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Imperial Emotions

Cultural Responses to Myths of
Empire in *Fin-de-Siècle* Spain

JAVIER KRAUEL

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For Virginia

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slightly different version of “Ángel Ganivet’s *Idearium español* as *Fin-de-Siècle* Imperial Melancholia,” *Revista Hispánica Moderna*, 65.2 (2012), pp. 181–97.

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Introduction: Emotions, Empire, and the Tradition of the National Essay

In the more than five hundred years of Western expansion, scarcely another imperial history has stirred up as passionate a dispute as that of the Spanish empire in the Americas. Long-standing and acrimonious, the beginnings of this dispute can be traced back to the beginnings of the Spanish Empire itself, when Bartolomé de Las Casas painfully recounted some of the horrors of colonization in his *Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias* (1552), a book that decisively contributed to the international condemnation of Spanish history known as the “Black Legend.” The Latin American Wars of Independence at the beginning of the nineteenth century were also an occasion to stage bitter criticisms of Spain’s New World empire, as was the Spanish-Cuban-American War of 1898.

In contrast to these passionate critiques of imperial history, nineteenth-century Spanish leaders generally regarded sixteenth-century imperial achievements with pride, which resulted in early twentieth-century intellectuals having to deal with a series of ambivalent, emotionally charged images of the conquest and colonization of the Americas in their attempts to reimagine a post-empire Spain. More recently, on the occasion of the 1992 celebrations of Columbus’s first voyage in 1492, Spain’s cultural and political establishment claimed the glory of those events for itself, transforming them into proof of Spain’s modernity and its deserved integration into the European Union. In response to this move by the Spanish government, Nicaraguan poet Gioconda Belli penned an article entitled “Porque aún lloramos” [Because we are still crying], where she recounts the pain evoked by the conquest and colonization. She wrote that for her, “esta discusión a pesar del tiempo transcurrido [...] aún no ha trascendido el plano de lo afectivo” [this discussion has not transcended the emotional plane {...} despite the time elapsed] (64).¹

Is the role of emotions in the historical controversy over the conquest and colonization of the Americas as central as Belli claims? Or are they crucial only to the colonized peoples and to those who claim their heritage?

The answers given in the following pages argue that emotions (in addition to epistemological and political reasons) have played and continue to play a central role for all of the parties involved in this historical dispute. Recent postmodern arguments in historiography have greatly challenged the positivist ideals and objectivist claims constitutive of history as an academic discipline by questioning the ontological stability of the past, by emphasizing the constructed character of historical facts, and by reflecting on the linguistic mediation of all knowledge.² But by focusing on the epistemological presuppositions and the form of historical accounts, these postmodern approaches have failed to take into account the different communities to whom historical narratives matter deeply. “Most often spurred by controversy,” writes Michel-Rolph Trouillot, “collectivities experience the need to impose a test of credibility on certain events and narratives because it matters *to them* whether these events are true or false, whether these stories are fact or fiction” (11; emphasis in orig.).

The main argument put forth in this book suggests that this mattering to a collectivity is the result of a previous emotional investment. If emotions are, as Martha Nussbaum convincingly argues, “appraisals or value judgments, which ascribe to things and persons outside the person’s own control great importance for that person’s own flourishing” (*Upheavals* 4), then the grief expressed by Belli in the name of the colonized and the pride evident in Spain’s national leaders show that these two communities care deeply about the events of 1492. Of course, the particular content of their respective memories could not be more at odds – Belli sees empire as an occasion to grieve over the (real and imagined) losses it brought about, while the Spanish elites see it as an occasion to take pride in the (real and imagined) achievements it made possible. But this is precisely the point: grief establishes salience among certain aspects of what we remember (the murders, injustices, and humiliations endured by the colonized) just as pride helps us to reinforce other aspects (the heroism and achievements of the colonizers).

As seen in the above examples, an important facet of emotions is that they are about something – in our case the Spanish empire in the New World – and that this object is what philosophers call an *intentional* object.³ This means that such an object “figures in the emotion as it is seen or interpreted by the person whose emotion it is” (Nussbaum, *Upheavals* 27). Belli, in her grief, saw the Spanish Empire as the cause of an irrevocable loss; the proud Spanish leaders perceived it as a series of achievements. In this sense, emotions can be said to single out and to color particular episodes of the past that are then incorporated into the particular identity of an individual or group.⁴ Belli’s identity as an advocate of the indigenous

cause is defined by the losses she remembers, and such losses are in turn defined by her identity; similarly, Spain's identity as a modern European country is determined by the imperial achievements national leaders want us to remember, and such achievements are simultaneously determined by their version of national identity. In both cases, the role of emotions has been constitutive of both memory and identity by establishing salience among the chaotic heretogeneity of the past and by embodying a particular way of seeing objects from the past. In an important sense, emotions provide a principle of selection within the vastness of the past. Without emotions, we would be afflicted by the same problems that threaten Ireneo Funes, the man with infinite memory immortalized by Jorge Luis Borges, for whom "the least important of his recollections was more minutely precise and more lively than our perception of a physical pleasure or a physical torment" (115). To forget, and thus to remember *certain* events in a *particular way*, we need emotions.⁵

For those societies less secure in their collective identity, the emotions projected onto the past agitate the present with unusual force. Spain is a case in point. Historians Sebastian Balfour and Alejandro Quiroga, referring to the early twentieth-century authors studied in the following pages, recently wrote that "for generations of Spanish intellectuals, writers, and politicians, Spain has been a problem. Some even doubt its existence as a nation" (1). Indeed, the past has not been a source of consensus in the Iberian Peninsula, but rather the stage for a number of internal antagonisms that have been continually summoned, invoked, and recalled. One explanation for the conflictive nature of Spain's past lies in Ernest Renan's famous definition of the nation as "a large-scale solidarity, constituted by the feeling of the sacrifices that one has made in the past and of those that one is prepared to make in the future" (19). The key term here is "feeling." The emotional component of nations, "the fact of having suffered, enjoyed, and hoped together" (Renan 19), complicates the construction of its common legacy of memories, making it an uncertain, ambivalent, and contentious endeavor.

The endemic crises of legitimacy that have marked modern Spanish history up until the recent consolidation of a democratic, constitutional government in the late 1970s confirm that Spain's past has been the object of a wealth of contradictory emotions. Consequently, Spanish citizens have had a hard time forgetting some of the most contentious episodes of their past. While at the end of the nineteenth century Spaniards fought about the meaning of the influence of the Catholic Church, the Inquisition, and the absolute Monarchy, more recently they have quarreled over the proclamation of the Second Spanish Republic, the Spanish Civil War, and the ensuing repression during Francoism.⁶ The sense of normalcy that

seemed to characterize Spanish cultural and political life after Franco has all but vanished in recent years. As Elena Delgado puts it: “the sources of tension and conflict within the national body are not duly acknowledged and dealt with, but simply anesthetized and/or circumscribed to a convenient problematic symptom” (121).

One point may be stressed here with regard to the contemporary controversy over Spain’s recent past, which is pertinent to my argument: emotions play a crucial role in early twentieth-century as well as more recent memory practices, although this role has rarely been theorized as such. Some critics have touched upon the emotional dimension of current uses of memory. For instance, Carolyn Boyd has briefly noted that the phrase “Recuperation of Historical Memory” is an “emotive phrase” that “reflected the depth of the social trauma that still lingered sixty years after the end of the civil war” (“The Politics of History” 143). And Ángel Loureiro has convincingly argued that “the more recent documentaries [on the civil war] rest primarily on a pathetic or sentimental rhetoric of unmediated affects” (“Pathetic Arguments” 233). Neither Boyd nor Loureiro, however, have explored in detail the nature of such affective investments, nor have they described the types of emotion at work in the memory practices they analyze. With regard to the memory work performed by the corpus that will be the focus of my study – early twentieth-century essays about national identity – next to nothing has been written on the subject of emotions. This is precisely the contribution that *Imperial Emotions* seeks to make.

Focusing on the emotional dimension of memory practices, this book explores a time in Spain’s collective past that has heretofore purportedly generated a consensual legacy of memories: the conquest and colonization of the Americas. For late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Iberian intellectuals, Spain’s expansion into the Americas did not have the troubling, traumatic, and catastrophic connotations that are evident in, for example, the Latin American essayistic tradition dealing with the question of identity. In José Carlos Mariátegui’s *Siete ensayos de interpretación de la realidad peruana* (1928) or in Octavio Paz’s *El laberinto de la soledad* (1951), the early colonial experience figures as an event of cataclysmic proportions that accounts for many of the social contradictions afflicting contemporary Latin American societies.⁷ A similar conception of the Spanish conquest underlies current reflections on the topic in the field of Latin American postcolonial criticism.⁸ For nationalistic reasons that I will examine in the following chapters, nothing of the sort happens in the cultural and literary corpus analyzed herein, which is composed of the textual traces of the 1892 commemorations of Columbus’s first voyage and some of the most influential essays on national identity written in twentieth-century Spain: Miguel de Unamuno’s

En torno al casticismo (1895), Ángel Ganivet's *Idearium español* (1897), Ramiro de Maeztu's *Hacia otra España* (1899), and Enric Prat de la Riba's *La nacionalitat catalana* (1906).

My interest in the commemorations and the essays by Unamuno, Ganivet, and Maeztu is not driven by their Eurocentric presuppositions regarding the more or less heroic nature of Spain's colonialist expansion over non-European peoples, nor am I motivated by Prat de la Riba's modernizing prejudices in his prospects for a Catalan empire for I will assume that today we judge these presuppositions and prejudices with a theoretical, political, and emotional distance that precludes any kind of identification whatsoever. In other words, I am not interested in the general consensus about the heroic nature of the imperial past shared by most turn-of-the-century authors. Instead, I would like to focus on the complex, often contradictory emotional terrain in which such imperial heroism played out. To this end, historian Ricardo García Cárcel provides us with a useful starting point in his recent *La herencia del pasado* (2011), where he suggests that the Spanish Empire has been the object of two types of memory, what he calls *la memoria autosatisfecha* [self-satisfied memory] and *la memoria doliente* [painful memory] (514–38, 563–76, 611–14). According to García Cárcel, the Spanish state and its organic intellectuals have instrumentalized certain aspects of the Spanish Empire, such as the imperial epic, the heroic dreams of the conquistadors, the glory associated with 1492, and the prestige attained by Castilian culture in the sixteenth century, in order to mobilize considerable amounts of pride. At the same time, however, he points out that sixteenth- and seventeenth-century reformers (the group known in Spain as *arbitristas*) blamed the empire for the nation's economic decline, and that the Black Legend brought about a series of pathetic laments for Spain's marginalization within Europe. Since its beginnings, then, the Spanish Empire seems to have mobilized both pride and shame. But are pride and shame the only emotions conjured up by empire? Did it not also mobilize a range of other emotions, such as mourning, melancholia, and indignation, especially at the end of the nineteenth century when the imperial cycle was coming to a close?

In providing a detailed description of the emotional attachments to the imperial past present in the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century national imaginaries, I seek, first, to better understand such a difficult political problem as the relationship between different nationalities in the Iberian Peninsula; and second, to provide a more nuanced understanding of one's relationship to the historical forces of nationalism. Throughout, I hope to increase awareness about the specific emotions aroused by imperial legacies and aspirations, a crucial factor for understanding the persistence of myths of empire in twentieth-century Spanish culture.

Redressing the Silencing of Empire

The reasons for studying a cultural phenomenon such as the 1892 commemorations together with some of the most reprinted, explicated, and commented on essays throughout Spain are many. For now, I would like to address what one could call a narrative rationale, leaving aside momentarily other reasons that have to do with the historical and political circumstances in which the texts under scrutiny were written. By “narrative rationale,” I mean, quite simply, a justification that has to do with the story told in the following chapters: as a landmark staging of the mythology of empire, the 1892 commemorations constitute an important reference point for the proposals for a national identity (Spanish or Catalan) put forth by the essays. In other words, the essays wrestle with the Spanish imperial past as a mythic episode in the national narrative, as a rich (yet occasionally contested) series of events and personages with considerable emotional value for the Spanish public, a value that somehow needs to be reworked to fit within the early twentieth-century national projects.

Events such as the “discovery” of America, the dazzling conquests of Mexico and Peru, the conversion of thousands to Catholicism, and the expansion of the Spanish language and culture, as well as characters such as Columbus, the Catholic Kings, and the conquistadors, are all treated in these texts with the stature, solidity, and consistency of myths. They are powerful stories about the glorious and prestigious origins of the national community that are tenaciously held onto by many.⁹ What is at stake in these imperial myths is not so much an explanation of contemporary social problems, as is the case in Mariátegui and Paz, but rather the memory and destiny of a political community. In contrast to the Latin American view of the colonial experience as trauma, in the texts studied in this book the imperial past is a myth that provides not only “a rich legacy of memories” and “a heroic past, great men, [and] glory” (Renan 19), but also fodder for an intellectual and political debate. It is as myth that the imperial past was commemorated in 1892, confronted by Spanish intellectuals such as Unamuno, Ganivet, and Maeztu around 1898, and then silenced (and replaced by an alternative imperialism) by Catalan intellectuals like Prat de la Riba in the early 1900s.

To understand the place of Spanish myths of empire in the early-twentieth century national imagination, it is important to bear in mind that during the years in which the texts analyzed herein were published, the term empire did not convey the negative connotations it does today. “Defining something as imperial or colonial today,” Stephen Howe points out, “almost always implies hostility to it, viewing it as inherently immoral or illegitimate”

(9). However, things were vastly different during the historical period that Eric Hobsbawm has called the Age of Empire (1875–1914), a time when “the society and civilization created by and for the western liberal bourgeoisie represented not the permanent form of the modern industrial world, but only one phase of its early development” (*Age of Empire* 11). At that time, having an empire was the hallmark achievement of Western nations.

As Pedro Cerezo Galán has shown in his groundbreaking study *El mal del siglo*, at the end of the nineteenth century Spain endured many of the critical and destabilizing transformations seen by Hobsbawm as characteristic of the Age of Empire. As the internal contradictions of the liberal bourgeois order deepened, Spain endured numerous crises: a political crisis that questioned the liberal system created by the Bourbon Restoration in 1875; a social crisis, derived from the conflict between the ruling classes and the proletariat; an intellectual crisis that questioned the main tenets of positivism; a religious crisis that pitted secularizing liberals against counterrevolutionary neo-Catholics; an existential crisis that gave way to the proliferation of nihilistic and pessimistic attitudes; and, finally, an aesthetic crisis that questioned the representational power of language.¹⁰ To be sure, all of these critical transformations have, to a greater or lesser extent, shaped the texts studied here. There is one transformation, however, that Cerezo Galán fails to mention, but which figures prominently in Hobsbawm’s account: the consolidation of a “new imperialism” that “was the natural by-product of an international economy based on the rivalry of several competing industrial economies” (*Age of Empire* 67).

