of sorts: since Juan believes that he is trapped, he is, in effect, trapped, regardless of whether he was really predestined or not.

Unamuno’s exploration of free will versus determinism, though a variation on the Don Juan myth, is not a new theme. Since the beginning of time people have struggled
with this problem, as it deals fundamentally with the relationship between humanity and the divine. Many ancient myths were absorbed by this argument, most notably the Greek ones. During the fourth century, St. Augustine used Neo-Platonic thought, and Pelagius used Aristotelian thought, to debate determinism versus freedom or choice. The problem figured prominently in the Reformation, and we continue to struggle with it today. In *El hermano Juan*, Juan is constantly thinking that his role in life is fated or determined. However, this probably has more to do with a self-fulfilling prophesy, because in the end it appears that Juan chose his fate rather than being forced to accept it. Antonio urged him to use his free will to make choices, but Juan chose to be stuck in what he considered to be a predetermined role.

Unamuno’s Don Juan also claims to be reincarnated, which leads to confusion with reality. Elvira and Inés ask Juan if he has killed people and he responds that that is what people tell him, but he doesn’t remember, and it must have been in his former roles (182). He struggles with the uncertainty over what is real and what is a dream (Unamuno 177). He recounts a dream he had in which he killed a ghost but awoke, afraid that the ghost had killed him. “Sueño que sueño” (183). In this regard, *El hermano Juan* has
similarities with Calderón de la Barca's *La vida es sueño*. Although Calderón and Unamuno lived several centuries apart, there is a notable influence from Calderón in Unamuno's work. For example, Calderón's *Segismundo* says that the biggest offence for man is to have been born:

> qué delito cometí
> contra vosotros naciendo;
> aunque si nací, ya entiendo
> qué delito he cometido.
> [. . .]
> pues el delito mayor
> del hombre es haber nacido. (117)

Similarly, Don Juan says, in *El hermano Juan*, that it is *he* who must forgive God for making him as he is.

Unamuno writes about the fact that the fictional character may be more real than the author (Unamuno 10, "Prólogo"). Once the author dies, the character lives on. For readers, the character is real, and the author only a pretext. That which is represented is real, not the one representing. The idea is real. The character may live on through the creation of one author, but may become something new or different to each subsequent reader. Or, like Don Juan, the character may become reincarnated through different authors. The character becomes different things to different people in different times and cultures. This is how fictional characters gain their immortality. Unamuno says that there is a need for every person to
represent himself or herself (13, "Prólogo"). This is not a physical need, but a spiritual need, a way to be eternal, immortal, to live in the theater, "que es la historia de la humanidad" (13). Unamuno's Don Juan is a reincarnation of prior Don Juans, who discovers his own role in the Don Juan myth as he remembers his other lives (the Don Juans of other authors), and he feels as though he is predestined, being told that he is only a fictional character. De la Fuente believes that fictional characters have the same relationship with the author as man does with God. He states:

El personaje es creado por el autor, pero a su vez tiene una vida independiente, idénticamente al hombre que en el momento en que se ve en el mundo actúa independientemente de Dios afirmando su libre albedrío. (66)

Although it is true that man has the free will to act independently of God, this is not a direct parallel to an author and character. An author creates the whole story, makes things happen, and his character does not have explicit free will - the difference between real and fictional individuals.

It could be said that the character has free will in the mind of the reader, or perhaps through other authors
who take the character and reshape him. On the other hand, the characters seem to be stuck, static almost, by their role in the minds of the authors and readers, but they also transcend the authors and readers throughout the ages, becoming different things to different people. This is the relationship Unamuno seems to be struggling with. The whole argument that a fictional character has free will seems absurd. How can Unamuno make a parallel between the relationship between an author and a character and the relationship between God and a real human being? Perhaps Unamuno is using these two types of relationships to express his own struggles and to try to understand God’s relationship with mankind.

There are some differences that Fajardo notes between the traditional Don Juan and the Juan of Unamuno in regard to death. The traditional Don Juan dies thinking of his own salvation or condemnation, while el hermano Juan dies believing in his immortality (Fajardo 377). Zorrilla’s Don Juan is redeemed by a woman, whereas women offer themselves to the brother Juan to redeem him. However, for Unamuno’s Juan, Death is his lover who redeems him. “El don Juan de Unamuno anhela la muerte porque la considera su novia, su verdadera amante, la única con quien podrá engendrar” (375).
The Don Juan of Unamuno offers two new perspectives in the Don Juan trajectory. One is his concept of love. No longer is Don Juan pursuing a woman for sexual pleasure, but only for spiritual gain. He even ends up sacrificing these platonic relationships in order to make peace between the women and their lovers. He sacrifices for them. The other innovation is Juan’s preoccupation with determinism. Most traditional Don Juans move haphazardly from adventure to adventure spontaneously enjoying the women that cross their path. Unamuno’s Don Juan is very deliberate about his actions - doing only that which he thinks fits his role.
Conclusion

The Don Juan treatments by Valle-Inclán, the Machados, and Unamuno all offer innovations to the Don Juan legend. These plays were written during the 1920’s, and convey thoughts not traditionally expressed in earlier treatments. Although Valle-Inclán retains most of the traditional elements of the Don Juan myth (like the cemetery and banquet scenes, the warning, and the letter) in Las galas del difunto, he creatively uses these conventional themes to generate a parody. It is also an overt statement of the condition in which Spain found itself during this time. Combining traditional Don Juan elements with the political state of affairs in Spain, Valle-Inclán produces an original Don Juan treatment.

