

## A NOTE ON BALZAC AND GALDÓS

**Rodolfo Cardona**

The first time I read Balzac's *Les employés* was in 1957, after I had read Ricardo Gullón's splendid edition of *Miau*. It was a professional reading. I was looking for clues to corroborate what Professor Gullón had found about the possible influence of Balzac's novel on Galdós's. Therefore, I focused on the Galdós novel mentioned by him. A recent casual, and *un-professional* second reading of Balzac's novel in an English translation published in the Centennial Edition of his works surprised me. It is this surprise that I wish to share with my fellow *galdosistas*.

Of course, the presence of Balzac in Galdós has been the subject of many studies throughout the years.<sup>1</sup> Professor Stephen Gilman in his wonderful book on Galdós devoted an interesting chapter that he called "A Colloquium of Novelists" in which he presents "the notion of a spontaneous and intuitive dialogue" (154) among novelists during the XIX<sup>th</sup> Century. Thus, it is not surprising that in our readings, however casual, of Galdós's novels we may find echoes of Cervantes, Dickens, Balzac, or themes that appear in novelists such as Flaubert, James, Tolstoy. In the particular case of *Les employés* there have been several detailed studies of its presence in *Miau*. Ricardo Gullón's, however, seems to have been the first one to have specifically mentioned *Les employés* as a source for *Miau* in his "Estudio preliminar" (subsequently republished under the title of *Galdós, novelista moderno*). It is important to stress anew what Gullón concludes after pointing out similarities and differences between these two novels:

No tiene sentido plantear el problema de las influencias sino es para mostrar cómo, arrancando de una experiencia común, se escriben dos obras, la primera de las cuales incita al autor de la segunda *no a imitar* (my italics), sino a corregir –si puede decirse así sin atribuir la menor petulancia a la actitud galdosiana –y a superar las insuficiencias de aquélla. (301)<sup>2</sup>

Keeping in mind this wise advice, I should like to write about the experience I had when reading *Les employés* the second time, as mentioned at the beginning. As I advanced in my reading of it, another novel kept appearing in my subconscious until it became impossible to disregard it. What was there, before my mind's eye was, in addition to *Miau*, *La de Bringas*.

It is interesting to note, before going any further, that Balzac's novel, originally dated July 1836, had "appeared in the *Presse* just a year after its composition, but it was called *La femme supérieure*, which name it kept on its publication by Werdet as a book in 1838" (Saintsbury xii). The interest here lies in the fact that Balzac's first intention was to emphasize the plot dealing with Célestine Rabourdin's social ambitions and her relationship to her husband Xavier and to the secretary-general Clément Chardin des Lupeaulx. It is this triangle that first linked for me Balzac's novel to *La de Bringas* with its own triangle Rosalía-don Francisco-Pez.

But besides that, Balzac's description of des Lupeaulx immediately called to my mind don Manuel María José del Pez: "Selfish and vain; supple and proud; sensual and gluttonous [...] the secretary-general was one among the crowd of mediocrities which form the kernel of the political world" (225).

What unites Célestine and Rosalía are their social ambitions and the length they are willing, or not, to go in order to obtain their desired ends. However, as the original title that Balzac chose for his novel indicates, Célestine *is* a "superior woman," morally and intellectually, something that could hardly be said about Rosalía de Bringas.

In the present form that we read *Les employés* today, it begins with a portrait of its female protagonist, Célestine Rabourdin, née Leprince. She was the only daughter of one M. Leprince, a retired and reputedly wealthy auctioneer. Xavier Rabourdin, the male protagonist, fell in love with Mlle. Leprince, then seventeen years old. She was endowed with two hundred thousand francs. Here is how Balzac describes her:

A tall, handsome girl with an admirable figure, she had inherited the gifts of an artist mother, who brought her up carefully. Mlle. Leprince spoke several languages, and has acquired some smatterings of learning [...] Mlle. Leprince's manners, language, and ways were fitted for the best society [...] A man needed have plenty courage to undertake such a wife! (199-200)

Xavier Rabourdin nevertheless marries her. Improvidence counseled by love and her social ambitions led the young couple into expense, and in five years they had spent nearly half of her dowry. When Xavier, then a chief clerk in a most important Government department and a most able man in his work, was, nevertheless, overlooked for a deserved promotion that went instead to an incompetent relative of a deputy, Célestine wished that the remaining hundred thousand francs of her dowry be put into land.

