QUIZ: Who wants to be a millionaire?

1. This anonymous work is about the life and heroic deeds of a hero born in Burgos, Spain, in the 11th century, who was in the service of Prince Sancho under King Fernando el Grande. He fought the North African Muslims, the Moors, who invaded Spain and remained in the country for eight centuries until 1492 when the last king was expelled. This hero’s wife was called Dona Ximena.
   What is the name of this epic poem?
   A. El Vencedor de Los Moros  
   B. Don Juan Tenorio  
   C. Cantar de mio Cid  
   D. El Caballero de Burgos

2. Tragicomedia de Calisto y Melibea, a play by Fernando de Rojas, is the story of two lovers who use an intermediary who gets them together and facilitates their love meetings. The play is classified as a "tragicomedia" (tragedy/comedy) because, for all the comic situations, it has a tragic ending.
   Under what name is this play more broadly known?
   A. Bodas de Sangre  
   B. Romancero Gitano  
   C. La Buscavida  
   D. La Celestina

3. The “picaresque novel” has its roots in the Baroque Spanish literature. What would the English be for “pícaro”?
   A. Wanderer or Soldier  
   B. Rogue or Rascal  
   C. Orphan or Bastard  
   D. Thief or Thug

4. This novel is anonymous, perhaps because the author did not want to get in trouble with the Inquisition. The story is that of a boy whose father is in gaol and who is entrusted by his unsupportive mother to a beggar who takes him as an apprentice.
   Do you know the name of this novel?
   A. El Mendigo  
   B. El Buscón  
   C. El Lazarillo de Tormes  
   D. Diálogos al Atardecer

5. This masterpiece of Spanish Literature was written by Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, the hero of the battle of Lepanto, who lost a hand in the battle. It is the story of a gentleman, Alonso Quijano, who, after reading many books about knights conquering dungeons and castles, walks out into the world to do the same, but sees what can’t be seen and takes ridiculous situations to convert them into glorious deeds.
   What is the name of this masterpiece?
   A. El Hidalgo  
   B. Don Sancho Panza  
   C. Don Quixote  
   D. El Conquistador

6. Which text introduced the legendary Don Juan Tenorio into International literature?
   A. Don Juan Tenorio by José Zorrilla  
   B. El Burlador de Sevilla y el convidado de piedra by Tirso de Molina  
   C. La vida es sueño by Pedro Calderón de la Barca  
   D. La Araucana by Alonso de Ercilla
7. Lope de Vega is probably the greatest writer of Spain's Golden Age. He wrote numerous plays, poems and sonnets. One of his best known plays is about a real life event in a small town, where a commander abuses the people living in the town. The people, tired of being mistreated and abused, get together and kill him. When the magistrate arrives in the town to investigate the murder, no one tells what really happened, even under torture. What is the title of the play?
   A. Peribañes y el Comendador de Olmedo  
   B. Fuenteovejuna  
   C. El Desdichado por la Honra  
   D. La Dragontea

8. This Spanish Realist writer is often considered as Spain's literary counterpart of Dickens, Tolstoy, Balzac and the likes. Who was this prolific novelist, only second to Cervantes?
   A. Benito Pérez Galdós  
   B. Leopoldo Alas  
   C. Juan Valera  
   D. Ángel Ganivet

9. The "Generation of ‘98" is a literary movement arising from an historical event. Which one is it?
   A. The aftermath of the Napoleonic wars in Spain  
   B. Sissi’s death  
   C. Magritte’s birth  
   D. The loss of the last Spanish colonies

10. Federico García Lorca, the most important poet and playwright of the 20th century according to many, who was supposedly killed by the Nationalist Forces during Spain's Civil War, wrote a collection of poems called Romancero Gitano. Which of these poems makes part of it?
    A. “Prendimiento de Antoñito el Camborio”  
    B. “El mañana efímero”  
    C. “Poema del Cante Jondo”  
    D. “Hijo de la luna”

11. In the 1960s, a new genre based on social reality appears. Who’s the author of The Family of Pascual Duarte and The Hive?
    A. Miguel de Unamuno  
    B. Camilo José Cela  
    C. Rafael Alberti  
    D. Miguel Hernández

12. Which of these novels was not written by Lucía Etxebarría?
    A. Cosmofobia  
    B. Ya no sufro por amor  
    C. Un milagro en equilibrio  
    D. Lo raro es vivir
Spanish literature has followed the movements and mindsets of European literature. Yet it has developed some features of its own that have proved to be very influential on the literatures from other countries.