The partition of the world among a handful of states (most notably Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium, the U.S., and Japan) had momentous economic, political, and cultural consequences for all of the parties involved in the process of colonial expansion and redistribution. As is well known, Spain lost her colonial possessions in the Caribbean and the Pacific as a result of the Spanish-Cuban-American War of 1898, having to endure what Hugh Seton-Watson has called an “imperial hangover” a bit earlier than the European countries whose empires came to an end after World War II – for the British, the French and the Dutch, the dissolution of their empires started in the late 1940s and was completed, for the most part, in the early 1960s. According to Seton-Watson, the Spanish had to wrestle with the impact of the loss of empire for many years after 1898, an impact that manifested itself “not just [in] the immediate political consequences but [in] the wider effects on the climate of opinion and on social and political behaviour, thinking and *mores*” (3). The political repercussions of Spain’s new status as a downgraded nation in this process of colonial expansion (Hobsbawm, *Age of Empire* 57) has certainly been an important topic for

historians (Balfour, “Spain”; Jover Zamora, *Teoría* and “Las relaciones”) but, in the last few years, the cultural, and especially the literary, relevance of the colonial losses has been increasingly disputed.

In light of the recent, insightful critical interventions that seek to question the traditional association between the so-called “Disaster of 1898” and its contemporary literary practices, my attempt to argue for the relevance of imperialism as a productive hermeneutic context deserves an extended commentary. One can distinguish two main arguments in the new interpretive paradigm that seeks to downplay the relevance of the colonial losses in literature. Some scholars point out that Spain’s resounding defeats at Cavite and Santiago had little effect on the majority of the turn-of-the-century intelligentsia (Llera Esteban and Romero Samper), and that other types of transformations such as the generalized, European crisis of liberal bourgeois society studied by Hobsbawm had a stronger bearing on *fin-de-siècle* literary production (Cerezo Galán, *El mal del siglo*).¹¹ Other scholars, for their part, argue that the moral consequences of the events of 1898 were not instrumentalized by the group of writers known as the Generation of 1898 (which usually includes, among others, Ganivet, Unamuno, and Maeztu), but rather by a younger group of intellectuals led by José Ortega y Gasset that sought to further their own proposals for national regeneration (Cacho Viu, *Repensar el 98*). As a result, the category “Generation of 1898” increasingly has been seen as amounting to little more than a “myth” or a “historiographic invention.” Antonio Ramos Gascón asserts that the notion of a Generation of ’98 is a spurious periodizing device that has scant explanatory power and is oblivious of its own historicity. “Today’s researcher,” he writes, “has cause for surprise to find how little attention and limited impact the Disaster provoked among the so-called ’98ers” (183).

It should come as little surprise, then, that critics have abandoned the expression “Generation of 1898” and adopted instead the term *modernismo* as the master periodizing category for turn-of-the-century peninsular literature. *Modernismo*, the critical consensus goes, is a more ample and expansive category that has the added advantage of putting Spanish literature, as it were, on the European map, of looking at Spanish literature as a variant of French, British, German, or Italian literatures. But, as Brad Epps and Alejandro Mejías-López have forcefully reminded us, *modernismo*, for all of its international and expansive potential, is also a category that has its own built-in set of silences. For all of its valuable contributions, the view of peninsular *modernismo* as a variant of Anglo-European modernism has had the unfortunate effect of both excluding Catalan *modernista* literature (Epps, “Modern’ and ‘Moderno” 89–113) and “largely ignoring the transatlantic dimension of modernismo and its origin in Spanish America” (Mejías-López

114). I would add that as a periodizing device *modernismo* downplays the cultural function of the imperial past for turn-of-the-century intellectuals to the point of making it inaudible.

There is no question that the way in which *fin-de-siècle* intellectuals approached the so-called “Spanish problem,” the concern with Spain’s decadence and backwardness, is a variant of the inner contradictions that were undermining the pillars of liberal bourgeois society throughout Europe. There can also be little doubt that many *fin-de-siècle* intellectuals, such as Pío Baroja and Azorín, publicly reacted with more than a tinge of indifference to the events of 1898, and that those who magnified them, such as Ortega y Gasset, had ulterior motives related not only to their projects of national regeneration, but also to their aspirations to intellectual leadership.¹² Like much recent criticism, I certainly accept these two lines of argument as important contributions to our knowledge of turn-of-the-century cultural production. At the same time, however, I believe that these attempts to dissociate the events of 1898 from their contemporary literary production hardly do justice to the presence of imperialism as a historical and mythical force that had a strong emotional impact on *fin-de-siècle* intellectuals. Whether they liked it or not, Spanish intellectuals found themselves living in an imperialist world where their claims to national greatness had all but vanished, the same world in which Catalan intellectuals held the fleeting hope that their national, expansionist aspirations would be fulfilled.

Thinking within and against current interpretive paradigms, in *Imperial Emotions* I strive to show two things: first, that the issue of imperialism is not reducible to either the events of 1898 nor to the effects that such events had on a particular group of writers writing in Castilian known as the Generation of 1898; and second, that the imperial past acquired a significant cultural – as well as textual – presence at the turn of the century, above all in terms of emotions. My objective in looking at this subject matter is not to discuss the appropriateness of the label “Generation of 1898” as a periodizing category, but rather to describe the ways in which a powerful imperial past is integrated within the affective life of nationalism. For the purposes of this study, then, 1898 is nothing more than a historical reference point, one that proved to be crucial for some works (Maeztu’s *Hacia otra España* and Prat de la Riba’s *La nacionalitat catalana*), but obviously less so for others published before the Disaster (Unamuno’s *En torno al casticismo* and Ganivet’s *Idearium español*). What is crucial, however, is that the Cuban colonial crisis dramatically altered the complacency with which Spanish intellectuals related to the myths surrounding Spain’s empire in the New World.

While the mid-1890s Spanish colonial crisis might have left few (but by

no means negligible) explicit textual traces within the essayistic tradition of national self-reflection, both the early modern imperial past and the new imperialism of the late nineteenth century were certainly a matter of preoccupation for the authors studied herein. Let me begin by addressing the work of Spanish intellectuals. In Unamuno's *En torno al casticismo*, a text originally published as Cuban rebels were taking up arms against Spanish colonialism, imperialism is not the major theme, but the *castizo* actions and attitudes that created the Spanish empire in the Americas are seen as partially responsible for the government's and the military's contemporary intransigence toward Cuba and the Philippines. Unamuno's apparently anti-colonialist stance is further developed a few years later in the epilogue he writes for Wenceslao Retana's *Vida y escritos del Dr. José Rizal* (1907), the first biography of the great Filipino national hero.¹³ Whereas the United States' intervention in the Philippines inspired Rudyard Kipling to write his famous poem "The White Man's Burden," where the onward march of European civilization is notoriously presented as a matter of both fate and responsibility (479–80), for Unamuno the colonizer's actions were a clear abuse of power that led him to denounce "todas las tonterías y todos los desatinos que hemos inventado los hombres de la raza blanca o caucásica para fundamentar nuestra pretensión a la superioridad nativa y originaria sobre las demás razas" [all of the nonsense and absurdities that we, white or Caucasian men, have invented to anchor our pretensions of native or original superiority over other races] ("Epílogo" 944).

A similar concern with imperialism is discernible in Ganivet's *Idearium español*, where above and beyond the military events that transpired in the Caribbean and the Philippines, the essay addresses both British and Belgian imperialisms and the way in which this novel colonial expansion compares with Spain's older, pre-industrial empire in the Americas. Finally Maeztu, although in many respects the direct antipode to both Ganivet and Unamuno, was also preoccupied with modern imperialism and its consequences for Spain. Not only did he write a little-known serial novel on the Anglo-Boer War of 1899–1902, *La guerra del Transvaal y los misterios de la Banca de Londres* (1899), but he also reflected extensively on Spain's colonial wars in the Philippines and, above all, Cuba – an island he knew well since he had lived and worked there for almost two years during his youth, trying to keep the family sugar mills afloat. Of all of the authors studied here, Maeztu is perhaps the one with the most acute sensibility for the threats and promises of imperialism. His two-year stay in Cuba was crucial in this respect for there he was able to witness both the obsolescence of old Spanish imperial traditions and the Cuban people's fascination with the United States' industrial power and economic prosperity.¹⁴

As we will see, Catalan authors were not far behind their Spanish counterparts in their engagements with imperialism. Catalan intellectuals were certainly not interpellated by the emotional intensity of a powerful imperial past for their imperialism was oriented toward the future. For this reason Prat de la Riba, who was first a politician and an ideologue and then a writer, devoted the last chapters of his doctrinal essay *La nacionalitat catalana* (1906) to examining, in a triumphant and utopian register, the prospects for a “Catalan empire.” Pondering the present and future achievements of Catalonia as a nation, Prat saw imperialism as the last stage of nationalism and as an index of the greatness of peoples. In Prat de la Riba’s narrative, imperialism was an aspiration and a desire that successfully blended particular achievements with universal designs.

This imperialist language might come as a surprise for those readers only vaguely familiar with Catalonia and its culture. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Catalonia was a small territory in the northeast corner of the Iberian Peninsula with no sovereign political institutions of her own. Constitutionally speaking, it was a region of the Spanish state, one that was often misunderstood and attacked by the central government; furthermore, it could hardly lay claim to any recent imperial memories. And yet, despite these political and cultural limitations, Prat could confidently speak of a Catalan imperialism at the beginning of the twentieth century. How was that possible? The answer, as will be made clear in the following pages, lies in the differing affective value and force that the 1898 defeat had in Madrid and Barcelona. In other words, if we are to understand the anxiety with which Spanish intellectuals related to imperialism, as well as the confidence that Catalan intellectuals attached to the same ideological formation, we have to pay attention to the “structures of feeling” produced by the 1898 defeat within the intellectual circles of Madrid and Barcelona.

If, following Raymond Williams, we take “structure of feeling” to refer to “meanings and values as they are actively lived and felt” (132), then we can say that Unamuno, Ganivet, and Maeztu experienced the colonial crisis as a depressing event, while Prat de la Riba lived it, for the most part, with confidence and eagerness. For the former, the colonial crisis signaled the end of the Spanish imperial era; for the latter it marked the beginning of Catalan imperial ambitions. More than reasoned interpretations of the defeat, these considerations of the period 1895–1898, both as the end and the beginning of an era, are to be understood as mobilizations of the emotional energies that were collectively available in *fin-de-siècle* Madrid and Barcelona, respectively. Heidegger called this affective environment that surrounds and influences us *Stimmung*, which is often translated as “mood.” As glossed by Jonathan Flatley, *Stimmung* refers to “a kind of affective atmosphere [...] in

which intentions are formed, projects pursued, and particular affects can attach to particular objects” (19). To a large extent, then, Madrid’s depressive mood and Barcelona’s confident atmosphere at the turn of the century – of which there are several important testimonies – go a long way to explain the divergent national projects that took place there, and the differing function that past and present imperialism had for them.

This concern with mood and emotions in connection with imperialism leads me to the basic argument put forth in this book: that there is implicit in the *fin-de-siècle* essayistic tradition a set of imperial emotions that are constitutive of national forms of identification. The national selves produced in these essays seek to do away with both the national language and pathos that supported the imperial rhetoric dominating the first half of the Bourbon Restoration (1875–1898), but in doing so they either insufficiently work through the emotional attachments to the early modern Spanish Empire or they create new, complex emotional investments in imperialism as an ideological formation. While the first possibility is exemplified by the Spanish authors, the second applies squarely to Prat de la Riba.

My effort in this book is not only to uncover the diffuse, ambiguous – and thus often overlooked – presence of the imperial past as a historical, mythical, and emotional force in Spain’s turn-of-the-century national cultures, but also to explain why it is only recently that imperialism has become a legitimate research topic for *fin-de-siècle* scholars. In order to do this, I must historicize my own critical position, making explicit the historical and theoretical traditions to which I am most indebted. Concerning its historical framework, this book draws from a number of recent contributions that redress the silencing of what Alda Blanco calls “nineteenth-century imperial consciousness” (“El fin” 6–7; *Cultura y conciencia* 15–26). This imperial consciousness, Blanco claims, has been all but erased from the dominant historiographical paradigms in literary criticism, and it is thanks to her work and that of other like-minded researchers that we have become aware of the cultural impact of empire during the nineteenth century – see, especially, Blanco’s recently published *Cultura y conciencia imperial en la España del siglo XIX* (2012).

Imperialism and Nationalism

Although imperialism was inextricably connected to nationalism in most Western nations at the end of the nineteenth century, this relationship has not been thoroughly studied in relation to Spain until very recently. Discussing the late nineteenth-century British and French empires, Hannah Arendt noted in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951) that the consent-based

logic of the nation-state and the expansion-based logic of imperialism were incompatible in theory, but that in practice nationalism developed imperialist tendencies because “in a society of clashing interests, where the common good was identified with the sum total of individual interests, expansion as such appeared to be a possible common interest of the nation as a whole” (152–53). Similarly, Eric Hobsbawm argued in *The Age of Empire* (1987) that imperialism (in Britain and France) provided a new kind of legitimacy to the nation-state as it entered the uncertain era of mass politics: “imperialism encouraged the masses, and especially the potentially discontented, to identify themselves with the imperial state and nation” (70). The case of Spain, however, seems to differ from that of France and Britain, for imperialism does not appear to have had either an economically or ideologically relevant role in Spanish nation formation. If we are to believe some of the most important studies of Spanish nationalism (Carolyn Boyd’s *Historia patria* [1997], Inman Fox’s *La invención de España* [1997] and Santos Juliá’s *Historias de las dos Españas* [2004]), the nation’s colonial past and aspirations seem to have had little impact on the establishment of communal bonds among its citizens. And while José Álvarez Junco’s *Mater dolorosa* (2001) does concede the importance of imperialist initiatives for nationalism, it defines the interrelation between these two ideologies in an almost entirely negative way for nineteenth-century Spain. He writes that because of the nation’s failed imperial adventures and aspirations (the so-called African War of 1859–1860, the brief reoccupation of the Dominican Republic between 1861 and 1865, the failed dream of forming an “Iberian Union” with Portugal), nationalist rhetoric was devoid of objectives that could energize the masses and thus lingered, in a semi-dormant state, until the Generation of 1898 revived it at the dawn of the twentieth century (499–531). In Álvarez Junco’s account, imperialism seemed to halt the nation’s progress rather than energize it.