In time they found themselves with a son and a daughter.<sup>3</sup> With an income of twelve thousand francs a year to meet all the household expenses of a family of four plus a housemaid and a cook, and paying a rent of one hundred louis, not to speak of the wife's expenses for dress and hired carriage:

(for dress is the first thing to consider) [...] you will find that Mme. Rabourdin could barely allow her husband thirty francs a month [...]. And so it had come to pass that the woman who believed that she was born to shine as one of the queens of Society was obliged to exert her intellect and all her powers in a sordid struggle for which she was quite unprepared" [...]. (202)

We begin here to see that the plights of Célestine and Rosalía are not too different. But there is a difference, however: Xavier, involved in his work, does not interfere with his wife's financial dealings, whereas Rosalía is constantly under the strict control of her husband.

Both women honestly believed that they were meant for great things. Rosalía, however, would have been incapable of the way Célestine sketched out magnificent plans for her husband, ignoring all practical difficulties. Rabourdain, meanwhile, with his practical experience, was unmoved from the outset by these grand ideas. Thus, Célestine had come to the conclusion that her husband was narrow-minded and his views not bold enough. She unconsciously began to form a false idea of him, even to belittle him. She, of course, doesn't go as far as Rosalía's calling her husband a "ratoncito Pérez."

I have failed to mention that Rabourdain was actually a brilliant man who, urged by his wife's ambition, had devoted himself wholeheartedly to a project that would bring about a revolution in the civil service, "a radical reform of the kind that puts a man at the head of some section of society; but he was incapable of scheming a general overturn for his particular benefit" (206).

Balzac, in his inimitable style, goes on for many pages to give a detailed account of Rabourdain's plan.<sup>4</sup> It is this part of Balzac's novel and his detailed descriptions of the Administration's bureaucracy and its *employés* that has alerted critics to the fact that Galdós must have had this novel in mind when he wrote *Miau*. There are undoubtedly many similarities between the two novels, as have been pointed out by critics. One of them, A. G. Paradisis, in his article "Una influencia balzaciana en España: *Les employés* considerada como una de las Fuentes literarias de *Miau* de Benito Pérez Galdós," gives a list of the principal themes of both novels in a double column; thirteen of them belonging to *Les employés* and seventeen to *Miau*. Of these, he claims that eleven of them are identical or have significant resemblance. I will quote the list in full here for it will serve me later for my own purpose:

<i>Les employés</i>	<i>Miau</i>
El mundo burocrático parisiense	El mundo burocrático matritense
El fracaso burocrático, con éxito posterior en la vida	El fracaso burocrático y en la vida
Las influencias personales en la Administración pública	Las influencias personales en la Administración pública
El mantenimiento de las apariencias sociales	El mantenimiento de las apariencias sociales
La ambición personal	La ambición personal
La corrupción social: el poder del dinero	La corrupción social: el poder del dinero
La lucha contra un destino determinista identificado con una serie de conjuraciones	La lucha contra el Destino, que consiste en fuerzas difícilmente identificables
	La obsesión religiosa
	La desesperanza y el suicidio
	El mundo de un niño enfermizo
	El mundo de un perro inteligente
El mundo de la burguesía	El mundo de la burguesía
El mundo de los usureros	El mundo de los usureros
El ambiente de la familia del funcionario	El ambiente de la familia del funcionario
El amor como tentación	El amor como tentación
El amor conyugal	
	El matrimonio como necesidad social y personal

If we utilize as a possible basis of comparison this list of themes compiled by Professor Paradisis but apply it instead to *Les employés* and *La de Bringas*, we come up with at least nine items that the two novels have in common. Let us look at them:

Item 1) Personal influence in public administration is patent in Balzac's novel, where twice Rabourdin is overlooked for a deserved promotion over two individuals recommended by high officials. In *La de Bringas* it becomes the main spring that moves the entire novel. The cenotaph, a minute description of which introduces this narrative, is the means by which the miser don Francisco Bringas chooses to repay don Manuel María José del Pez for having placed Bringas's son in Hacienda, as well as other minor favors:

Era un delicado obsequio con el cual quería nuestro buen Thiers pagar diferentes deudas de gratitud a su insigne amigo don Manuel María José del Pez. Este *próvido sujeto administrativo* (my italics) había dado a la familia Bringas [...] nuevas pruebas de su generosidad. Sin aguardar a que Paquito se hiciera Licenciado en dos o tres Derechos, habíale adjudicado un empleillo en Hacienda [...]. (9)

This quotation is already sufficient proof of the importance of this theme in *La de Bringas*. In addition, it presents, this early in the novel, one of its three main characters around which this narrative revolves, and it does so in the ironic language that I have emphasized by my italics.