Medieval Spanish literature mainly consists both of ‘romances’, whose epic tone is salient, and of poems dedicated to the Virgin Mary. The start and flourishing of chivalric romances, such as *Amadís de Gaula*, dates back from the Renaissance during which humanists like Luis Vives prevailed.

The Golden Age of Spanish literature is a rich period, if any, for at that time two major works were written: *Lazarillo de Tormes*, the original model for picaresque novels, and *Don Quijote*, the story of a medieval man born in a world already imbued with capitalism, a mad man with a passion for chivalric novels. It was also the time of the Baroque, when plays abounded in intricate plots, like those of Lope de Vega, or were pregnant with metaphysics, like those of Calderón de la Barca.

In the 18th-century authors focused more on the society and its customs, hence the name of the major movement: the costumbrista literature (i.e. customs-oriented literature). The 19th century Spanish literature is marked, on the one hand, by movements such as naturalism, romanticism and costumbrismo and, on the other hand, by the generation of ’98’s question about Spanish identity.

In the course of 20th century, several movements followed one another: the generation of ’27’s poetry (including the works of Federico García Lorca, who also wrote plays, and those of Miguel Hernández, who witnessed the fights during the war), the works by authors deeply impressed and affected by the war, franquism, and the feeling of absurdity.

The present-day Spanish literature is characterised by the postmodern issues addressed in individualism, scepticism, irony, and parody.
1. PRESENTATION OF THE IMPORTANT EPOCHS AND MOVEMENTS OF SPANISH LITERATURE FROM THE MIDDLE AGES TO THE 21ST CENTURY.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Movements</th>
<th>Main Features</th>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Works</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 11th c.| Middle Ages                    | 1. Oral features are prevailing  
2. Most works are anonymous  
3. The works abound with religious references  
4. The works often serve didactical purposes  
5. Verse prevails over prose | Gonzalo de Berceo  
Arcipreste de Hita  
Don Juan Manuel  
Jorge Manrique  
Fernando de Rojas | Poema de Mio Cid (anónimo)  
Romancero (anónimo)  
Los Milagros de Nuestra Señora  
El Libro de Buen Amor  
El conde Lucanor  
Coplas a la muerte de su padre  
La Celestina |
| 12th c.|                               |                                                                               |                                            | Soneto, Odas, Elegías  
Cántico espiritual  
Vivo sin vivir en mí  
El Lazarillo de Tormes (anónimo)  
Diálogo de la Lengua  
Los engañados |
| 13th c.|                               |                                                                               |                                            |                                           |
| 14th c.|                               |                                                                               |                                            |                                           |
| 15th c.|                               |                                                                               |                                            |                                           |
| 16th c.| Renaissance                   | 1. The movement stems from Italian Humanism  
2. Shift from theocentrism to anthropocentrism  
3. The Ancient Greece and the Antique Rome are extolled  
4. The works comply with classical standards  
5. Religious mind: Reform and Counter-Reform  
6. Onymous works prevail  
7. Poems and narratives are prevailing | Garcilaso de la Vega  
San Juan de la Cruz  
Santa Teresa de Jesús  
Juan de Valdés  
Lope de Rueda |                                           |
| 17th c.| Baroque                        | 1. This typical Spanish movement originates in a spiritual, social and political crisis  
2. The works are imbued with gravity, thoughtfulness and pessimism  
3. The movement concerns all major genres  
4. The movement forsakes classical standards  
5. The works (esp. poetic works) are rather demanding and impenetrable  
6. Spanish comedy is prevailing | Luis de Góngora  
Miguel de Cervantes  
Francisco de Quevedo  
Baltasar Gracián  
Lope de Vega  
Calderón de la Barca  
Tirso de Molina | Soledades  
El Quijote, Novelas ejemplares  
La vida del Buscón  
El Criticón  
Fuentovejuna  
La vida es sueño  
El burlador de Sevilla |
| 18th c.| Neoclassicism-Illustration    | 1. This movement originally appears in France and spreads across Europe  
2. The resort to Rationality becomes prevailing  
3. Imaginative writing almost disappears as a genre  
4. The works often serve didactical purposes  
5. Prose and essays prevail | Juan Meléndez Valdés  
José Cadalso  
Benito Jerónimo Feijoo  
Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos  
Leandro Fdez de Moratín | Églogas  
Cartas marruecas  
Cartas eruditas y curiosas  
Informe sobre la ley agraria  
El sí de las niñas |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>19th c.</th>
<th>Romanticism</th>
<th>1st half of the century</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. This movement originates from Germany (Sturm und Drang)</td>
<td>José de Espronceda</td>
<td>El estudiante de Salamanca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Authors express their feelings and sentiments</td>
<td>Gustavo Adolfo</td>
<td>Rimas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Life is perceived as a tragedy</td>
<td>Bécquer</td>
<td>El casarse pronto y mal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Imagination prevails</td>
<td>Mariano José de Larra</td>
<td>Don Juan Tenorio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The movement concerns all major genres</td>
<td>José Zorilla</td>
<td>Don Álvaro o la fuerza del sino</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. A whole range of noticeable subgenres in prose appears: costumbrismo (genre focusing on traditions and customs), novels, journalism, doctrinal writing</td>
<td>Duque de Rivas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 2nd half of the century |
|---|---|---|
| 1. This movement originates in France | Pedro A. de Alarcón | El sombrero de tres picos |
| 2. Literature reflects reality | Leopoldo Alas, Clarín | La Regenta |
| 3. Novels are prevailing | Benito Pérez Galdós | Fortunata y Jacinta |
| 4. The movement ends with the current called naturalism | Emilia Pardo Bazán | La Tribuna |
| | Vicente Blasco Ibáñez | La barraca |