The Machados combine the legend of Don Juan with the myth of Miguel de Mañara in Juan de Mañara. The inventive feature in this Don Juan treatment is that Juan becomes sanctified. Instead of other characters worrying about whether he will be saved when he dies, he is the one unselfishly preoccupied with another character’s soul.

Unamuno’s Don Juan treatment, El hermano Juan o el mundo es teatro, also contains innovative qualities. Juan’s preoccupation with existence, free will versus determinism,
and immortality is a new contribution to the Don Juan trajectory.

*El hermano Juan* and *Juan de Mañana* differ substantially from *Las galas* but they share many similarities with each other. In both of these treatments, Juan is interested in *agape* love and believes that pure *eros* love cannot exist alone. In at least some ways, Juan is seen as a selfless or sacrificial character. Some writers compare the Machados’ Juan to Jesus, and Unamuno’s Juan even quotes Jesus’ words from the Bible. He also sometimes acts as if he is a savior for the other characters. Although Unamuno’s Don Juan desires immortality, he is not living only for himself, as in the traditional versions.

Both of these treatments also include the role reversal between Juan and some of the women. Juan is not a *mujeriego* in these versions. In *El hermano Juan*, the women chase and fight over Juan. In *Juan de Mañana*, Juan does pursue Elvira, but it is for spiritual rather than physical reasons. He pursues her to take her blame — in essence, to save her. In the treatments by Molière and Mozart, Elvira seeks to save Don Juan’s soul by urging him to repent. This role is reversed in the Machados’ Don Juan treatment.
Fatalism is another way that the Machados’ and Unamuno’s treatments are similar. Both Juans feel guilty: Juan de Mañana feels responsible for Elvira’s sin, while el hermano Juan feels the burden of the sins of all his Don Juan predecessors. Both Juans believe that death awaits them as their only true bride; this is their destiny and they embrace this fate. Like Calderón de la Barca, the Machados and Unamuno struggle with the concept of the pain of living and the sin of even being born. One of Unamuno’s main ideas in his Don Juan treatment is the lack of choice involved in having a predetermined role in life. Determinism can also be detected in the Machado version, but not as obviously.

Additionally, Unamuno and the Machado brothers resemble each other in that they are not really interested in the stone guest, but rather the penitent sinner. Ricardo de la Fuente Ballesteros writes of Unamuno: “no le interesa el convidado de piedra de Tirso, de Zamora o de Zorrilla, sino que se acoge a la versión del penitente, que los hermanos Machado también seleccionaron” (60). The Machados’ Juan repents of his old ways, is redeemed, and offers redemption.
Besides having many similarities with each other, these two Don Juan treatments have a common bond with Valle-Inclán’s Don Juan treatment. The strongest theme tying together these three works is that of redemption. Eileen Doll makes the important point that although each of the three versions is unique, the common union they have is that they all return to the sources of the Don Juan myths to examine modern spiritual problems like religion and redemption (182). In the four traditional treatments reviewed in Chapter 1, the religious theme was retribution based on bad works, or in some cases (like the treatment of Zorrilla) redemption based on confession. In the three more modern works, Don Juan is no longer behaving immorally while waiting for his spiritual punishment. Redemption on account of good works, or the acknowledgement of the need for redemption, is the theme. The theme of retribution by a spiritual force for bad works is not dominant, although we see the self-inflicted punishment by Don Juan in the Machado and Unamuno treatments. In the Machado work, Don Juan does not get punished for leaving Beatriz, but in a way he punishes himself for Elvira’s crime and makes it his mission to take her blame. In Unamuno’s rendering, Don Juan deprives himself of an intimate marital relationship, and instead, seeks death. In the Machado and Unamuno models,
Don Juan offers redemption. In the Valle-Inclán account, redemption is not offered *per se*, but the purpose is to reveal a society in need of redemption.

I have shown that the theme of redemption links these treatments and contrasts them with their predecessors, whose objective is retribution, not redemption. In these three Don Juan treatments of the 1920’s, retribution is marginalized while redemption becomes the common bond.
Bibliography


___. "The Tragicomic Don Juan: Valle-Inclán's Esperpento de las galas del difunto (The Dead Man's Duds)." Modern Drama 23 (1980): 44-57.