Item 2) The maintenance of social appearances with the corollary of the sub-themes "quiero y no puedo" and the love of "trapos" are paramount in both novels. In the case of *La de Bringas*, it is not only illustrated by the female protagonist but by secondary characters such as doña Cándida and, most particularly, Milagros Tellería. It is, in fact, what leads to their debts and the subsequent schemes that these women resort to in order to pay them, leading, of course, to Rosalía's fall. This theme in Balzac is much more subdued thanks to Célestine's intelligence and tact and to her husband's leniency. However, in order to forward her plans to better her husband's position in the Administration, she incurs considerable debts to improve her wardrobe and to entertain at weekly dinners at their house (such as Milagros Tellería did in Galdós's novel).

Item 3) Personal ambition on the part of the two female protagonists of these two novels is patent. In the case of Célestine, it appears at the very beginning of the novel and it becomes the mainspring of *Les employés*'s plot dealing with her and des Lupaulx. Rosalía also has very superior ideas about herself (as descendant from the Pipaóns) and thinks all along that she deserves a better lot than what she has. The very idea, although perhaps not hers, of naming every room in their apartment after the sumptuous salons of the Royal Palace is an indication that reflects personal ambitions. Both Célestine and Rosalía think of their husbands as obstacles to the fulfilling of their "destinies" (although in the Balzac novel this is rectified at the end). The final outcome of this theme takes a diametrically different course in the two novels.

Item 4) Social corruption and the power of money is paramount in Balzac's novel. It affects both Célestine and Xavier; particularly the latter, since his failure to obtain his well-deserved promotions are thwarted by corruption and the power of money. In *La de Bringas* it takes a different form: the power of money over the lives of those whose ambitions lead them

to wish to live beyond their means, such as Milagros and Rosalía (both, symptomatic of the Madrid and Spanish society in general). Money is also an important factor in Bringas's life. His miserliness leads him to undertake the perilous hair cenotaph that blinds him and it is also the cause of Rosalía's need for constantly scheming, both in the sphere of housekeeping as well as in that of her own social ambitions.

Item 5) The administrative financial reform, paramount in *Les employés* and an important element in *Miau*, takes in *La de Bringas* a minor role. It is mentioned in passing at the end of Chapter XXVII and not in the person of the counterpart to Xavier Rabourdin, but in the counterpart of des Lupeaulx, that is to say, Pez:

Tenía Pez un ideal que acariciaba su mente organizadora; pero ¿cómo realizarlo? Su ideal era montar Direcciones generales. Que no hubiera manifestación alguna de la vida nacional que se escapara a la tutela del Estado. El país no pensaba, el país no obraba, el país era idiota. Era preciso, pues, que el Estado pensara y obrase por él, porque sólo el Estado era inteligente. (173-74)

That is to say, the complete opposite of the reforms that Rabourdin wanted to propose for his country: instead of shrinking the size of the Administration, Pez wants to increase it. It is interesting to note how Galdós uses this theme ironically to show us one more instance of the ineffective bureaucrat that Pez is, and also, what the Spanish bourgeoisie thought of the State: a milk cow. It is also a telltale for us to ascertain that Galdós had Xavier's reforms in mind.<sup>5</sup>

Item 6) The bourgeois world is very much an important theme in both novels. Life in the upper stories of the Royal Palace is a mirror of life in Madrid and in the country at large. Chapters IV and V are devoted to a tour through the Palace when Pez and the narrator go there in search of their friend Bringas. The places that they encounter resemble to their minds the variety of quarters that one would find in a city while looking for someone's residence. At one moment in their search Pez mentions "Esto es un barrio popular." And, at the end of Chapter V, the narrator states:

En la vecindad había familias a quienes Rosalía, con todo orgullo, no tenía más remedio que conceptuar superiores. Otras estaban muy por debajo de su grandeza pipaónica; pero con todas se trataba y a todas devolvió la ceremoniosa visita inaugural de su residencia en *la población superpalatina*. (32, my italics)

In other words, the novel revolves around a place that mirrors the bourgeois world.<sup>6</sup>

Item 7) The world of the money lenders becomes in *Les employés* the core of the plot that prevents Rabourdin from obtaining his well deserved promotion. It is really the usurer's plot that forces des Lupeaulx to stop Xavier's appointment. In *La de Bringas* the usurer makes its appearance in the form of our well-known Torquemada. Nine chapters before the end of the novel Torquemada appears as the only possible solution to Rosalía's pressing money problem. Pez, the ideal solution in her view, is not in Madrid. Besides, she recalls that she had been brusque with him on a previous occasion when Pez pressed his advances. Thus, she says to herself: "Si ella no hubiera sido tan...tan tonta, no habría tenido necesidad de pedir dinero al

cafre de Torquemada. ¡Una mujer de su condición verse en tales agonías...! ¿y por qué? Por una miserable cantidad... *Bien podría tener miles de duros si quisiera* (264-65, my italics).