| 20th-21st c. |
|---|---|---|
| Generation '98 (1890s) | A bourgeois, ideology free play-writing movement | Jacinto Benavente | Los intereses creados |
| 1. A typically Spanish movement | Miguel de Unamuno | Niebla |
| 2. Critical view on the socio-political context | Pío Baroja | El árbol de la ciencia |
| 3. Content matters more than form | Azorín | La Voluntad |
| 4. The authors claim to write for a larger readership | Ramón del Valle-Inclán | Luces de Bohemia |
| Commercial theatre |
| Modernism (1900s) | The authors eschew issues |
| 1. This movement is mostly a European movement: symbolism and parnassianism (France) ; pre-raphaelites and d'annunzianism (Italy) | Rubén Darío | Azul |
| The authors eschew issues | Antonio Machado | Campos de Castilla |
| 2. Form matters more than content | Francisco Villaespesa | Doña María de Padilla |
| 3. The authors claim to write for a smaller readership | Eduardo Marquina | La ermita, la fuente y el río |
| Novecentismo (1910s) | Novecentism 19th-centurism |
| 1. This movement is imbued with Europeanism | Juan Ramón Jiménez | Arias tristes |
| 2. The authors champion the “Art for Art's sake” principle and claim that a work is nice as long as it is well written | José d'Ortega y Gasset | España invertebrada |
| 3. The authors support political liberalism and favour objectivity | |
| Avant-guardism (1910-1920) | A short-lived movement |
| 1. This movement breaks with previous literary movements | Ramón G. de la Serna | Automuribundia |
| 2. The movement breaks with previous literary movements | |
| Generation '27 (1920-1930) | |
| 1. This Spanish movement is made up of poets. | Luis Cernuda | Desolación de la quimera |
| 2. The movement was formed to commemorate the anniversary of Gongora’s death | Pedro Salinas | Presagios |
| 3. Mezcla entre las formas populares y las cultas | Vicente Aleixandre | Pasión de la tierra |
| 4. Mixture of popular and learned forms | Jorge Guillén | Cántico |
| 5. The authors champion the “Art for Art's sake” principle | Rafael Alberti | Marino en tierra, El adefesio |
| | Federico García Lorca | Romancero gitano, La casa de Bernarda Alba |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
|                                    | 1. Expression of conformism with the context | 1. Uncompromising, socially conscious literature | 1. Literature mostly concerned with personal matters | 1. Following suit with previous movements |
|                                    | 2. Literature concerned with personal matters | 2. Content matters more than form | 2. Literature mostly concerned with humanity | 2. Literature mostly concerned with humanity |
|                                    | 3. Pervious to all genres | 3. Literature seen/used as a means of protest and struggle | 3. Introducing new techniques from aboard | 3. Returning to classical themes and techniques |
|                                    | Luis Rosales, Camilo José Cela, Carmen Laforet | Blas de Otero, Luis Martín Santos, Laura Olmo | Pere Gimferrer, Miguel Delibes, Fernando Arrabal | Blanca Andreu, Antonio Soler, Francisco Nieva |
|                                    | Retablo de Navidad, La familia de Pascal Duarte, Nada | Pido la paz y la palabra, Tiempo de silencio, La camisa | Anda al mar, Cinco horas con Mario, El cementerio de automóviles | El sueño oscuro, El camino de los ingleses, El combate de Ópalos |
**MIDDLE AGES: Cantar de Mio Cid, anonymous**