While imperialism received scant attention in the above accounts of Spanish nationalism, recent historical scholarship has foregrounded the political, economic, and ideological centrality of the colonial empire for the process of Spanish nation building in the nineteenth century. Josep Maria Fradera’s *Colonias para después de un imperio* (2005) explores the first two aspects – the political and economic – by showing how Spanish liberals in the mid-nineteenth century established a system of administrative domination and fiscal exploitation in their colonies in the Antilles and the Pacific. This system, which was based upon the enslavement of African peoples in the Antilles and the forced labor of Filipino peasants, saw its successful institutionalization between 1858 and 1861. For his part, Christopher Schmidt-Nowara focuses on the third aspect of colonialism,

the ideological. In *The Conquest of History* (2006), Schmidt-Nowara makes an important argument for the crucial role played in Spain's national imaginary by the symbols and figures associated with the early modern empire in the Americas. He demonstrates that Spanish patriots turned to their colonial past for nationalist inspiration well before the aftermath of the Spanish-Cuban-American War of 1898, and that throughout the nineteenth century they related to the conquest and colonization of America through its vigorous defense and its unanimous exaltation. Thus the colonies, seen from the peninsular perspective as *la España ultramarina* (overseas Spain), were transformed into "a site of national aggrandizement, glorious heroes and undertakings, and a rich historiographic tradition" (10). Although I believe that the imperial past was more contested than Schmidt-Nowara seems to suggest (see Chapter 1), his characterization of empire as national ideal provides us with an important starting point for he analyzes the notion of empire as an ideological tool. Indeed, Schmidt-Nowara's analysis offers us the opportunity to perform new readings of the essays by Unamuno, Ganivet, Maeztu, and Prat de la Riba insofar as these texts engage, in a more or less explicit manner, an imperial past whose symbolic importance has only recently been brought out.

Fradera and Schmidt-Nowara's twin accounts of the centrality of the colonial empire for the nation-building process during the nineteenth century alert us to its ideological importance for the Restoration regime, a political system built in part around "the belief that Spain [...] remained a world power of sorts" (Balfour, *The End* 60). Although neither Fradera nor Schmidt-Nowara examines the function of the emotional attachments to empire, my suggestion that the events and personages commemorated during the 1892 celebrations were transformed into myths already suggests that emotions were part and parcel of the imperial cultural symbols. Indeed, as Anthony Smith points out, the function of myths of ethnic descent, such as those propagated during the 1892 commemorations of the so-called discovery of the Americas, is to "endow popular perceptions of ethnic boundaries and identities with meaning and sentiments" (57). Simply put, the 1892 commemorations were designed to bestow upon the Spanish community a sense of pride and heroism that was made possible by the fiction that the Spaniards of 1892 somehow descended from those of 1492, that old and new Spaniards shared a number of virtues (courage, faith, perseverance, wisdom) and cultural qualities (language, religion, customs) that indicated "a cultural affinity and ideological 'fit' with the presumed ancestors" (Smith, *Myths* 58).

In the modern history of Spain, the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries have been privileged for their capacity to project meaning and emotions

onto ethnic identity. Also known as the Spanish Golden Age(s), this period is associated with great, influential works of literature (Cervantes's *Quixote*; the poetry of John of the Cross, Luis de Góngora, and Francisco de Quevedo; the plays of Lope de Vega, Calderón de la Barca, and Tirso de Molina), paintings (the work of El Greco and Velázquez), and architecture (El Escorial, Madrid's Plaza Mayor); with the extension of "Spanish" power all over the world under the reign of powerful kings (Charles V, Philip II) and their larger-than-life conquistadors (Hernán Cortés, Francisco Pizarro); and with pioneering geographic discoveries (Columbus's discovery of the New World) and legal institutions (The Laws of the Indies). As such, it has come to define an ideal for the national community, one that was to be endlessly recreated during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Considered within this larger framework, the imperial myths studied in this book constitute only a portion of the idealized memories that take the early modern period to be a golden age, not only of literary achievements but also, and above all, "of heroism, beauty, learning, holiness, power and wealth, an era distinguished for its collective dignity and external prestige" (Smith, *Myths* 263). No matter how anachronistic such an ideological operation might be, the fact of the matter is that the sixteenth century "was an age that created, and is creating, Spain, not only because of those who still yearn for it but also on account of those who feel they must reject it passionately" (Kamen, *Imagining* ix).

This brief excursus into the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries leads us to formulate a precautionary note. It is possible, both in historical terms and in the primary literary texts under consideration, to distinguish between "two Spanish empires." The "first" Spanish empire would be the early modern empire, the political structure that was known to contemporaries as the *Monarquía hispánica* and which survived until the early nineteenth century. Despite the fact that many historians have cast doubt on the appropriateness of considering this political unit an empire, it has been an enduring source of imperial myths. As Henry Kamen points out, "apart from recognizing the ruler of Spain as their king, they [the territories under Spanish control] shared no common laws or administration, they were (with the exception of the 'colonies') completely autonomous, and they did not construct any system of beliefs ('ideology') about empire" (96). And yet, it is out of these less-than-imperial territories that a number of persistent imperial myths were produced, among which the following two stand out: the myth of Spain's military conquests in the Americas and the myth of Spain as the founder of Hispanic civilization.¹⁵

Quite different from this political structure is what we could call the "second" Spanish empire, a much-reduced imperial system consisting of the

territories that remained loyal to the metropolis after the mid-1820s, when Spain lost all of her continental American empire as a result of the Latin American Wars of Independence. Limited to a handful of archipelagos in the Atlantic (Cuba and Puerto Rico) and the Pacific (the Philippines, Guam, and the Mariana Islands), and to a few scattered possessions in Africa, this “second” Spanish empire proved to be much less fertile ground for imperial myths. Several reasons explain this diminished mythical potential. First and foremost, and in sharp contrast to her standing in the sixteenth century, Spain in the nineteenth century was not a hegemonic power, but rather a declining empire, one that had to contend with British and U.S. imperial ambitions. Second, the new colonial model that made possible the continued Spanish rule over Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines offered little in the way of idealization and heroic fashioning.¹⁶ In addition to lacking the benefits that come with temporal distance, this imperial project was based on repressive political measures carried out by the colonial bureaucracy (such as the exclusion of colonial populations from political representation), economic arrangements that benefited the metropolis and the local elites (since most of the wealth was generated by the use of slave or forced labor), and racist cultural assumptions (such as those which made possible the understanding of Spain’s presence in the Philippines as a civilizing mission).¹⁷ It is easy to see how an individual figure like, say, Hernán Cortés, could be turned into a myth, but it is much harder to imagine how an employee of the Ministry of Ultramar who shared with fellow bureaucrats the condition of being, as Max Weber put it, “a small cog in a ceaselessly moving mechanism which prescribed to him an essentially fixed route of march” (qtd. in Morillo-Alicea 116), could acquire mythical status. Third and finally, the artistic achievements of the nineteenth century pale in comparison with those of the sixteenth, thereby preventing the conflation of cultural and political hegemony that cements the mythical force of the early modern period.

The words “empire” and “imperialism” thus have multiple referents in this book; however, my main focus is on Spain’s “first empire,” the early modern empire in the New World. Although I will specify the meanings covered by each word when I analyze the different texts, let me briefly comment on the ways in which these meanings complicate my assessment of the emotional presence of imperialism in the culture of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The 1892 commemorations, for instance, offer a fascinating example of the ways in which the “first” and “second” Spanish empires interact with the more general, European imperialism characteristic of the period. By looking back at Columbus’s achievements and the early modern empire, the Restoration elites sought to assert the

legitimacy of the “second empire” and thus strengthen Spanish rule over Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines. Transformed into a symbol of Spain’s reinvented colonialism, Columbus, the founding figure of the “first” empire, not only helped make a series of increasingly intransigent colonial policies more palatable, but he also helped make the case that Spain belonged to the select number of European nations that had the capacity to colonize the less civilized parts of the world. The “second” empire thus created a myth about the “first” empire with the purpose of staking a claim to Spain’s imperialist ambitions, which at that point in time were, to be sure, more symbolic than real.

In arguing for the centrality of imperialism for the study of *fin-de-siècle* national cultures, I wish to join two contemporary strands of scholarly inquiry. First, I aim to partake in the efforts of other literary critics who have inquired into the post-1820s rearticulation of the Spanish Empire and the impact that it had upon Spanish culture. I have in mind, for instance, recent innovative readings of *Don Álvaro o la fuerza del sino* and of Spanish Romanticism as bearing witness to the colonial origins of modernity (Iarocci 123–38), compelling reassessments of Galdós and the so-called “Generation of 1898” in light of their engagement with the question of imperialism (Blanco, *Cultura y conciencia*, “El fin” and “Spain at the Crossroads”; Coffey), and productive analyses of the ways in which cultural representations of Africa and Africans are key to understanding the performance of Spanish national identities in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Martín-Márquez; Blanco, “La guerra”). In *Imperial Emotions* I acknowledge the central insight of this emergent field of study – which I take to be that Spanish culture can no longer be understood without making reference to its constitutive colonial Others – while taking a slightly different direction by raising the question of emotions. In this book, the Spanish Empire does not figure simply as a cultural motif (Blanco), as a political and cultural structure either enabling (Martín-Márquez) or questioning (Coffey) the performance of national identities, or as an occasion for racial disavowal (Iarocci). The Spanish Empire has certainly stood for all these things, and these scholars have marshaled an impressive number of textual, historical, and theoretical arguments in support of their respective characterizations. However, in *Imperial Emotions*, the Spanish Empire stands for something these scholars have not focused on: a source of myths with considerable *emotional* force.

Second, I heed recent calls within Hispanism to question two of the grounding methodological assumptions of the discipline: the monolingual conception of Spain and the privileging of canonical literary works over other cultural manifestations. Concerning the first, I see this book as

complementing current efforts seeking to reconfigure the field of Spanish studies by acknowledging the cultural and linguistic plurality of the Spanish state. My reflections on Pi i Margall and Prat de la Riba not only bear witness to the plurilingual reality of the literatures of the Spanish state, but also strive to live up to the utopian promise of “a new discipline that would incorporate the various cultures of the Iberian Peninsula in a non-hierarchical way” (Resina, “Cold War” 100; see also his *Del hispanismo a los estudios ibéricos*). Although these attempts to end the traditional exclusion of non-Spanish literary traditions have been in the making for over thirty years – in fact, they can be traced back to the political and cultural reforms that created a state of autonomous communities during Spain’s transition to democracy in the late 1970s – and although the number of voices calling for an end to the discipline’s entrenched monolingualism have grown more vocal over the past few years (Epps; Epps and Fernández Cifuentes; Harrington; Martí-López; Santana), the number of truly comparative studies that simultaneously engage more than one of Spain’s literary languages is less than impressive. As in many other facets of our experience, it is easier to present what should be done than to actually do it. More often than not, the intellectual pressure to put an end to the legacy of exclusion that has historically shaped Hispanism has translated into a trivializing “expansion of the Hispanic canon to include ‘representative works’ of the other peninsular cultures sampled in translation” (Resina, “Cold War” 99–100), a gesture that has led one critic to lament that “little, in general, is known or discussed of work done in Spain in languages other than Spanish” (Santana 110). These sobering assessments are, of course, occasionally refuted by valuable exceptions. One such truly exceptional case is Cacho Viu’s *Repensar el 98*, a text that presents a complex view of the Spanish *fin de siècle* by integrating Castilian and Catalan traditions. From a methodological viewpoint, I see much of what follows as complementary to Cacho Viu’s seminal proposal that in the late nineteenth century Madrid and Barcelona were two distinct cultural capitals that configured two singular, yet interconnected, public spheres.

As for the privilege traditionally accorded to canonical works, I have attempted to achieve a balance between little-known documents that appeared in obscure venues (such as the journal *El Centenario* or Pi i Margall’s weekly *El Nuevo Régimen*) and major essays in the Castilian and Catalan traditions. Instead of simply examining the marginal and canonical texts on equal footing, I have sought to emphasize that the former constitute a relevant hermeneutic context for the latter, thereby historicizing a series of canonical essays that are often read in a transcendental, unhistorical manner. In other words, I have attempted to ground the prestige and

centrality of the essays on what is an admittedly contingent corpus made of fragments of political and cultural journalism. Moreover, my effort to present a view of the essays on national identity from the standpoint of their imperial emotions addresses an issue that bears decisively on the ethical implications of nationality as the founding assumption of both Hispanic and Catalan studies. Insofar as imperial emotions are a constant reminder of the secret complicity of state nationalisms in a history of political subjugation, economic exploitation, and cultural expropriation, my reading of the canonical essays is, paradoxically enough, counter-canonical and counter-disciplinary.

The Spanish Empire's Embattled Legacies

Despite its importance in the nineteenth-century national imaginary, the status of the Spanish Empire as a cultural emblem has been the subject of a virulent controversy. This controversy, which spanned several centuries and nations, has borne decisively on the ambivalence that characterized the use and abuse of the imperial past in Spain since the late nineteenth century. On the one hand, as imperial myths made clear, the Spanish Empire was a much-coveted symbol for both the grandeur and the (ideological, territorial, and linguistic) unity of the nation. It was the most glorious product of the alliance between the Catholic Church and Monarchy; it drew together, at least until the early 1890s, Spaniards of all peninsular territories in an ideology that associated progress with central power; and it was a living testimony to the purportedly "universal" scope of the Castilian language and culture (see Chapter 1). According to Spanish renderings of the early modern empire, this political structure made possible the nation's greatest military victories, but also, and most importantly, some of its most enduring civilizing accomplishments. It is thus not hard to see why most of the Spanish intellectuals studied in this book considered Spain's status as the first global imperial power a matter of pride. What requires a more extended explanation, however, is why such pride stubbornly survived the loss of virtually all of Spain's colonial possessions. If we are to believe Ángel Ganivet's *Idearium español*, a foundational text for twentieth-century Spanish nationalism published at a time when the loss of the last imperial possessions in the Caribbean and the Atlantic was a foregone conclusion, then emotions outlast the objects to which they are attached. With evident pride, Ganivet writes that "España ha sido la primera nación europea engrandecida por la política de expansión y conquista" [Spain was the first European nation to be ennobled by the pursuit of a politics of expansion and conquest], a primacy which he used to pointed neo-imperial effect,

legitimizing a cultural tutelage of Spain *vis-à-vis* its former Latin American colonies (*Idearium* 240).

On the other hand, Spanish intellectuals were painfully aware that the Spanish Empire was characterized by rival European powers as the product of a religious, pre-rationalist, pre-commercial, barbaric colonialism. Capitalizing on Bartolomé de las Casas's *Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias* (1552), these rival European powers crafted the Black Legend of Spain's colonial brutality in the New World so as to better legitimize their own imperial projects, which sought to replace "the arbiters of the old world order, the 'tyrants, priests and hypocrites,' with the enlightened scientists of the new" and "conquest, physical and spiritual, by enlightened instruction" (Pagden 10). According to Julián Juderías, the Spanish journalist and amateur historian who wrote *La leyenda negra* (1914), the phrase "Black Legend" refers to "la leyenda de la España inquisitorial, ignorante, fanática, incapaz de figurar entre los pueblos cultos" [the legend of Spain as an inquisitorial, ignorant, fanatic country incapable of belonging to the group of civilized peoples] (24). Although, as Juderías points out, the origins of the Black Legend go back to the sixteenth-century Protestant Reform, it resurfaced at crucial moments in Spain's history, such as the colonial wars of independence against Spain and the Spanish-Cuban-American War of 1898. Most importantly, the Black Legend was the basis for the image of the Spanish as an unmodern people – a heavy burden with which all of the authors studied here contended.