It is her having to use the usurer Torquemada that puts into her head the idea of selling herself, which she finally does with disastrous results at first; but, according to the narrator, with sufficient profit so as to be able to take care of the family after the *Gloriosa*, when don Francisco lost his job. It is interesting in this regard to recall Célestine's confession to her husband that, perhaps, if she had yielded to des Lupeaulx's advances, he might have had his promotion.

Item 8) Love as temptation is present in both novels. However, there is a dramatic difference, as we have seen in the previous paragraph. Whereas Célestine rejects the temptation to yield to des Lupeaulx's advances, Rosalía does, with negative results, when she yields to Pez "for nothing." And this leads, in turn, to the next item.

Item 9) Conjugal love is a very important theme in both novels. As we have seen, both heroines, Célestine and Rosalía, have ambivalent feelings about their respective husbands. Célestine has to be prodded by her father to marry Xavier, although they forge a loving relationship and produce two children. Their happiness is somewhat marred by his total devotion to his work and, mainly, to his cherished project for reforming the Administration to which he has devoted more than seven years.

The fact that he was overlooked once for a promotion that he deserved and his seemingly passive acceptance makes her think little of him. At all times she feels superior to her husband but, nevertheless, wishes to help him and uses des Lupeaulx as her instrument, leading her to a possible compromising situation. But she never, for an instant, expresses any feelings against her marriage or develops any romantic inclination towards the man she uses as a possible remedy for her husband's plight. Her fascination with des Lupeaulx is focused on his elevated position in the Administration and the power that he, through his machinations, has been able to wield even over his superiors. When the possibility of yielding to his advances comes to a head, she is clever enough to reject them without a complete denial; thus, she leaves him still in expectation of positive results.

Xavier's second chance for a promotion is thwarted through a double plot: the first one is lead by the two usurers, one of whom wishes to have his nephew appointed to the vacant post. In this plot des Lupeaulx has a great deal to lose if he goes ahead and signs Xavier's promotion and a great deal to gain by denying it. So, he changes his original promise to the Roubourdins and promotes his rival instead. Originally des Lupeaulx thought that he could have his cake and eat it, for, by appointing an incompetent individual, in three months time he could be dismissed and then appoint Xavier to fulfill his promise to Célestine. However, Xavier thwarts his plans by extending his resignation. The second plot against Xavier's promotion, mentioned at the beginning of this section, was conducted by employers in his division who, for some reason, disliked him. They got hold of a portion of his reform project that gave a careful profile of each employee in the Ministry, most of which were very negative. They were able, through des Lupeaulx help, to make it known and to promote a scandal against Xavier. Prior to his resignation he had been able to explain his reform to Célestine who finally was able to see that he was not the innocent and incompetent man that she had thought, but an able, intelligent and

competent administrator.

After his resignation and his plans to make a life for them in industry and away from the Administration, she comes not only to love him more, but to admire his courage and dignity. With his conjugal love intact and reinforced, Xavier applies himself successfully to a life in industry. Due to his dignified and intelligent stance against the Administration, and with the little that has been leaked about his reform project, he becomes an inspiration to his colleagues, many of whom resign to devote themselves to other activities to which they were better suited. In the end, *Les employés* has an uplifting message both for the readers as well as for the characters within it. Even des Lupeaulx, perhaps in a resigned sour grapes form, comes to the realization that he is too old to be pursuing new conquests. Or as he states it, “he was a very fine fellow for political purposes, but unmistakably superannuated for the court of Cytherea” (403).

The conjugal love theme in *La de Bringas* takes an opposite route. To begin with, Rosalía always thought herself superior to her husband and this feeling never changes, in fact, it increases as the novel progresses. It comes to a head when she compares him to Pez, as she imagines this pompous and mediocre bureaucrat to be. The bottom line, as we know, is that she finally sees Pez for what he is. But her regret is not to have yielded to his advances but to have done so for nothing, an experience that she is determined will not repeat itself with other men. Compare Rosalía’s behavior with Célestine. The latter mentions to her husband that, perhaps, if she had yielded to des Lupeaulx he might have had his promotion. But this is a frank, overboard conjugal talk that points out the firmness of their marriage. On the other hand, Rosalía’s relationship with don Francisco has been all along one of deceptions that end with a complete betrayal of their marriage.