**Presentation**
The history of Spanish literature starts with *The Poem of the Cid*, an epic narrative written in a Romance language, composed around 1200 and transmitted orally by the story tellers. It is based on the true story of Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar, known as El Cid, and it takes place during the Spanish Reconquest.
The poem is composed of 3,735 verses of variable extension. It is divided into three *Cantares* (Songs), but the work is structured in two general stages: survival and rehabilitation.

**Summary**
*The Poem of the Cid* revolves around the topic of the restoration of lost honor, which will be a greater honor than the one lost.
First song: After being accused of stealing, Cid is banished by the King from Castile and leaves his daughters and wife at home to begin his military campaign to restore his honor.
Second song: Cid conquers Valencia and his daughters are wed to the Infants of Carrión, even though Cid doesn't trust them.
Third song: The Infants of Carrión leave Cid's daughters beaten in the middle of the country. He asks the King for a trial against the Infants and he wins. His daughters are promised then to two Spanish Princes, the Infants of Navarre and Aragón.

**Commentary**

- **Song of deeds** (*chanson de geste* < *gesta* (Lat) = major achievements, heroic deeds).

- **The Cid, an Hero?** The Cid, Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar, was a real life warrior but the novel paints him as a hero, a defender of Spain's interests, when actually there is no evidence of his being totally loyal to the Spanish king. Some Muslim writers of that time said that El Cid fought sometimes for the Muslims.

- **Posterity of the character of The Cid** in European literature: *Las Mocedades del Cid* de Guillén de Castro in 1605, is work that inspired Corneille's *Le Cid* published in 1637.

**PRE-RENAISSANCE PERIOD: La Celestina, Fernando de Rojas**

**Context**
The end of the Middle Ages is a very prolific time for Spanish literature, with the development of works such as *Coplas a la muerte de mi padre* (Jorge Manrique) and *La Celestina* (Fernando de Rojas).

**Presentation**
*La Celestina*, written by Fernando de Rojas under the Catholic Kings of Spain Fernando and Isabel, is considered as the beginning of the Spanish Renaissance. The author is not known to have written any other work afterwards.

**Summary**
Young nobleman Calisto falls in love with Melibea, the daughter of a rich merchant. Calisto's servant Sempronio suggests they get the old procuress Celestina to further the romance. However Calisto's other servant Parmeno is suspicious of Celestina, whose tricks he is well abreast of. After Celestina convinces Melibea of Calisto's love and arranges a brief clandestine meeting between them, Calisto gives Celestina a valuable chain of gold. After she had refused to give their reward, Celestina is murdered by both servants. Calisto returns to the garden for another night with Melibea but while leaving falls from the wall and is killed. She, after confessing their affair to her father, jumps from the top of the house and dies too.

**Commentary**

- **Like an *exemplum*, the play has a moral purpose** : It aims at warning young people against the dangers of passionate love. It condemns passionate love

- **Character of Celestina**: She reminds of the character of matchmaker from the courtly literature, serving as an intermediary between the knight and the dame. Such intermediaries can be found outside courtly love rules, though, like in Ovid’s works with the character of the older woman. Celestina is depicted as a procuress and a witch, both cupid and unscrupulous.

- **Two worlds**: the world of noblemen and that of the dregs of society, of prostitutes and criminals, which will be the stereotypical setting in Picaresque literature.
**RENAISSANCE: El Lazarillo de Tormes, anonymous**

**Context**
During the Renaissance the influence of Italy on Spain is very strong, and hence that of religion. A great deal of religious works are published, notably those by authors such as Fray Luis de Leon or San Juan de la Cruz.

Pastoral or didactic novels are also quite popular.

Many literary works from that time typically feature a walker as the main character (pícaro, pilgrim, wandering knight) who makes encounters in places such as inns, gaols, country houses: the picaresque genre becomes popular with Lazarillo de Tormes.