Indeed, the Black Legend was instrumental in "the construction of an imperial difference, internal to Europe" (Greer, Mignolo, and Quilligan 8), one that articulated a marginal, subordinate position for modern Spanish culture within Europe. According to the late seventeenth-century representations of Spain coming from northern European countries – mainly France, Germany, and England – Spain was not part of modernity nor, more largely, the West. An article on Spain by Masson de Morvilliers, a French geographer who contributed to the 1782 *Encyclopédie méthodique*, corroborates this point forcefully by hinting at Spain's colonial status at a time when she was still in control of her American empire. He famously wonders: "Mais que doit-on à l'Espagne? Et depuis deux siècles, depuis quatre, depuis six, qu'a-t-elle fait pour l'Europe?" [What do we owe Spain? And what has she done for Europe in the last two, four, six centuries?] (25). Masson goes on to add that Spain "ressemble aujourd'hui à ces colonies faibles & malheureuses, qui ont besoin sans cesse du bras protecteur de la métropole" [today resembles those weak and miserable colonies that constantly need the metropolis's protective arm] (25).¹⁸ If, according to some foreign observers like Masson, Spain was both empire and colony by the end

of the eighteenth century, it is not hard to imagine that the Spanish Empire would be the object of contradictory emotions.

Some forty years later, in *The Philosophy of History* (1837), Hegel would articulate this “imperial difference” even more forcefully when he conceived of the “center of Europe” as being principally formed by France, Germany, and England, thereby consolidating the hegemony of the “three countries in the process of becoming the new colonial powers, replacing Spain and Portugal” (Mignolo, “Rethinking” 165). As Iarocci has recently put it, “this symbolic amputation of Spain from ‘modernity,’ ‘Europe,’ and the ‘West’ was arguably among the most profound historical determinants in defining modern Spanish culture” (8). And, as we have been suggesting, imperial myths of colonial brutality, which directly contradicted and undermined those produced in Spain at the end of the nineteenth century, played no small part in such symbolic banishment.

Imperial Legacies and National Reform

The status of the Spanish Empire as a contradictory, overdetermined cultural emblem helps to explain its ambivalent presence in the *fin-de-siècle* cultural scene. To be sure, this ambivalence had more to do with the image of brutality and backwardness drawn by Spain’s European colonial rivals than with a critique, from colonized peoples, of the most egregious aspects of imperialism – by which I mean its legacy of racism, cultural destruction, economic exploitation, and political injustice. “During this period,” Fredric Jameson writes, “the word ‘imperialism’ designates, not the relationship of metropolis to colony, but rather the rivalry of the various imperial and metropolitan nation-states among themselves” (“Modernism and Imperialism” 47). Today, when we think of imperialism the first thing that comes to mind is a relation of exploitation between First World powers and their colonial possessions, but this was not the primary meaning of the expression for the authors studied here. For them, imperialism evoked above all ideas of contest, struggle, and competition among European nation-states. This experience of national rivalry and competition was lived with particular poignancy in Spain, a country painfully aware of its modernizing deficits throughout the nineteenth century.¹⁹

Although at the end of the nineteenth century few intellectuals saw the legacies of the Spanish Empire as a burden for Spain’s modernization (chief among them was Francesc Pi i Margall, a figure I treat in Chapter 1), these critical voices took center stage in the aftermath of the Spanish-Cuban-American War of 1898, an event known in popular memory and conventional historiography as *el Desastre*. Around that point in history, Spain’s powerful

and glorious imperial past was transformed into a specter that cast a long shadow on the Spanish public. The swift and humiliating defeat at the hands of the United States had a devastating effect on the national conscience of the ruling elites, but it did not completely do away with the imperial myths. The central issue in this critical period was not the political and ideological struggle between those who had invoked the myth of Spain's imperial greatness in support of the war effort (a majority of the ruling elites and the press) and those who saw the colonial wars as foolish adventures that came at too high a price (a minority of intellectuals and some of the workers and peasants who actually fought in the war).²⁰ What was really at stake, as Martin Blinkhorn has shown, was the integration of Spain's powerful past within the social, economic, and political structures of modernity. Within this larger conflict between traditional inertias and modern needs, Spanish imperial myths emerged as focal points of discussion for those intellectuals attempting to reform prevailing concepts of national identity – the group of intellectuals known as the Generation of 1898 in Spain, and those belonging to the cultural movements of *Modernisme* and *Noucentisme* in Catalonia.

A case in point are two of the most revered poets of the period, Antonio Machado (1875–1939) and Joan Maragall (1860–1911). Loosely affiliated with the Generation of 1898 and with the literary movement of *Modernisme*, respectively, Machado and Maragall clearly saw the dangers that the Spanish imperial myths posed for their national communities. In their civic poetry, they both wished to displace Spanish imperial myths from the center of traditional conceptions of national identity, although in different ways.

Consider, for instance, Machado's "A orillas del Duero," the central poem in *Campos de Castilla* (1907–1917). In this poem Machado displaced imperial grandeur with hesitation and some might even say with equivocation when, in the face of the national mythology of military might that saturates the Castilian landscape and that literally adopts the form of a ghost ("[...] Sobre sus campos aún el fantasma yerra / de un pueblo que ponía a Dios sobre la guerra" [{"...} Over the fields walks the ghost / of a people who fought for the glory of God] [47–48]), the poetic voice reveals an ironic attitude that seeks to parody conventional elegies for bygone military splendor with a devastatingly effective refrain: "Castilla miserable, ayer dominadora / Envuelta en sus harapos, desprecia cuanto ignora" [Wretched Castile, once supreme / now wrapped in rags, haughty in her ignorance] (67–68).²¹

An even more forceful critique of the destructive effects of imperial myths can be found in the civic poems that Joan Maragall composed during the War of 1898. In "Oda a Espanya," the second poem in *Els tres cants de la guerra*, the poetic voice urges Spain to replace the death drive associated with imperial myths ("les teves glòries – i els teus records, / records i glòries

– només de morts” [your glories and your memories are only memories and glories about the dead] [9–10]) with feelings of compassion (“Espanya, Espanya, – retorna en tu, / arrenca el plor de mare!” [Spain, Spain, come back to your senses and start crying like a mother] [31–32]). In order to achieve this, however, Maragall cautions that Spain should listen to the voice of her non-Castilian children (mainly Catalanian) if she is to save herself from the catastrophe that befell her in 1898.

What the poems by Machado and Maragall reveal is both the exhaustion of imperial myths and their continued vitality in the aftermath of the colonial wars. In an important sense, the war acted as a reality check for certain sectors of Spanish society. As Sebastian Balfour puts it, “The Disaster exposed as a terrible delusion the belief that Spain was at least a middle-ranking world power, a belief that was a central component of the national culture” (*The End* 49). These sobering remarks notwithstanding, we are also forced to recognize that the fact that Machado and Maragall address imperial myths in their poems is an unmistakable testament to their social importance. They are the ghosts that literally haunt Machado’s rendition of the landscape of Castile and that figuratively lead Spain toward death in Maragall’s poetry. The Disaster perhaps exposed the delusional belief in Spain’s status as a global power, but this delusion remained a strong and enduring hallucination, one determined to overcome the all too evident signs of its anachronism thanks to its intense emotional charge.

The need to break with a past composed of imperial myths of national grandeur is a theme insistently pursued by both Spanish and Catalan intellectuals throughout the late 1890s and early 1900s. Of course, their motivations and ultimate goals were rather different, but they all seemed to rally against a mythified view of the Spanish imperial past that was increasingly seen as a political, economic, and cultural liability. This need to break with imperial myths was approached as part of what contemporaries understood as *el problema de España*. And although this problem, which is associated with the Generation of 1898, did not emerge as a result of the Disaster, the defeat certainly acted as a catalyst, as an agent that significantly accelerated the process of questioning the traditional components of Spanish nationhood that had started at the outset of the Restoration with the so-called polemic of Spanish science (López Morillas 236). Within this process of national self-reflection, the Disaster was, among many other things, a defamiliarizing experience for many intellectuals. The dark and somber mood that resulted from it cast a pall over the routine celebrations of Spanish imperial grandeur that had characterized national life in Spain.

To have a better sense of the momentous consequences that the imperial crisis of the 1890s had for the construction of a regenerated national self,

we should turn our attention to an editorial published in *El Imparcial* on August 21, 1898, when the negotiations to draft a peace protocol between Spain and the United States were well under way. Laconically titled “Leyenda acabada,” this piece forcefully conveys the sense that the foreclosure of the imperial epic called for a new emotional disposition with regard to the Spanish Empire:

La leyenda anima, defiende, infunde respeto y da, hasta en las desdichas, prestigio. Nosotros hemos vivido mucho de la leyenda. La teníamos muy brillante y heroica en todas partes, y especialmente en el Nuevo Mundo. La hemos perdido. [...]

Son estas noticias muy dolorosas, pero conviene mucho que la nación las sepa, a fin de que al rehacer su vida no cuente con la leyenda, sino con las energías de la voluntad. [...]

El amor a la nación, la conciencia de que solamente con una labor tenaz y seria podremos salvarnos, la buena voluntad, nos llevarán por caminos más propios de estas edades. En la eterna juventud de la fantasía, la madurez viene a ser producida por la desgracia.

[Legends are a means to animate, defend, instill respect and, even in unhappy times, lend prestige. We have long lived on legends. Ours was brilliant and heroic everywhere, especially in the New World. We have lost it. {...}]

This is extremely sad news, but it is necessary that the nation be aware of it, so that when it rebuilds its life it does not count on legends, but rather on the energies of the will. {...}

The love for our nation, the awareness that only by means of persistent and serious work will we be able to save ourselves, our goodwill, will take us on roads more appropriate for these times. In the eternal youth of fantasy, wisdom seems to be the outcome of disgrace].

The editorial goes on to refer to these legends as a “ventaja moral” [moral advantage] that was made possible by the heroism of such figures as Hernán Cortés, Francisco Pizarro, and Vasco Núñez de Balboa. The point of the article is that such moral advantage is no longer available in 1898, and that the Spanish self should be constructed not by these legends, but rather by persistent and serious work.

This shift from imperial legend to disciplined work as the cornerstone of the national subject demanded the production of a new emotional attitude toward the imperial past. Unless the prestige and desirability surrounding the conquistadors was modified, no new Spanish self could emerge. This is the common problematic that we find in the essays

by Unamuno, Ganivet, and Maeztu. For them, and for a wide array of both Spanish and Catalan intellectuals, Spanish history clearly posed a problem. Maeztu, for instance, affirmed in 1897 that “Arrastra España su existencia deleznable [...] evocando en obsesión perenne glorias añejas” [Spain drags along her insignificant existence, evoking her stale glories in a perennial obsession] (*Hacia otra España* 107). Eleven years later, Antonio Machado echoes Maeztu’s bitter comment in “Nuestro patriotismo y la Marcha de Cádiz.” In this sobering article Machado writes that “luchamos por libertarnos del culto supersticioso del pasado” [we struggle to free ourselves from the superstitious cult of the past] (1483). Maragall, for his part, coincides with Machado’s assessment of the legacies of the past. He thinks that Castile has to break the spell of its powerful past and sees Catalan nationalism as a beacon of Spain’s modernization. Maragall acknowledges that Castile reached its high point during the Renaissance and was instrumental in furthering “el absolutismo, el imperialismo colonial, el espíritu aventurero, las guerras religiosas, la formación de las grandes nacionalidades” [absolutism, colonial imperialism, the spirit of adventure, the religious wars, the formation of great nations] (*Obras completas* 2: 630), but he adds that, at the beginning of the twentieth century, such a historical mission represented an exhausted, anachronistic enterprise. Interestingly, Maragall’s assertions demonstrate how the mythic potential of the sixteenth century can be put to counter-nationalist uses.

Also speaking in the name of Catalan nationalism, Miquel dels Sants Oliver, now a largely forgotten figure who nonetheless was a keen observer of turn-of-the-century Spain, judged the “literature of the Disaster” – mainly the essays by Unamuno and Ganivet – as attempts to reform a series of social habits that went back to the age of empire. According to Oliver, at the end of the nineteenth century,

en lo social, en lo más íntimo del alma colectiva perduraba el vigoroso cuño del siglo XVII, o sea una estructura y tipos nacionales en discrepancia absoluta con el tiempo y con la normalidad media de los países vecinos.

[in the social realm, in the depths of the collective soul, there persisted the vigorous influence of the seventeenth century, that is, of a national structure and a way of being that were completely at odds with both the times and the average life of our neighboring countries]. (*La literatura* 71)

Oliver understood the persistence of the dead weight of the imperial past as intimately bound up with Spain’s modernizing shortcomings, and linked

the lack of a Europeanizing spirit with the impossibility of overcoming such deficiencies. In a similar vein, Ortega y Gasset complained, as late as 1914, that Spain's past was "uno de los terribles morbos nacionales" [one of the terrible national illnesses] (*Meditaciones* 182).

This incompatibility between an unmodern past and the present need for modernization is part of a common dilemma faced by *fin-de-siècle* intellectuals in both Castile and Catalonia, one that Cacho Viu has described as the challenge of regenerating the nation through what he calls "public moralities" in *Repensar el 98*. For Cacho Viu, there were two public moralities available in turn-of-the-century Europe: a rational public morality that sought to regenerate the nation through the promotion of scientific advances, which in Spain was cultivated by the generation of intellectuals led by José Ortega y Gasset, and a national morality that sought to strengthen a given community's particular identity as the starting point for its modernization and socialization, which was the solution favored in Catalonia by a number of intellectuals gathered around the figure of Enric Prat de la Riba (*El nacionalismo catalán* 20–27; *Repensar el 98* 53–75).²² Although Cacho Viu's account is immensely productive, it is far from exhaustive, for there is a group of intellectuals who fit neither in Ortega's rational morality nor in Prat's national morality. I refer, of course, to the intellectuals conventionally associated with the Generation of 1898 (for our purposes, Unamuno, Ganivet, and Maeztu), whose opinions on Spanish cultural identity, according to Cacho Viu, did not properly crystallize in a public morality (*Repensar el 98* 54). In analyzing the history and future of Spain, these authors offered neither disciplinary – scientific – expertise nor organized knowledge to fortify a particular identity. Instead, they privileged personal experience, a constitutive component of the essay form. As is well known, the uniquely personal quality of their writing was the object of much criticism on the part of younger (and rival) intellectuals, such as Ortega y Gasset and Manuel Azaña, who saw the Generation of '98 as mounting a purely negative, destructive critique whose egotistical character made it socially ineffectual (Ortega y Gasset, "Competencia" 602–03). As Azaña put it, the Generation of '98 "incorporaron momentáneamente a su vida sentimental lo que se ha llamado 'el problema de España'" [momentarily incorporated what has been called the 'Spanish problem' into their emotional lives] (41). Herein, my objective is to turn these criticisms upside down, making the world of emotions the center of my own argument while acknowledging the limitations that an emotional approach to historical problems can sometimes have. In other words, I seek to briefly describe the features of the essay on national character that make it a particularly significant subgenre in uncovering the presence of imperial emotions in *fin-de-siècle* Spain.