In conclusion, the differences between the two novels are great, beginning with the nature of the couple involved. The other members of the two triangles mentioned have much more in common. But Rosalía and Célestine and Xavier and don Francisco could not be more different. The only thing that could link Xavier and don Francisco is the pertinacity with which they devote themselves to their respective pet projects; but the projects themselves are worlds apart. Xavier spends all of his spare time for many years on a project that, if carried out, would save France billions and make its Government more agile; whereas don Francisco’s equal diligence is spent on the grotesque manufacture of a cenotaph made with the hairs of diseased children of the Pez family. Even Pez, the actual object of this present, at a moment when he is observing the painstaking efforts of Bringas, comments to himself: “—Vaya una mamarrachada... Es como salida de esa cabeza de corcho. Sólo tú, grandísimo tonto, haces tales *esperpentos* (my italics), y solo a mi mujer le gustan. Sois uno para el otro” (67).

It isn’t in vain that Galdós utilizes here the word *esperpento* for, in a way, one might be tempted to state that the two novels that were inspired by *Les employés* could be conceived as *esperpentic* versions of Balzac’s novel. All the themes in them as well as the characters seem like grotesque versions of their originals.

So, in the end I ask myself why did Galdós chose a novel that has such a final uplifting outcome only to convert it into two novels that lead to such tragic and degrading endings. There is no question about Balzac’s intentions in writing *Les employés*. He aimed at a critical

presentation of the Parisian bureaucratic world that needed a fundamental and radical reform. To go through the detailed presentation and analysis of Xavier's reform project meant that he himself had thought about these problems in depth. So, in his novel he avails himself of characters that will show us clearly what was wrong with that world; one of them, keenly aware of the problem, devotes himself wholeheartedly to its reform. In a way, this novel, in the final version that we read today, might better be called a treatise than a novel (George Saintsbury, who introduces each work for the quoted Centennial edition mentions that it "has rather dubious claims to be called a novel or a story at all" (xi)).

Galdós's two novels, on the other hand, dwell on the human elements of the bureaucratic and bourgeois worlds of his own time and place. He depicts them, without preaching, in their lamentable reality. The characters he chooses to enact the actions involved are then, at the same time, unique and stereotypical of the world he is portraying. This may seem paradoxical, but looking at them objectively we see them in their actions both as types and individuals: Villaamil as *cesante* and as himself, a human being with ideas and feelings and a will of his own that leads him to his suicide. We see Bringas as a typical small-minded Government official who tries his best to be frugal, mindful of the real possibilities of Government's fluctuations that may lead to Villaamil's situation. Rosalía, the typical example of the "quiero y no puedo," with ambitions to reach a social position that she erroneously aspires to, is also the scheming wife that is able to devise ways for helping herself and her friends. And thus, Galdós gives a double image of Madrid and of Spain: the one that has always been commented upon by writers from Larra on forwards and backwards, and the human element that bring the individuals involved out of their stereotypical roles and makes them live for us as *agonistas*, as Unamuno would say. Because of his ability to transcend the typical, Galdós ends up surpassing his model.



## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The first article on the subject of “Galdós y Balzac,” by Carlos Ollero, was published in *Insula* in 1952. It does not compare novels by these two authors but, rather, the two societies that they depicted in them. Gullón’s edition of *Miau* with its specific mention of *Les employés* as a possible source for it came in 1957; it was followed by María Embeitia’s “Balzac y Galdós, un paralelismo (1971), in which she dwells on how both novelists captured “el triunfo del mundo burgués con su crisis y transmutación de valores, y el desplazamiento de la aristocracia de la vida pública” (7). She mentions *La de Bringas* as a cruel satire of the aristocracy but without bringing up a parallel in Balzac’s works. A. G. Paradisis’s article quoted at length in the body of this note appeared in 1972, and was followed by A. F. Lambert’s “Galdós and the anti-bureaucratic tradition” (1976). This latter article focuses mostly on the Spanish tradition on the subject of bureaucracy in authors such as Mesonero Romanos, Gil y Zárate and Antonio Flores. It has little to say about Balzac except for a brief mention of Gullón’s assertion about *Les employés* as a source for *Miau*, to which he adds the possibility of Dickens’ novel *Little Dorrit* as another influence for the Galdós novel. However, Lambert has some interesting things to say pertinent to the subject of this note that will be quoted later.