**Presentation**
This novel had a transcendent impact on Spanish literature. It turned out to be a realistic innovation as it expressed the way of thinking of many sectors of Spanish society, which no author had done before. Important though the novel is, the author's name remains unknown: the content of the book was considered dangerously heretical, enough so for the author to cautiously prefer anonymity. Indeed, El Lazarillo de Tormes was listed in the "Index" of the books the Inquisition had forbidden. Not until the 19th century was the complete book published in Spain. This work published in 1554 tells the story of Lazarro de Tormes, a town crieur, from his birth in a village near Salamanca to the time when he had his trade in Toledo. The book is divided into a prologue and seven treaties.

**Summary**
Tráiler largometraje de animación para televisión "El Lazarillo de Tormes", producido por Arte Sonora Estudios S.L. y Lotura Films S.L.

**Commentary**
Lazarillo represents the first picaresque novel. The characteristics of the picaresque novel are:

- The main character is a rascal with a very low social status, an ideal counterpoint to the chivalrous knights of the Renaissance. He wants to gain a higher status but to do so he has to use illegitimate procedures like cons and lies.
- **False autobiography structure**: These novels are always written in first-person narrative, as if the main characters were writing about his own adventures. He plays a double role in the narration: actor and narrator.
- **Determinism**: Even though the rascal's aim is to better his social position, he always fails. This is why the structure of the picaresque novel is always open, there's no possible evolution for the story.
- **Moralizing and pessimistic ideology**: Every picaresque novel is narrated from a final perspective of disillusion; it could serve as an example of how deviant behavior is always punished, no matter what happens.
- **Satiric intention and itinerant structure**: Society is heavily critiqued in the picaresque novel as the rascal moves through the different social planes, working for an archetype of each social class. The rascal is a privileged spectator who is able to see the hypocrisy of each is his bosses.
- **Realism** and even **naturalism** when describing some of the most disagreeable aspects of society.

**GOLDEN AGE: El Quixote, El Burlador de Sevilla, and Fuenteovejuna, three Baroque works**

**Context**
The Spanish Baroque spans from the end of the 16th century to almost the whole 17th century. It coincides with the Golden Age of Spanish literature, so called because of the great number of excellent literary works that were published in a period of time yet deeply affected by a political crisis and economic stagnation. The Spanish Baroque therefore makes part of the European movement of Baroque, although its characteristic pessimism sets it somehow apart. Contrast is a recurrent motive: the lines between reality and fiction, sleep and wakefulness, doubt and confidence are constantly blurred.

**El Quijote.** Miguel de Cervantes

**Presentation**
Miguel de Cervantes is undoubtedly the ultimate Baroque author. His masterpiece, the adventures of the mad knight Don Quixote, is considered as the most important book of the Spanish literature and one of the most important in world literature. *The Ingenious Gentleman Don Quixote of La Mancha (El ingenioso hidalgo don Quijote de la Mancha)* is a novel published in two volumes, in 1605 and 1615.
Summary

Don Quixote is a middle-aged gentleman from the region of La Mancha in central Spain. Obsessed with the chivalrous ideals touted in books he has read, he decides to take up his lance and sword to defend the helpless and destroy the wicked. After a first failed adventure, he sets out on a second one with a somewhat befuddled laborer named Sancho Panza. On his horse, Rocinante, a barn nag well past his prime, Don Quixote rides the roads of Spain in search of glory and grand adventure. He gives up food, shelter, and comfort, all in the name of a pleasant woman, Dulcinea del Toboso, whom he envisions as a princess.

On his second expedition, Don Quixote acts out against what he perceives as threats to his knighthood or to the world. Along the way, the simple Sancho plays the straight man to Don Quixote, trying his best to correct his master’s outlandish fantasies. Two of Don Quixote’s friends, the priest and the barber, come to drag him home. Believing that he is under the force of an enchantment, he accompanies them, thus ending his second expedition and the First Part of the novel.

In the Second Part of the novel, as the two embark on their journey, Sancho lies to Don Quixote, telling him that an evil enchanter has transformed Dulcinea into a peasant girl. Undoing this enchantment, in which even Sancho comes to believe, becomes Don Quixote’s chief goal. Don Quixote meets a Duke and Duchess who conspire to play tricks on him. Under the watch of the Duke and Duchess, Don Quixote and Sancho undertake several adventures. Finally, Don Quixote sets out again on his journey, but his demise comes quickly. Shortly after his arrival in Barcelona, the Knight of the White Moon—actually an old friend in disguise—vanquishes him.