Imperial Emotions and the Essay on National Character

Up to this point, we have been characterizing imperial myths as a significant component of the Spanish problem, of what made Spanish history problematic in the eyes of some of the younger intellectuals of the time. Once one recognizes that at the turn of the century some intellectuals related to Spanish imperial legacies with ambivalence, there follows the need to reflect on how they attempted to solve this collective problem. How did Iberian intellectuals seek to break with the myths surrounding the Spanish imperial past? What form did their response take? Was it a moral judgment, an aesthetic statement, or a scientific opinion? And, what literary genre did they employ to respond to the demands of breaking with past imperialism?

Concerning the last question, which in a certain way encompasses the other three, the quick answer is that Iberian intellectuals wrote a number of essays that are among the most influential pieces of writing in twentieth-century Spain. As used in this book, “essay” is an umbrella term for a number of textual types that, to a greater or lesser extent, share the essential characteristics of the essay as a genre. Schematically put, the essays discussed in Chapters 2 through 5 can be described as relatively short prose pieces that discuss national character without aiming to provide a systematic or complete exposition of the subject.²³ Yet the elusive multiplicity of the essay form, which is readily apparent in the texts studied herein, demands that we go beyond this working definition. In doing so, what we find is that some authors practiced a more or less canonical type of essay (Unamuno in *En torno al casticismo* and Ganivet in *Idearium español*) while others cultivated different subgenres, such as the journalistic essay (Maeztu in *Hacia otra España*) or the polemical essay (Prat de la Riba in *La nacionalitat catalana*).

In 1924, literary critic Eduardo Gómez de Baquero affirmed that the essay was the central, defining genre of contemporary Spanish letters. According to Andrenio – Gómez de Baquero’s *nom de plume*, which he adopted from Baltasar Gracián’s *Criticón* – three developments explain the essay’s success in the early twentieth century: the growth of the periodical press, the formation of an intellectual middle class, and the creation of a reformist civic atmosphere in the aftermath of 1898 (146–50). All of these factors certainly had a strong bearing on the essays studied here. Many of them were published in either journals or newspapers: Unamuno’s *En torno al casticismo* was first published in periodical form in *La España Moderna*, and most of Maeztu’s *Hacia otra España* consists of brief articles previously published in socialist publications such as *Vida Nueva*, *Germinal*, and *El País*. Concerning the reading public, the essays addressed in this book mostly targeted an urban readership whose emergence was instrumental in consolidating modernist literature

in Spain. As José Carlos Mainer has shown, this reading public was made up of the middle classes, who sought to placate their historical frustrations with the domination of political corruption (*caciquismo*), clericalism, and militarism in national life, as well as sectors of the lower middle class and the “conscious” proletariat (“1900–1910” 204–05); in Catalonia, the reading public consisted mainly of the middle class, which made possible the emergence and affirmation of Catalan nationalism (see Marfany). Finally, as for themes, all of the essays herein may be affiliated with the *fin-de-siècle* intellectual movement known as regenerationism, which offered a variety of proposals for reforming Spain from a plurality of political viewpoints – just as there was a progressive and a conservative regenerationism, there also was a centralist regenerationism that sought to strengthen the power of the central state and a Catalanist regenerationism that stressed Catalonia’s importance and leadership within the Spanish state.²⁴

As suggested above, the essays I discuss share many of the generic features that have characterized the essay as an ideal type, as a conceptual model whose origins can be traced back to the late sixteenth century, when Michel de Montaigne’s first edition of *Essais* (1580) was quickly followed by Francis Bacon’s first edition of *Essays* (1597).²⁵ Such generic features can be summarized as follows: all of the texts are highly personal pieces of writing that foreground the lived individual experience of the author above and beyond any concern for systematic or theoretical elaboration; they all discuss subject matters that were critical to the general, educated readers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (the past, present, and future of the nation); they all presuppose and appeal to the reader’s sympathy and invite her collaboration in the production of meaning precisely because the essay is an open, fragmentary literary form that can only offer a limited, provisional truth; and, they all can be described as hybrids of art and science, as can be seen in their language, which combines concepts (belonging to a denotative register), tropes, and figures of speech (belonging to a connotative register).²⁶

From a historical viewpoint, the essays I analyze depart from the formal procedures of the nineteenth-century treatise, a genre that was employed by two figures who had a strong moral influence on *fin-de-siècle* intellectuals: Francesc Pi i Margall (1824–1901) and Joaquín Costa (1846–1911). Pi i Margall’s *Las nacionalidades* (1877), which systematically explores the idea of nationhood as contrasted with that of federalism, and Costa’s *Teoría del hecho jurídico individual y social* (1880), which is an objective study of customs from a legal, philosophical, and anthropological perspective, can be said to offer a theory of their respective subjects, one that claims to be scientific truth. Both Pi i Margall and Costa are not essayists, but systematic authors whose work is closer to the full-scale academic exposition than to the fragmentary,

provisional, situated knowledge offered by the essay. For this reason their influence was moral, not formal – unless we consider a purely negative concept of influence, where the treatise would provide an inherited stock of forms that were to be refused by the essayists studied herein.

It is also worth pointing out that the essays I analyze can be viewed as encouraging a critical attitude with respect to the historical components of nationality at their time of publication. In the late 1890s and early 1900s this critical impulse was surely not free of ideology. Not only because the essay can be said to be an ideological form in itself – a crudely Marxist interpretation might see it “as embodying bourgeois ideology, the world view based on the isolated self, separated from community, and forced to construct its own precarious significance in an alien world” (Good 182) – but also, and more importantly, because such essays functioned as vehicles for both Spanish and Catalan nationalisms. In this precise respect, they conform to Fredric Jameson’s contract theory of literary genre. According to Jameson, “genres are essentially literary *institutions*, or social contracts between a writer and a specific public, whose function is to specify the proper use of a particular cultural artifact” (*The Political Unconscious* 106). In light of this definition, the essays studied herein can be viewed as satisfying the desires of the reading public by offering a symbolic resolution to the economic and political contradictions afflicting *fin-de-siècle* Spanish society that displaces such contradictions into the imagined community of the nation.

The plausibility of this interpretation notwithstanding, I believe that such essays performed other functions that cannot be described as ideological. Not only did they accommodate radically different and often contradictory political viewpoints, but they also questioned the inherited stock of national images that were hegemonic during the first half of the Bourbon Restoration (1875–1898). As such, they can be seen to perform a *critical* function that is inherent in the freedom of judgment presupposed by the essay as a product of modern culture. Graham Good nicely captures this critical function when he writes that the essay might represent “an anti-ideological expression of the free individual reporting and reflecting on his experience in defiance or disregard of authority” (182). One of my goals in reading the essays at hand is to recover the ambivalent critical force that has been obscured by the subsequent canonization of the texts and the transformation of their authors into great personalities of Spanish and Catalan letters.

Of all of the generic characteristics of the essay noted above (its personal tone, its appeal to the readers’ sympathy, its being an open, fragmentary literary form, etc.), two have a particular resonance for the study of emotional investments. The first is related to what we could call the structural principle of the essay, its markedly subjective character (Good 8; Gómez-Martínez

53–54; Pozuelo Yvancos; Weinberg 138–39). More precisely, my contention is that one of the ways in which the subjective component of the essay is constructed is through the naming and performance of different emotions in the text. Two of the most important theories on essays written in the twentieth century, Gyorg Lukács's "On the Nature and Form of the Essay" (1910) and Theodor Adorno's "The Essay as Form" (1958), provide contrasting accounts of the subjective aspect of the essay. Advancing a rather aestheticist view of the essay, Lukács suggests, quoting the elder Schlegel, that essays are "intellectual poems" (18). As an art form, they might be seen as a "kind of expression of the human temperament [...] in which the same life-problems are raised as in the writings which call themselves criticism, but with the difference that here the questions are addressed to life itself" (3). To distance himself from Lukács's Romantic expressivism, Adorno accords a greater weight to both the essay's object and its claim to truth. Equally dissatisfied with Lukács's aestheticism and "the general positivist tendency to set every possible object, as an object of research, in stark opposition to the subject" (5), Adorno acknowledges the essay's aesthetic autonomy as well as the need for it submit to "the obligations of conceptual thought" (7). The result is that the essay emerges as a space where a provisional determination between self and world can be achieved: "the heart of the essay as a form is this moment of characterization, of recognition, of figuration, where the self finds a pattern in the world and the world finds a pattern in the self" (Good 22).

Today, after the postmodern critique of subjectivity, it is hard to see this self as a unified, autonomous, self-present consciousness that exists prior to the text and governs it. If Foucault's early account of the author and his later reflections on subjectivity have taught us anything, it is that subjectivity is a contingent configuration, a product of what he called the "techniques or practices of the self" (*The Use of Pleasure* 25–32). The self that is characteristic of the essay is nothing more than the figure where a multiplicity of textual projections converges. Such projections, to be sure, might have diverse origins: the extratextual author, the implied author, or, as Beatriz Colombi has recently pointed out, a series of socially valued images such as the polemist, the prophet, or the master (26–27). Regardless of their origin, these projections fulfill a crucial function: they lend credibility to the argument put forth by a particular essay.

Within this framework, emotions are pertinent because they modulate the self constructed in and by the essay. For instance, when Maeztu confesses to his readers that the starting point of *Hacia otra España* is the pain he felt in 1898 when faced with the image of a defeated, broken nation ("mueve mi pluma el dolor de que mi patria sea chica y esté muerta" [my pen is moved by the pain caused by my shrinking, dying fatherland] [48]), he appears to

his readers as someone deeply invested in the past, present, and future of the nation. To become the “I” that holds together the essay is to feel pain at the sorry state of the Spanish nation.

Here it will be useful to say a few words about the accounts of emotion that have shaped my own understanding of the contradictory responses elicited by *fin-de-siècle* myths of empire. Instead of adopting a general account of emotions that would purportedly apprehend the range of affects present in all of the essays under consideration, I have chosen to work, as it were, inductively, moving from the specific emotions present in the essays to more general accounts of such emotions. Thus, the elegiac tone of Unamuno’s *En torno al casticismo* and Ganivet’s *Idearium español*, as well as their consideration of early modern imperial ideals as a lost object, directed my attention to Sigmund Freud’s well-known account of mourning and melancholia. Freud’s theory of melancholia, which has recently been described as a specifically *modernist* theory that accounts for “a new mode of experience, one in which difficult-to-mourn losses have become a central feature of life in a way that has fundamentally affected the nature and structure of subjectivity” (Flatley 42), is particularly apt to discuss both Unamuno’s and Ganivet’s essays because loss is the central experience discussed by these texts. As we will see in Chapters 2 and 3, colonial losses are not the only losses with which these essays grapple. In both texts, the changes in the nature of work and in the structure of traditional communities brought about by industrialization are fundamental to understanding the complex emotional investments projected upon the early modern myths of empire.

In Maeztu’s *Hacia otra España* and Prat’s *La nacionalitat catalana*, the values and traditions associated with the early modern Spanish Empire do not figure as a lost object, but rather as the cause of a series of distinct thoughts, beliefs, and judgments that constitute two particular emotions: indignation and shame. Given that what differentiates and constitutes these two emotions in the essays is primarily a question of thought, I follow a generally cognitivist perspective to describe them. Cognitivist approaches to emotions hold that “thoughts (conscious and unconscious) are what differentiate [emotions ...] Thoughts are crucial not only in giving the direction of a particular emotion but in distinguishing one type of emotion from another” (Neu, *Tear* 12).²⁷

In what can be described as the most formidable challenge to cognitivist accounts of emotion coming from an aesthetic perspective, Charles Altieri has recently argued in *The Particulars of Rapture* (2003) that such accounts tend “to assimilate the affects too quickly into models of reflective judgment that subordinated the phenomenology of the affects to the perspectives we bring to bear in orienting and in assessing actions” (4). For Altieri, the two conceptual victims of the cognitive approach are “the range of affects that do

not take form as emotions” and other forms of affective agency that cannot be apprehended by “emphasizing what we might call the belief-judgment nexus” (9), where beliefs and judgments are constitutive of thoughts.

Altieri is probably right in pointing out the limitations of cognitive theories of emotion when engaging novels, poems, and paintings, but the affects present in the essays by Maeztu and Prat de la Riba seem largely immune to his criticism for two main reasons. First, and following Altieri’s own definition, the types of affect present in these essays are indeed emotions, that is, “affects involving the construction of attitudes that typically establish a particular cause and so situate the agent within a narrative and generate some kind of action or identification” (2). As anyone slightly familiar with *Hacia otra España* and *La nacionalitat catalana* knows, the main objectives of these texts are to situate the reader within a national narrative and to have her adopt a distinctly patriotic attitude that will contribute to the nation’s regeneration. To these ends, emotions are crucial. Second, Altieri’s focus on affects that are not shaped by beliefs and judgments and that, consequently, are divorced from questions of morality, does not seem particularly productive when reading Maeztu’s and Prat’s essays. This is so because, as one critic pointed out, the *fin-de-siècle* generation of essayists was a group of writers primarily concerned with moral problems:

Todos ellos de alguna manera fueron moralistas. Todos quisieron, desde distintas plataformas ideológicas, suprimir, moldear, innovar costumbres colectivas y defectos personales.

[All of them were, in one way or another, moralists. All of them, each from his own ideological platform, sought to suppress, shape, and change both collective customs and personal shortcomings]. (Mir 32)

Whether the emotions elicited by the essays are described through a Freudian or a cognitivist paradigm, it is important to emphasize that they cannot be reduced to a psychological state, to something that is “in” someone’s mind. Sara Ahmed, for instance, writes: “emotions are not simply something ‘I’ or ‘we’ have. Rather, it is through emotions, or how we respond to objects and others, that surfaces and boundaries are made: the ‘I’ and the ‘we’ are shaped by, and even take the shape of, contact with others” (10). Ahmed’s account of emotions revolves around the idea of “contact,” of a subject that comes into close proximity with a material or imagined object that, in turn, shapes her emotions. Taking a broadly similar view of emotions, Robert Solomon conceives of emotions as “strategies for getting along in the world” (3) and draws from phenomenology to further develop

the intentionality of emotions. Within a phenomenological framework, emotions “are *acts* of consciousness [...] not entities *in* consciousness” (157; emphasis in orig.). This means that emotions are one of the ways in which the mind engages the world. Thus, emotions cannot be seen as private, purely subjective phenomena, but rather as arising “*in the world*, in *social* space [...], in the nexus of our interpersonal relationships” (158; emphasis in orig.).²⁸ According to this view of emotions, Maeztu’s pain is not a purely mental state that he “has” and then “expresses” on the page. Rather, it is the way in which Maeztu engages Spain’s past and present, a “strategy” that shapes Maeztu’s “I” as much as it shapes the national past.