<sup>2</sup> In addition, Gullón here was pointing out, without citing him, what Carlos Ollero had, in fact, done in his article published in *Insula* a few years earlier.

<sup>3</sup> Among the several differences between these two novels that will be dealt with in the course of the article, it is important to state from the outset that unlike *La de Bringas* where the Bringas children have an important role to play, the Rabourdin children are hardly ever mentioned in the course of the novel and only in passing.

<sup>4</sup> Since we only have a slight echo of this particular subject in *La de Bringas* that will be dealt with later, I have not felt that a full description of Xavier’s plan was necessary in the context of my particular focus on the two novels. I should mention, however, that the detail with which Balzac describes every angle of Xavier’s plan makes me think that Balzac himself had given a great deal of thought to the subject of a radical reform of the Administration. Since Balzac was a radical conservative, it is not surprising to see that, as Republicans in the United States, he was against “big government,” and an important aspect of the plan that Xavier puts out is focused on the reduction of the Administration along with the savings that this will mean for the Government of France. Similar “austerity plans” have been imposed in the UK, Greece, Spain, Portugal and Italy in recent times.

<sup>5</sup> In this regard it is interesting to see what Professor Lambert has to say about the anti-bureaucratic tradition: “Appreciation of Galdós’ satire against the bureaucracy has tended to concentrate on the moral defects of the bureaucrats portrayed. But they were also prime offenders against Galdós’ political ideals in many respects, on much the same grounds they were attacked by Gil y Zárate. Francisco Bringas is an important although absurd servant of the government. As an *empleado* in office (the fact he has remained in office so long must testify to his inconspicuousness as much as to any positive skills) he resists change even if it is for the better, because, as Gil y Zárate has pointed out of earlier bureaucrats, it would menace his own livelihood. He is terrified by the approaches of the 1868 revolution out of egocentric motives, without considering its possible benefits to society as a whole [the complete opposite of Xavier Rabourdin]. The irony is, of course, that the revolution in fact changed little. More adept and flexible bureaucrats like Pez [and des Lupeaulx, one might add] changed horses in time – another manoeuvre mentioned by Gil y Zárate” (44).

<sup>6</sup> With specific reference to *La de Bringas*, Professor Lambert notes: “Although the bureaucrat was in many respects a characteristically—almost even symbolically—middle-class individual [i.e. bourgeois], the state apparatus he served was seen as largely inimical to the productive middle-class. Furthermore, association with the court and a parasitic aristocracy contaminated the bureaucratic milieu with competitive extravagance

and ostentation. Traditional anti-aristocratic sentiment merges with keen observation of contemporary *cursilería* in the satire of *La de Bringas*"(44). And, I may add, not too far removed from the milieu of *Les employés*, although without the satirical twist.

## WORKS CITED

- Balzac, Honoré de. *Les employés*. Ellen Marriage, trans. *The Novels of Balzac (Centennial Edition): Muse of the Department, A Prince of Bohemia and Other Stories*. Prefaces by George Saintsbury. Philadelphia: John D. Morris & Company: n.d.. 195-450. Print.
- Embeitia, María. "Balzac y Galdós, un paralelismo." *Insula* 298 (1971): 7-8. Print
- Gilman, Stephen. *Galdós and the Art of the European Novel: 1867-1887*, Princeton: Princeton University Press: 1981. Print.
- Gullón, Ricardo. Estudio Preliminar. Benito Pérez Galdós. *Miau*. Madrid: Revista de Occidente, 1957. Print. 13-302.
- Lambert, F. "Galdós and the anti-bureaucratic tradition." *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies* 53.1 (1976): 35-50. Print.
- Ollero, Carlos. "Galdós y Balzac". *Ínsula* 82 (1952): 9-10. Print.
- Paradisis, A.G. "Una influencia balzaciana en España: *Les employés* considerada como una de las fuentes literarias de *Miau* de Benito Pérez Galdós." *Bulletin Hispanique* 74 (1972): 444-52. Print
- Pérez Galdós, Benito. *La de Bringas*. Madrid: La Guirnalda, 1884. Print.
- Saintsbury, George. Preface. Balzac, Honoré de. *Les employés*. Ellen Marriage, trans. *The Novels of Balzac (Centennial Edition): Muse of the Department, A Prince of Bohemia and Other Stories*. Prefaces by George Saintsbury. Philadelphia: John D. Morris & Company, n.d. ix-xii. Print.