In the end, the beaten and battered Don Quixote forswears all the chivalric truths he followed so fervently and dies from a fever. With his death, knights-errant become extinct.

Commentary

- 2 parts: The first part displays the common features of the works from the Renaissance: Byzantine novels (numerous adventures, the stories of minor characters are intertwined with that of the main character, allusions to mythology, etc.) and parodies of chivalric romance. The second part is far more baroque in the sense that it is more pessimistic and introspective. More dialogues and more in-depth portrayals of characters can also be found. The author seems to have started taking really account of the characters and their evolution: Sancho resembles more and more Quixote while Quixote resembles more and more Sancho.

- A parody of chivalric novels: Don Quixote complies with the rules of chivalric novels, albeit in a roundabout way.

- The baroque aesthetics: To many respects, Don Quixote partakes of the baroque aesthetics (metamorphose, instability, illusion), without being a Baroque novel yet.

El burlador de Sevilla, Tirso de Molina

Presentation

The Seducer of Seville and the Stone Guest is a play by Tirso de Molina, first published in Spain around 1630, though it may have been performed as early as 1616. Set in the 14th century, the play is the earliest fully-developed dramatization of the Don Juan legend.

Summary

Don Juan is a legendary character with questionable morals who would take advantage of women’s emotions to satisfy his own appetites.

- 1st part: Don Juan abuses 4 women, one of which being Commander Don Gonzalo’s daughter. He kills Don Gonzalo as the father tries to rescue the daughter.

- 2nd part: Don Juan is invited for dinner by the Commander’s statue which drags him into the flames of hell.

Commentary

The Trickster of Seville is a baroque work par excellence for 3 main reasons:

- Don Juan is a baroque character, completely outrageous, challenging all authorities, claiming total freedom, fearing neither God nor man.

- A constant feature is a tensed duality, for example between profanity and sacredness, between being and seeming.

- Finally, the work clearly serves a religious purpose: when questioned about his morals Don Juan always answers, "Que largo me lo fiáis", meaning that he will repent at the time of his death. However, this backfired in a major way: Tirso wants to show whither immorality, rebellion, recklessness and excessive self-confidence lead.

In the posterity:

Through Tirso’s version, Don Juan became a universal figure, comparable to Hamlet and Don Quixote.
In the 17th century the Don Juan story was incorporated into the repertoire of strolling Italian players who carried
the legend to France (Molière’s Le Festin de Pierre, 1665). By the 19th century many foreign versions of the Don
Juan existed.
Some of these musical and literary works include Mozart’s opera Don Giovanni, produced in 1787, Lord Byron’s
satiric poem Don Juan (1819-24), and George Bernard Shaw’s drama Man and Superman (performed in 1907),
including the 2 well-known third act, “Don Juan in Hell”.

**Fuenteovejuna, Lope de Vega**

Fuenteovejuna is one of the best known Spanish Golden Age plays, and its author, Lope de Vega, the most popular
and influential dramatist of the period. He wrote over 1500 plays, although only over 400 have been found.
Fuenteovejuna is an historical play, based on an uprising in the village of Fuenteovejuna (North West of Córdoba) in
1476. It was composed probably between 1612 and 1614. The action of the play takes place in 1476, but with
implications not just for the audience of the 17th century but for all ages: good governance, loyalty, justice, the
meaning of honour, trust, true love, sacrifice. Is nobility restricted only to social rank?
The main plot centres on the relationship between the noble, Fernán Gómez de Guzmán, Comendador (Knight
Commander) of the Order of Calatrava, and the villagers of Fuenteovejuna; the subplot addresses the relationship
between the Comendador and the Catholic Monarchs. In both, the Comendador creates disorder. For order and
harmony to return, the Comendador must either recognize his error or be destroyed.

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### 19th Century

Realist literature was designed to paint an accurate portrait of society, and avoided the over imaginative styles of
Romanticism. Benito Pérez Galdos’ most famous novels have a historical background and they were published under the name
Episodios Nacionales.
The author researched the historical facts of his novels, sometimes even interviewing witnesses of the different
events.