Solomon’s account of emotions stages a dialectic between the self and the world that bears a striking resemblance to the one enacted by the essay. Just as the essay, in Adorno’s account, exposes the dogmatism of a positivist doctrine that is based on the Cartesian dualism of mind and external world (14–16), so too recent views of emotion do away with the idea that emotions are processes that take place in a mind that is separate from the world. Paralleling the way in which the knowledge produced in the essay is as much about the self as about the world, the emotions attached to empire also occur in a continuum between the self and the world, thereby laying bare their inherently social structure. In the preface, entitled “Au lecteur,” that opens the first volume of his essays, Montaigne claimed that, upon his death, his family and friends would be able to deepen their knowledge of him by reading his essays because his whole being was inscribed in the text. He wrote, “Je suis moi-même la matière de mon livre” [I am myself the subject of my book] (48), but as readers we know that this “I” is actively engaged in the world by way of a variety of emotions that are going to give it its provisional configuration. Similarly, when we read the essays on national identity by Unamuno, Ganivet, Maeztu, and Prat de la Riba, we will gain much knowledge about the way in which imperial emotions shaped such particular subjects but, at the same time, we must keep in mind that such emotions are never purely private or subjective, but also social.

The second formal feature of the essay that makes it a particularly fertile ground for emotional intensities resides in its ties to rhetoric. As many commentators have suggested, the essay is a genre that not only attempts to evoke in the reader a multiplicity of meanings, but also seeks to persuade her (Aullón de Haro 117; Gómez-Martínez 53; Terrasse 115–31). Adorno, who remarked that “historically the essay [...] is related to rhetoric” (20), characterized the rhetorical dimension of the essay in a compelling manner: “Rhetoric was probably never anything but thought in its adaptation to communicative language. [...] The essay retains, precisely in the autonomy of its presentation, which distinguishes it from scientific and scholarly

information, traces of the communicative element such information dispenses with” (21). Since Aristotle’s *On Rhetoric*, we have known that what Adorno calls “communicative elements” partly consists of emotions, which come into play in the accomplishment of persuasion.

For Aristotle, persuasion can be achieved through three different means: *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos*. While *ethos* refers to persuasion through character “whenever the speech is spoken in such a way as to make the speaker worthy of credence” (38, 1356a), *pathos* alludes to persuasion that takes place “through the hearers when they are led to feel emotion [...] by the speech” (39, 1356a), and *logos* concerns persuasion through “the arguments [*logoi*] when we show the truth or the apparent truth from whatever is persuasive in each case” (39, 1356a). Particularly relevant for my purposes here are Aristotle’s theories of *ethos* and *pathos*. If, according to Aristotle, a credible speaker must simultaneously display practical wisdom [*phronesis*], virtue [*arete*], and good will [*eunoia*] (112–13, 1378a), it seems fair to suggest that *fin-de-siècle* Iberian intellectuals generally displayed a great deal of good will (which for Aristotle is an aspect of *pathos*) and smaller doses of practical wisdom and virtue. This is the reason why some commentators have suggested that Spanish intellectuals are “sentimental,” more concerned with projecting a grandiloquent, self-aggrandizing image of their personality than with understanding, with modesty and patience, the complexities of the world (Villacañas Berlanga, “El carisma”).

Emotions are thus an integral part of the essayists’ character, a character that is conveyed through and projected by their words. But if we recall Aristotle’s remarks about *pathos*, it becomes clear that emotions are also inherent in the essayists’ attempts to connect with the emotional dispositions of their audiences. Standard descriptions of *fin-de-siècle* Spain maintain that audiences were afflicted by a debilitating melancholia in relation to empire since the outbreak of the colonial crisis in 1895. All of the essayists I address in this book sought to transform – with varying degrees of success – this melancholic mood into one that promoted a positive attachment to their nations, thereby making empire one of the most rhetorically and emotionally charged terms in their texts.

As a final remark regarding my suggestion that the imperialist dimension of national forms of identification works primarily through emotions, it is worth pointing out that such a suggestion is congruent with the late Victorian understanding of imperialism. As Stephen Howe reminds us, for most late nineteenth-century users of the word, imperialism “did not mean the *facts* of dominance, conquest, or overseas expansion, but a policy, a philosophy, or just an *emotional attitude of enthusiasm for such things*” (23; emphasis added). This view of imperialism as emotion is confirmed by

one of the most popular contemporary reflections on the subject, John A. Hobson's *Imperialism: A Study* (1902). Hobson not only views imperialism as a perversion and degradation of nationalism (11), but he also devotes a whole chapter to its "Moral and Sentimental Factors," which, according to the author, manifest themselves differently in the educated classes and the masses: for the former, the sentimental factors of imperialism relate to its "intellectual and moral grandeur," while for the latter they involve "a cruder appeal to hero-worship and sensational glory, adventure and the sporting spirit" (222). In contrast to what happened in Britain, in *fin-de-siècle* Spain the source of imperial emotions was not an actual empire but a past empire (Spain's early modern empire in the New World), and the cultivation of such emotions was a phenomenon by and large restricted to those intellectuals who were invested in the regeneration of their nation.

With the above remarks I do not mean to imply that the essay is the only type of text that can perform the emotional work that I have described with regard to empire. In fact, in Chapter 1, I read a number of texts that circulated in the public domain, including academic speeches, scholarly essays, and newspaper articles, which both register and bring about a series of imperial emotions. My only claim here is that the essay, because of its generic and rhetorical particularities, is distinctly suited for understanding how empire became an object of national emotions.

The following chapters are organized around a series of events and texts that not only are among the most important in early twentieth-century Spanish culture, but are also especially interesting for how they stage emotional attachments to empire. I take as my main case studies one event and four essays: the 1892 commemorations of Columbus's first voyage; and the essays in *En torno al casticismo* (1895) by Miguel de Unamuno (1864–1936), *Idearium español* (1897) by Ángel Ganivet (1865–1898), *Hacia otra España* (1899) by Ramiro de Maeztu (1874–1936), and *La nacionalitat catalana* (1906) by Enric Prat de la Riba (1870–1917). These texts will be organized both chronologically and by national tradition.

Although this sequence is meant to give the reader a sense of the complex ways in which imperial emotions were constitutive of national forms of identification during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Spain, it does not seek to produce a teleological history of *fin-de-siècle* imperial emotions. Far from it; my narrative seeks to account for the conflicting uses of imperial emotions in a variety of political and intellectual contexts while resisting the teleology inherent in nationalist narratives. If there is a method of historical investigation that informs this book, it is Foucault's (and Nietzsche's) notion of genealogy. While history, in its classical sense, privileges the linear development of things and searches for their secure and

stable origin, my genealogy of imperial emotions “record[s] the singularity of events outside of any monotonous finality; [...] seek[s] them in the most unpromising places, in what we tend to feel is without history – in sentiments, love, conscience, instincts; [...] and] isolate[s] the different scenes where they engaged in different roles” (Foucault, “Nietzsche” 139–40). The different chapters of this book follow a chronological order, but it is one that emphasizes discontinuities, accidents, and reversals.

The reader will note that I have arranged the book along a series of distinct historical experiences that roughly span the period 1890–1914. The book begins with the first years of the Restoration regime (1875–1898), which were characterized by an attempt to place the symbols and figures associated with the early modern empire at the heart of Spain’s national imaginary. I begin with the myths surrounding the “discovery” and conquest of America in order to show how the Spanish state’s appropriation of the symbols and figures associated with the early modern empire was far from an uncontested endeavor. I take the fourth centennial of Columbus’s “discovery” of America as an occasion to examine the rhetorical fabric of the myths about Spanish colonialism, which can be traced back to what can be considered the Restoration’s official master narrative of the Spanish nation, Antonio Cánovas del Castillo’s *Discurso sobre la nación* (1882). Taking my cue from the current historical consensus about the centrality of Spanish colonialism for the political imagination, I highlight the dissenting voices whose political use of the imperial past represented an alternative to the nationalist appropriations prevalent in 1892. This federalist use sought to advance a conception of the political community first formulated in Francesc Pi i Margall’s *Las nacionalidades* (1877), a text that acknowledged the plural history and territorial diversity of the different regions that made up the Spanish state. The conclusion of this chapter is that the nationalization of Spain’s colonial past was much more ambivalent than has previously been thought. This ambivalence sets the stage for the conflicting emotional responses spurred by the demise of empire which I examine in subsequent chapters.

I then proceed to analyze the colonial crisis of 1895–1898, an occurrence that dramatically altered the affective force of the imperial markers of national identities. This historical conjuncture, which was marked by an acute sense of loss for most Spanish intellectuals, is the focal point of Chapter 2, which is devoted to Miguel de Unamuno’s canonical essay *En torno al casticismo* (1895). By focusing on the ways in which the text addresses Spain’s transition from an imperial to a post-imperial nation, I propose an interpretation of the essay as a failed attempt to mourn the imperial ideals that had been a crucial element of Spanish national identity. The

narrative of mourning offered by *En torno al casticismo* fails in that it only addresses the most traumatic aspects of the Spanish imperial past, those related to the religious justification of political domination and economic exploitation. The essay's neglect of the cultural aspects of the Spanish Empire makes it possible for the specters of empire to return in an idealized manner, haunting future developments of Unamuno's thought as well as his relationship with Catalan culture.

In Chapter 3, I show how Ángel Ganivet's famous essay *Idearium español* (1897) is a melancholic text that incorporates and identifies with imperial ideals instead of mourning their passing. Central to my reading is the ambivalence toward empire displayed by the text, an ambivalence that has not been theorized as such (that is, as a specific way of relating to the loss of imperial ideals). The identification process associated with Freud's account of melancholia provides the key to explaining why the symbolic loss of a series of thoroughly idealized imperial values is such a crucial element in the formation of Spanish national identity. The chapter concludes by rethinking Ganivet's 1897 injunction to concentrate energies within national borders. Situating the text in its original context of production, the chapter demonstrates the paradoxical quality of such an injunction: it can be seen as an anti-imperialistic gesture that, in the same movement it was expressed, also blatantly ignored the nineteenth-century Spanish imperial experience in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines and indicated a clear drive toward expansion both within the Iberian Peninsula and Africa.

The last chapter that bears on the imperial crisis of the late 1890s is Chapter 4, where I examine another *fin-de-siècle* canonical essay about the symbolic constitution of the Spanish people: Ramiro de Maeztu's *Hacia otra España* (1899). The chapter draws on philosophical accounts of the emotion of indignation, using classical and contemporary sources (Aristotle, Antonio Valdecantos, Robert Solomon, Victoria Camps), to distinguish between anger – for which Maeztu was famous – and indignation. Bringing Nietzsche's reflections on the role of historical knowledge together with these accounts of emotion, the chapter argues that Maeztu is a critical historian who views the recent imperial past with indignation and who seeks to replace the old-fashioned, pre-industrial glories of the Spanish empire in America with the industrial bourgeoisie's conquest and colonization of the Castilian plains. This approach to Maeztu reveals the weak normative commitments of his national project, which relied heavily on an emotional critique of empire, something that is evident in his later work, especially his deeply traditionalist, utopian essay *Defensa de la Hispanidad* (1934).

The backdrop for Chapter 5 is the cultural and political impact of Catalan nationalism in Spain, a phenomenon that was of great interest and concern

to Maeztu. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Catalan nationalism sought to achieve the local bourgeoisie's hegemony within the Spanish state, greatly impacting the Spanish elites. Chapter 5 looks at the work of Enric Prat de la Riba, and particularly at his essay *La nacionalitat catalana* (1906), trying to account for Prat's silence regarding Spain's American empire – a silence that is all the more telling when one realizes that Catalonia was deeply involved in Spanish imperialism during the nineteenth century. I argue that such silence depends upon a previous characterization of the Spanish Empire as a source of shame, and that such shameful characterization is a condition for the expression of collective pride in Catalonia's imperial prospects.

I end with 1914 because World War I signals the end of the so-called “regenerationist projects” that arose at the end of the nineteenth century, and because that year anticipates the Catholic and authoritarian emotional investments in empire characteristic of Spanish conservatives such as Ernesto Giménez Caballero or Ramiro de Maeztu. (I refer here to the reactionary, deeply Catholic, traditionalist Maeztu of the 1920s and early 1930s, not to the iconoclastic intellectual of the early twentieth century.) The Conclusion is divided into two sections. The first section offers a brief examination of the emotional dimension of imperial myths in the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s, a period when these myths progressively lose their conflictive character and thus increasingly become the object of an excessive, false pride – the best example being the Francoist discourses about *Hispanidad*. The second section investigates the moral implications of the book's argument.

Notes

- 1 Many of the texts that I will be citing are not available in English translation. I have had to translate a great many of them. All translations from Spanish, Catalan, and French to English are my own, unless otherwise noted. Two additional stylistic choices are worth mentioning: one, Spanish and Catalan spellings have been modernized throughout the text; two, the names of Catalan individuals are written in Catalan in the text, even when the authors signed their books with the Spanish spelling of their names (as is the case, for instance, with Francesc Pi i Margall).
- 2 Perhaps the most representative work of this postmodern approach to historiography is Hayden White's *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe*. For those inclined to label White as a “postmodern relativist,” Barbara Herrnstein Smith offers an engaging – and sobering – account of the ways in which current constructivist views of knowledge find their roots in the intellectual world of the 1920s and 1930s (18–45).
- 3 In the *Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*, intentionality is defined as “aboutness”: “Things that are about other things exhibit intentionality. Beliefs and other

mental states exhibit intentionality, but so, in a derived way, do sentences and books, maps and pictures, and other representations” (Dennett 381).

- 4 As John Gillis remarks: “The core meaning of any individual or group identity, namely, a sense of sameness over time and space, is sustained by remembering; and what is remembered is defined by the assumed identity” (3).
- 5 In the case of individual subjects, Debus argues that “autobiographically past directed emotions” or APD-emotions are not memories of original emotions, but rather new emotional responses to the past events to which the relevant emotions are directed. She further notes that such APD-emotions “contribute to the subject’s understanding and evaluation of her own past life, and they thereby help the subject to develop a balanced sense of self” (761). To my knowledge, there is not much written on the topic of emotions and social, as opposed to individual, memory practices.
- 6 At the outset of the Bourbon Restoration (1875–1923), secularizing liberals and traditionalist Catholics conjured the ghosts of the Inquisition and the absolute monarchy to address a purportedly intellectual issue (whether there had been true science in Spain) that in fact was a political question (whether the newly established, oligarchic, traditionalist regime was legitimate or not). This exchange, which came to be known as the *polémica de la ciencia española*, pitted liberals like Gumersindo de Azcárate, Manuel de la Revilla, and José del Perojo against the traditionalist Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo: the former argued that the Monarchy and the Inquisition had stifled scientific development for over three centuries, while the latter responded that science had flourished under both the Monarchy and the Church, the two traditional sources of the Spanish state’s legitimacy. More recently, during and after Spain’s transition to democracy, it was the specter of the Civil War (1936–1939) and its repressive aftermath during Francoism that haunted the imagination of a number of novelists, filmmakers, and ordinary citizens. Already in 1976, Juan Benet observed that the Civil War was the single most important event shaping the life of twentieth-century Spaniards: “todavía está lejos el día en que los hombres de esta tierra se puedan sentir libres del peso y la sombra que arroja todavía aquel funesto conflicto” [the day in which the inhabitants of this land may feel free from the shadow and weight projected by that ill-fated conflict is still far away] (25). The ongoing history and memory wars about the Civil War seem to confirm Benet’s prediction (see Boyd, “The Politics” and Loureiro, “Pathetic”). These two well-known, contentious episodes in national memory are meant to offer a contrast with the relatively more stable symbolic place occupied by the conquest and colonization of the Americas in the national imaginary at the end of the nineteenth century.
- 7 See especially chapter 2 of Mariátegui’s essay titled “El problema del indio” and chapter 5 of Paz’s essay, “Conquista y colonia” (228–58).
- 8 I use the expression “Latin American postcolonial criticism” loosely, fully aware of the fact that critics analyzing the legacies of colonialism in Latin America claim for themselves other labels, such as post-occidentalism, etc. For an understanding of the Spanish conquest and colonization as the inaugural catastrophe of the modern world, see Walter Mignolo’s *The Darker Side of the Renaissance* and Enrique Dussel’s *The Invention of the Americas*.
- 9 I appropriate here Robert Segal’s minimal definition of myth as laid out in *Myth: A Very Short Introduction* (4–6).

- 10 For an exhaustive and perceptive description of the development of such crises in the Spanish context, see Cerezo Galán, *El mal del siglo* (65–508).
- 11 Consider, for instance, the contention that opens Llera and Romero Samper's study on Spanish intellectuals and the colonial problem: "estamos cada vez más convencidos de que los intelectuales españoles se preocuparon poco, muy poco, del 'Desastre' de Cavite y Santiago" [we are increasingly convinced that Spanish intellectuals were not very worried about the 'Disaster' of Cavite and Santiago] (267). For a recent example of the relocation of peninsular *fin-de-siècle* literature within the context of Anglo-European modernism, see Cerezo Galán's *El mal del siglo*. This exegetical paradigm also informs a number of important studies on the period, such as Ricardo Gullón's *Direcciones del modernismo* (1990), Serge Salaün and Carlos Serrano's *1900 en España* (1991), and the essays compiled by José-Carlos Mainer for the first supplement to the sixth volume of *Historia y crítica de la literatura española (Modernismo y 98* [1994]). This is not intended to be an exhaustive review of the critical literature on *fin-de-siècle* Iberian letters, but rather a bibliographic orientation about the new hermeneutic paradigm that has emerged since the early 1990s.
- 12 To assess the extent of Ortega's rewriting of recent Spanish intellectual history, as well as his self-representation as the speaker of the Generation of '98, see the articles he published in *El Imparcial* in 1913, "Competencia I y II," which are included in the works cited.
- 13 In "El fin del imperio español y la Generación del 98," a seminal article on the impact of imperial culture on the so-called Generation of 1898, Alda Blanco mentions this text by Unamuno as evidence of the latter's critical stance toward colonialism. For reasons that will become apparent in Chapter 2, I believe that Unamuno's position is far more complex than Blanco seems to suggest.
- 14 See *Maeztu: biografía de un nacionalista español* (34–42) by Pedro González Cuevas for more details about Maeztu's stay in Cuba.
- 15 As Henry Kamen points out in *Imagining Spain*, Spain's military conquest was not so much a national, but rather an international enterprise: "Every stage of the Spanish exploration of the New World was made possible by the aid of the native population, who in this way hoped to gain more power over their enemies" (116). Concerning the vision of empire as a civilizing institution, he observes that "There was a continuous Spanish presence, but it was rarely backed up by 'power.' It is doubtful whether the description 'empire' had any real meaning in the overseas territories" (122). This view of the Spanish Empire as a transnational association, one that squarely contradicts Spanish nationalist historiography, was advanced in much greater detail by Kamen in *Empire* (2003).
- 16 One of the significant works in which nineteenth-century Spanish colonial experience was textualized is Benito Pérez Galdós's novel *Tormento* (1884). As Mary Coffey has pointed out, the *indiano* character Agustín Caballero embodies such a colonial experience, but it does so in an ambivalent manner that prevents any kind of national identification whatsoever. As Coffey argues, in *Tormento* "The metropolis's link to the colonies becomes [...] a means by which the nation's lack of progress is rendered visible" (63).
- 17 This is an admittedly brief and partial summary of the richly textured and nuanced description offered of Spain's nineteenth-century imperial project in Josep M. Fradera's *Colonias para después de un imperio*.

- 18 As can be expected, Masson's article elicited a number of indignant and patriotic responses by Spanish intellectuals, among which stand out Antonio José Cavanilles's *Observaciones sobre el artículo España de la Nueva Enciclopedia* (1784), Carlo Denina's *Respuesta a la pregunta: ¿Qué se debe a España?* (1786) and, most famously, Juan Pablo Forner's *Oración apologética por la España y su mérito literario* (1786). For a summary description of these works and of the debate stirred by Masson in Spain, see the introduction to the edition of Masson's article referenced in the works cited.
- 19 These modernizing deficits have been studied insightfully by Jesús Torrecilla in *La imitación colectiva*, a study that shows how Spanish culture was dependent upon French culture between the eighteenth and the early twentieth century.
- 20 This struggle between the war's supporters and opponents is described by Balfour's *The End of the Spanish Empire* and Cacho Viu's *Repensar el 98*.
- 21 I use the Cátedra edition of *Campos de Castilla*; the translations of Machado's verses come from *Campos de Castilla. The Landscape of Castile*. I say that Machado displaces imperial myth with hesitation because the tone of Machado's poem suggests some redeeming qualities in the attitudes and dispositions of the conquistadors (Ribbans 44); critics like John Butt have argued that Machado equivocates on the issue of myths of empire, reading the poem – incorrectly, in my opinion – as expressing nostalgia for Castilian military conquest.
- 22 Cacho Viu's argument in *El nacionalismo catalán como factor de modernización* is that while Catalanism successfully blended rationalism and nationalism, and thus became an important factor in Spain's modernization, Spanish nationalism failed to impose itself as a modernizing project at the end of the nineteenth century. As Cacho Viu goes on to argue, Spanish national modernization was thwarted because of the unitarist obsession inherent in Spanish nationalism since its origins as a project of Doctrinary Liberalism (23).
- 23 I appropriate here the working definition of the essay provided by *The Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*. A useful and important reference work about the essay as a literary genre and about particular essayists and essayistic traditions is Tracy Chevalier's *Encyclopedia of the Essay* (1997).
- 24 For an account of the different ideological tendencies within Regenerationism, see Cerezo Galán, *El mal del siglo* (221–54).
- 25 The consideration of a genre as a “mental model,” as a sort of Weberian “ideal-type” that arranges the most significant features of a plurality of works into a unified analytical construct comes from Claudio Guillén's insightful remarks on the study of literary genres in *Entre lo uno y lo diverso* (137–71).
- 26 To describe the generic features of the essay, I have drawn from the insights of Good, Aullón de Haro, Gómez Martínez, Mainer (“Apuntes”), and Marichal. I have also found useful the compilations by Glaudes, García Casanova, and Cervera, Hernández, and Adsuar.
- 27 Although the cognitive view of emotions is quite popular among philosophers, it is not so among literary critics, many of whom deal with the multiple, ever-expanding theories of affect. In a recent article that makes use of affect theory, Miranda Burgess offers the following distinction between emotions and affects: while emotions are “conscious and individual, the personal property of a thinking, feeling body,” affect constitutes a “pre-individual” “flow of energy” that is eminently “social” and “circulatory” (289–90). Although this particular

distinction between emotions and affects is not universally accepted, I do think that it is productive to discriminate among phenomena that take place, as Thomas Dixon puts it, somewhere “between physiological processes and mental experiences, and between states of feeling and states of thought” (343). The distinction between emotions and affects is thus predicated upon two elements: the subjective or pre-subjective character of the experience at hand, and what one could call the “thought-content” of such experience – which is considerable in the case of emotions, but minimal in the case of affects.

Two other references bear out this distinction. Rei Terada sees affect as “the physiological aspect” of emotion, which she conceives as “a psychological, minimally interpretive experience” (3). Gregg and Seigworth, who offer a very useful review of contemporary theories of affect, affirm that “Affect, at its most anthropomorphic, is the name we give to those forces – visceral forces beneath, alongside, or generally *other than* conscious knowing, vital forces insisting beyond emotion – that can serve to drive us toward movement, toward thought and extension, that can likewise suspend it (as if in neutral) across a barely registering accretion of force relations, or that can even leave us overwhelmed by the world’s apparent intractability” (1). For reasons I make clear in the body of this chapter, I believe that the feelings mobilized by imperial memory in the essays at hand are best described as emotions, not affects.

- 28 In *The Secret History of Emotion* Daniel Gross offers a fascinating rhetorical account of emotion that emphasizes its social dimension, a feature that according to him was obscured by the rise of eighteenth-century psychology. As he puts it, “Emotions [...] must be read as markers of social distinction rather than just as expressions of a human nature essentially shared by all” (178).

CHAPTER ONE

Imperial Myths and the National Imagination

Columbus in 1892

The story of the nationalization of Spain's colonial past, of the lionization of the conquest and colonization of the Americas by the Spanish state and its cultural institutions, is protracted and complicated. For a long time, it was thought that it was only in the aftermath of the Spanish-Cuban-American War of 1898, when Spain had lost all of its colonies, that it turned to its colonial past for nationalist inspiration (Serrano, *El nacimiento* 245–329; Pike). In contrast to these opinions, Ángel Loureiro has remarked that “Spain has been haunted for two centuries by the specter of its former colonies” (“Spanish Nationalism” 65) and that at the end of the nineteenth century “Latin America is [already] seen by Spaniards [...] as symbolic and material compensation for Spain's economic and political dejection” (69). Echoing Loureiro's concern with the place of the Spanish-American ex-colonies in the Spanish national imagination, Christopher Schmidt-Nowara has recently argued, in *The Conquest of History* (2006), that Spanish patriots appropriated the history of the colonization of the Americas for their projects much earlier, since at least the mid-1820s. This recognition of the importance that the Spanish empire in the Americas has had for the nation-building process in Spain was long overdue. For this reason alone, Schmidt-Nowara's study is nothing short of groundbreaking; it attests to the existence of a patriotic imagination based on past Spanish colonization during the course of the nineteenth century by unearthing a series of largely unknown documents and by reinterpreting better-known ones. This recognition of the American empire's early symbolic importance for Spain's imagined community, however, has a blind spot: it assumes that the only possible way in which Spanish patriots related to the conquest and colonization of America was through its glorification for nationalistic purposes.

Although this is largely true, especially for the first half of the Bourbon Restoration (1875–1898), I argue that it is possible to rescue some alternative,

critical visions of both past Spanish colonialism and the Spanish political community. Taking my cue from Schmidt-Nowara's insights about the political use of the imperial past, in this chapter I focus on the Columbian commemorations of 1892 in order to examine an important chapter in the Spanish state's appropriation of the symbols and figures associated with the early modern empire. Building on the suggestion that the Columbian commemorations were not as unanimous as had previously been thought (Fontana 17; Pérez Garzón 91–93; Serrano, *El nacimiento* 315–16), I analyze three distinct perspectives on the events of 1492: the nationalist discourse of Emilio Castelar (1832–1899) and Antonio Cánovas del Castillo (1828–1897), the freethinking pronouncements of Antonio Machado y Núñez (1812–1896) and Ramón Chies (1845–1893), and most importantly, the federalist views of Francesc Pi i Margall (1824–1901). In contrast to the nationalist fervor that swept the nation during the fall of 1892, when the commemorations gave way to jingoistic reassertions of Spain's imperial legacies, Pi i Margall related to the conquest and colonization of the Americas mostly with indifference, and occasionally with indignation. By reconstructing Pi i Margall's forgotten views, I seek to demonstrate that there was an alternative political use of the imperial past, one that acquired its meaning not within a nationalist framework but rather within a federalist political formation. In this manner, I hope also to clarify the distinct roles of the imperial past and of imperialism in the articulation of nationalism and federalism, two of the main discourses of political identity and difference in the nineteenth century.

Certainly, as various historians have remarked, the different readings of the colonial past produced during the last quarter of the nineteenth century were, by and large, unanimous. The predominant interpretation is that during the Restoration there was a general agreement *within Spain* about the defense of Spanish forms of colonization and their capacity to assimilate the colonized regardless of political ideology. In this sense, Schmidt-Nowara rightly points out how “the conflicts endemic to political life in the metropolis disappeared in the imagined community of *la España ultramarina*” (*The Conquest* 10). For Schmidt-Nowara, this Spanish consensus about the colonial past is especially clear “when seen in dialogue and contention with patriotic Antillean or Philippine histories of Spanish colonization” (41), histories that, naturally enough, often contradicted those of Spanish patriots. Frederick Pike adds to the argument by asserting that the fundamental conviction of *hispanismo*, namely that “Spaniards (*peninsulares*) and Spanish Americans are members of the same *raza*, a *raza* shaped more by common culture, historical experiences, traditions, and language than by blood or ethnic factors,” was common to both liberals and conservatives of the time (1). In a recent essay on the subject, Antonio

Feros concurs, forcefully asserting that “if since the 1870s there were various and conflicting views on the identity and the history of Spain as an Iberian nation, there was, however, only one view about the identity of Spain as a global empire” (112). Finally, Carlos Rama reinforces this alignment of the liberal and conservative visions of the history of colonization by pointing out that during the Restoration it is difficult to distinguish between the liberal’s and conservative’s foreign policy with respect to Spanish America (183–84), suggesting that colonial policy validated the historical defense of Spanish colonialism put forth by Spanish intellectuals.