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### 20th Century

**Generation of ‘98**

"Generation of ‘98" is the name of a group of Spanish writers, essayists and poets who were profoundly affected by
the moral, social and political crisis occurring after the US had defeated the Spanish army in 1898 and the colonies
of Cuba, Guam, Puerto Rico and the Philippines had been lost to Spain.

**Generation of ‘27**

Generation of ‘27 is the last generation of authors before the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, which would wipe
out almost totally the cultural and literary life of Spain for its duration and for most of the following dictatorship.

Among the Generation of ‘27 authors was Federico García Lorca, a poet and a play and prose writer. His
Romancero Gitano, a collection of 18 ballads published in 1928, allies popular tradition and poetic modernity.

**Post war period**

With The Family of Pascual Duarte, published in 1942 during the Franco period, Camilo José Cela started a
movement called ‘tremendismo. Continuing the Spanish tradition of naturalism and the social novel, ‘tremendismo’
one of the most developed genres in post-war Spain. The Family of Pascual Duarte is set in rural Extremadura
before and after the Civil War. The main character, Pascual Duarte, recounts his life crudely in which violence is
seen as the only response to existential emptiness. Making his work quite innovative, the author uses several
narrators, in addition to Pascual Duarte himself, so as to offer a full realistic vision of the events thereby re-told.

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### 21st Century: Contemporary Literature

Two contemporaneous works with two points in common:

**Beatriz y los cuerpos celestes**, Lucía Etxebarria

**El camino de los ingleses**, Antonio Soler

Both of them were awarded the Nadal Price and are good examples of European intertextuality, because The divine
comedy and Dante’s character Beatrice are their first source of inspiration.
**Beatriz y los cuerpos celestes**, Lucía Etxebarria, 1998

**Summary**

*Beatriz and the Heavenly Bodies* explores the life and loves of Bea, a young Spanish woman. At the beginning of the novel, Bea is 22 years old and returning to her native Madrid after spending 4 years studying in Edinburgh. She leaves behind her loving, yet needy girlfriend, Cat, and her distant and occasional lover, Ralph. For Bea, returning to Madrid means to get together with her best friend Monica, who she is in love with and who has been involved in some tragic events. This is her chance to find out what happened to Monica and to decide whether to end her relationship with Cat. Monica is highly promiscuous and sleeps with Coco to guarantee her supply of drugs. Coco and Monica draw Bea into their world, and Bea goes along with all their plans. Soon, things begin to take a violent turn.

**Commentary**

- Novel which contains a symbolism inspired by the *Divine Comedy* by Dante Alighieri, and deals with the evolution of a bisexual feeling in which the author finds herself.
- Feminist and woman-centered elements can be found in a number of Etxebarria’s works.
- Work typical of what is called “Generación media” and “Generación X”.

**El Camino de los Ingleses**, Antonio Soler, 2004

**Summary**

The novel depicts the life of teenager Miguelito Dávila, who, after suffering from kidney disease and spending some time at the hospital, has learned such classic poetry as Dante’s *Divine Comedy* and dreams of leaving his job at a hardware store and pursuing his dream of becoming a poet.

One summer, he hangs out with his childhood friends Babirusa, Paco Frontón and Moratalla, until he meets a girl called Luli, who becomes his Beatriz, and the two start dating. Luli would love to become a professional dancer, and is best friends with “La cuerpo”, who fancies Miguelito’s posh friend Paco. The two couples spend time together swimming, and gradually they experiment with other distractions.

Miguelito meets later an older teacher, who is interested in his talent, and begins an affair with her around the same time that Cardona, an older and apparently richer man, starts courting Luli with the promise of helping her career as a dancer.

*Cf. Videoilustración basada en la novela ‘El camino de los ingleses’ de Antonio Soler. Edición I Premio Mandarache.*

**Commentary: a crude realism**

The characters in *El camino de los Ingleses*, heroes of some Picaresque sort, are stuck in an age between adolescence and adulthood, at a stage where change is permanent, in a difficult time when dreams can never come true and when daily life is always more fraught with uncertainty.

With acuteness and irony Antonio Soler depicts what makes their world: first romances, sex, conflicts, disconcertedness, and friendship. Such are indeed the settings of the play of their existence as a group of friends who, torn between adolescence and adulthood, struggle in a fight between innocence and maturity and who, dreaming of a chimeric future, attempt to elude vagrancy and insipidity.