These accounts, however, do not ask if these visions of Spain’s imperial past related to other, more critical visions that were circulating at the time and that were articulated with other, less markedly essentialist national projects. If these scholars are right in arguing that knowledge about the imperial past was produced in order to foster bonds of loyalty between the Spanish state and its citizens, then the next question that needs to be asked is how this imperial knowledge was interpreted in other conceptions of the political community, regardless of whether such conceptions were institutionalized or not, were successful or failed. The failure of a political project, such as Francesc Pi i Margall’s federal organization of the Spanish state, can sometimes be more telling than a success. Indeed, as my reading of the 1892 commemorations will show, this particular failure reveals the existence of a critical vision of the history of colonization in the Americas, one whose suppression is constitutive of the tradition of imperialistic affirmation that shaped the dominant Spanish nationalist imagination during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. As the federal articulation of the Spanish community failed, a staunchly nationalist, self-congratulatory, complacent vision of the imperial past imposed itself. This vision is precisely the one that historians have emphasized thus far in their accounts of the nationalization of the Spanish colonial past.

In the following, I will look at failed political projects to determine their corresponding visions of the history of colonization. My point of departure is Schmidt-Nowara’s observation that the historical works of Martín Fernández de Navarrete (especially *Colección de los viajes y descubrimientos que hicieron por mar los españoles desde fines del siglo XV* [1825]), the wealth of published documents from Spanish archives on the colonization of the Americas, and the uses of Christopher Columbus and Bartolomé de las Casas as national symbols show that “the empire bequeathed to nineteenth-century patriots a deep layer of scholarly authority, historical sources, glorious heroes and events, and pointed responses to foreign critics of Spain” (*The Conquest* 34). Ultimately, I aim to nuance the conclusion that (i) Spanish representations of the conquest and colonization were uniform across the political spectrum

of the Restoration and (ii) that these representations were exclusively articulated in a centralist, essentialist conception of the Spanish community.

If this unanimous defense of Spanish colonialism were constant throughout the Bourbon Restoration (1875–1923), one would expect an even higher degree of unanimity in 1892, when at first glance it appeared that the whole country was rallying to celebrate Columbus and the events of 1492. But was it really? If in 1892 Spaniards were so unanimously singing the praises of Columbus as a “symbol of Spain’s reinvented colonialism and national history” (Schmidt-Nowara, *The Conquest* 64), how is one to understand the pronouncements of free-thinkers and federalist republicans who dared to condemn Spanish colonial violence and the injustice of Spanish political institutions in America? How is one to judge statements such as the following by Ramón Chías, a freethinking republican, who wrote that during the conquest “masas de hombres sin malicia y sin ambición fueron reducidas a la más dura esclavitud” [multitudes of men without malice or ambition were forced into the harshest of slaveries] (1)? Or, the stance taken against Spanish colonial institutions by Antonio Machado y Núñez, the grandfather of the famous poet Antonio Machado, who declared that Spaniards had been “bad rulers” in America, and had managed to “producir en ellos un odio extraordinario a sus padres” [create in them {the colonized} an extraordinary hatred toward their fathers {the Spaniards}]” (2)? Or finally, the reference to the collective responsibility of Spaniards for “el despotismo con que [...] gobernamos [las colonias]” [the despotism with which we ruled {the colonies}], which can be found in an editorial of *El Nuevo Régimen*, Francesc Pi i Margall’s federalist weekly (“El Centenario de Colón,” Oct. 8, 1892, 5)? Certainly, these statements are more complex and contradictory than suggested herein, but when read together in the appropriate context they represent some of the few critiques of past (and present) Spanish colonialism that one can salvage from 1890s Spain. As we shall see, this critique of the history of Spanish colonization contains a number of contradictions and ambiguities, but that most definitely does not mean that it should be simply swept under the rug.

And yet this is precisely what happened in the main accounts of the nationalization of Spain’s imperial legacies during the end of the nineteenth century. Likewise, a critique of past Spanish colonialism only appears obliquely in the best and most complete description of the Columbian celebrations written, Salvador Bernabéu Albert’s 1892: *El IV centenario del descubrimiento de América en España*. Bernabéu Albert’s study, published in 1987 in preparation for the 1992 commemorations, is primarily based on the official chronicle of the festivities as found in the brainchild of the state’s commission entrusted with the organization of the quadricentennial

activities, the journal *El Centenario: Revista ilustrada*. Because it is largely based on the facts and interpretations recorded by *El Centenario*, Bernabéu Albert's narrative of the quadricentennial activities reproduces many of the silences that were already inscribed in the original – and thus, for instance, he only attributes marginal significance to those ideas that contradicted the dominant epic glorification of Spain's colonization of America, turning them into a hardly significant “background” for the exaltation of Spanish colonialism (131–33). In a later work entitled “La conquista después del desastre,” Bernabéu Albert comes closer to our line of inquiry by treating the dissenting views of the conquest and colonization as a historical topic in its own right, but he fails to show how these critical views were part of an alternative conception of national memory.

In short, historians have tended to minimize the symbolic relevance of dissenting views about past Spanish colonialism in America because either (i) they do not perceive a significant difference between liberal and conservative accounts of Spanish colonialism and its legacies (Pike; Feros), (ii) they do not perceive a difference between metropolitan accounts of Spanish colonialism when contrasted with colonial accounts of the same events (Schmidt-Nowara, *The Conquest*), or (iii) they acknowledge the existence of sources that contradicted the official, state-sanctioned, colonialist narrative but endow them with minimal retrospective significance by failing to articulate them within an alternative conception of the Spanish political community (Bernabéu Albert, 1892; this is also the case in Blanco's *Cultura y conciencia* 82–87). As a result, the critiques of past Spanish colonialism that did manage to appear in the public sphere around 1892 lack a historical narrative that treats them on their own terms.

In saying this, I do not mean to suggest that the general outline of the historians' interpretive framework is wrong. On the contrary, it seems correct in that it acknowledges the power inherent in the state's greater access to, and control of, the means of historical production. After all, the commemoration of the events of 1492 was an initiative by the Spanish state, an institution that in 1892 was widely supported by the liberal and conservative elites, both of whom mobilized their economic, political, and cultural resources to produce the “White Legend” of the conquest and colonization of America. But beyond this general (and often unconscious) acknowledgment, most historical narratives rarely track the specific ways in which power is constitutive of the glorious epic of Spanish colonization. That is, historical narratives register (and to a certain extent reproduce) both the Spanish state's power in organizing sources and the dominant intellectuals' power in interpreting sources, but they rarely thematize such power or draw any lessons from its operations. Only Schmidt-Nowara offers

a detailed analysis of the workings of Spain's archival power, showing how Cuban or Puerto Rican patriots had to negotiate the metropolitan organization of sources in crafting their own national narratives (*The Conquest* 96–128).

But is there anything to say about the workings of power *within Spain* when it comes to the elaboration of narratives about the conquest and colonization of America? What epistemological and ideological factors explain the operations of power in Spanish narratives about Spain's rule in America? Is it possible to reduce the ideological factors to the – all too familiar – liberal versus conservative dichotomy? And if so, on what side of the liberal/conservative divide would one place the political uses of the imperial past put forth by freethinkers and federalist republicans?

These are just some of the questions that I wish to address in this chapter. Throughout, my thoughts will be guided by Michel-Rolph Trouillot's observation that commemorations are essentially narratives of power about the events they celebrate (118). Neither good nor evil, power for Trouillot is constitutive of all historical narratives. Its uneven distribution, both at the level of historical process (what actually happened in 1892) and of historical narrative (what is said to have happened in 1892), accounts for the particular arrangement of silences and mentions that make up narrative history. In this sense, I approach the silences produced in 1892 by the narrative of a global and unanimous defense of Spanish colonialism bearing in mind that "power does not enter the story once and for all, but at different times and from different angles. It precedes the narrative proper [for it affects the making of sources and archives], contributes to its creation and to its interpretation" (28). Thus, the construction of silences obeys a multitemporal logic that makes different types of silence enter the process of historical production at different moments.

In the case of the narratives of 1892, the first significant silence is the one produced by the naming of Columbus's landfall as the "Discovery." This first silence, which is inextricably linked to the process of making Columbus and the Spanish Empire relevant for national memory and is common to all Spanish (and European) celebrations of the "Discovery," determined the exclusion of an indigenous perspective on the events of 1492. The second silence that is relevant for our purposes is the result of the political culture of the Bourbon Restoration, which was characterized by the polarization of the intellectual field between liberals and conservatives (the two political parties shared power after 1881). As centralist, nationalist ideologies, liberalism and conservatism marginalized the voices of federalist republicans, and made their alternative conceptualization of collective memory – and thus their renderings of Columbus and of past Spanish

colonialism – both unspeakable and inaudible. This marginalization of federalist, secular thought also determined the creation of a third silence with regard to the narratives produced during the 1892 commemorations, a silence that did not affect the framework within which a critique of past Spanish colonialism could have been understood but instead affected the quantity and visibility of the sources. Indeed, the few critical voices against Spanish colonialism that were expressed appeared in a series of minor, peripheral outlets that are not considered part of the canon but rather simply part of the archive.¹ In spite of these silences, federalist republicans managed to put forward a critique of past Spanish colonialism in the late 1890s. My attempt to reconstruct this critique will involve unearthing a series of obscure and often neglected sources from the archive, such as Francesc Pi i Margall's writings on the subject, and articles that appeared in weekly publications such as *El Nuevo Régimen* or *Las Dominicales del Libre Pensamiento*. These sources not only questioned the dominant representations of Spanish colonialism, but also the national story imposed by the Restoration regime, thereby constructing an alternative collective memory that has been all but buried in later historical accounts.

In short, my argument involves a twofold, seemingly contradictory strategy. It attempts to redress a silence that has had no clear historical effects – the critiques of past Spanish colonialism – by simultaneously recognizing and displacing the power asymmetry between the official narrative vindicating Spanish colonialism and its critical counterpart. In other words, my argument grants that historical efficacy is important, but at the same time attempts to minimize it. This is the paradox embedded in my attempt to address the silences that make up the narrative of the events of 1892 as a unanimous vindication of Spanish colonialism. This type of delicate balancing act is required of any narrator of silences, a storyteller who, according to Trouillot, “must both acknowledge and contradict the power embedded in previous understandings” (56).

In previous accounts of the 1892 commemorations, narrators have often limited themselves to acknowledging the uneven power in the production of sources, archives, and narratives, thus presenting Columbus as the uncontested embodiment of the White Legend of Spanish colonialism. In my account, I will both acknowledge and contradict the power embedded in the narrative of Spanish imperialism that emanated from the nation-state by treating alternative political uses of the imperial past as a historical topic in its own right. This is no easy task, for the nation-state was the most decisive agent shaping the narratives of commemorated events during the nineteenth century. As John Gillis compellingly demonstrates, since at least the 1850s the nation-state and its professional historians instrumentalized

commemorative practices for the construction of a singular national identity. A quick reference to the ways in which Columbus's first voyage was commemorated around the globe bears out this judgment. Mexico's contributions to the 1892 celebrations, for instance, "expressed its search for national identity through the translation of the 'discovery' narratives into politically vehement statements that told of an indigenous population brutalized by foreign invaders" (Vázquez 21). In Spain these narratives were an occasion to showcase "la política española de reivindicación de la conquista y la colonización" [the Spanish policy of vindicating the conquest and colonization] (Díaz Quiñones, "1892" 477). And in the United States, at the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893, they "overlapped with the ongoing narrative of conquest that U.S. power was busily writing in the lands of this hemisphere" (Trouillot 129).

These divergent appropriations of the figure of Columbus and the events of 1492 make clear the conflictive character of commemorative activity, which can be considered a properly political endeavor insofar as "it involves the coordination of individual and group memories, whose results may appear consensual when they are in fact the product of processes of intense contest, struggle, and, in some instances, annihilation" (Gillis 5). If all commemorations, as Michel-Rolph Trouillot once remarked, "impose a silence upon the events that they ignore, and [...] fill that silence with narratives of power about the event they celebrate" (118), then my aim in the following pages is to revive and better understand the different narratives of power, the different readings about the events of 1492 that existed in Spain. In other words, my aim is not simply to re-present the cultural memory of the conquest and colonization of the Americas, but rather to expand it, to make room for the conflicting representations of Spain's imperial past. Without a clear image of these cultural conflicts, without a clear perception of the embattled legacies of the Spanish Empire, the ambivalent emotional attachments to imperial myths characteristic of the early twentieth century would be very hard to understand.

Nationalist Uses of the Imperial Past

On October 12, 1892 every major Spanish newspaper hailed Columbus as a hero and acknowledged his landing in the Bahamas, now simply called the "Discovery," as one of humanity's greatest achievements. However, Columbus's voyage was not celebrated in 1592, 1692, or 1792.² Therefore Columbus's relevance as the "discoverer of America" and the initiator of the Spanish Empire is something that cannot be explained only by the circumstantial fact that the year 1892 marked the quadricentennial

of Columbus's landfall. If the liberal-oligarchic state of the Restoration committed over 2 million pesetas from its meager resources to celebrate the figure of Columbus in 1892 by holding several scientific congresses, popular exhibitions, and lavish parades, then this must be explained by a more powerful rationale than chronological coincidence alone.³ In fact, the state's interest in the events of 1492 betrayed an intense zeal to make Columbus's voyage part of a grand historical myth.

The first element that contributed to the relevance of Columbus and of past Spanish colonialism was the Spanish state's interest in forging new cultural alliances between Spain and its former American colonies. According to one commentator, the attempts up until 1866 to build cultural bridges between the intellectual elites on both sides of the Atlantic were "narrow in scope and limited in effectiveness" (Van Aken 99). By the end of the nineteenth century, however, they were considerably more successful. Carlos Rama has chronicled these efforts, which were designed to counter the growing economic and political influence of the United States in Latin America. Among the most notable, he mentions the publication in 1884 of a government-sponsored journal devoted to America (*Unión Iberoamericana*), the increase in the book trade between Spain and America, the critical writings on Latin American history and literature of Emilio Castelar (1832–1899), Juan Valera (1827–1905) and Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo (1856–1912), and the Columbian commemorations of 1892, which are the focus of this chapter (Rama 161–98, 241–330).

The Restoration's concern with the public use of history, however, was more fundamental than these international cultural initiatives for determining the relevance of Columbus. As Stuart Hall points out, "nations construct identities by selectively binding their chosen high points and memorable achievements into an unfolding 'national story'" (25). In 1892, Columbus's landing in the Bahamas was designated (or rather, constructed) as the mother of all memorable achievements, as the beginning of Spain's glorious history of colonization. This, however, required the active participation of the state and its organic intellectuals.

Whereas in other Western countries, the nationalization of the past was relatively strong, in Spain it was not, despite the fact that history was born in liberal, early nineteenth-century Spain "como un saber nacional, como una disciplina estatal y como una escuela de patriotas" [as a national knowledge, as a state discipline, and as a school for patriots] (Pérez Garzón 63). As in other European countries, the nationalization of the past in Spain was instrumental in legitimizing the nationalization of both politics (the rise of the Liberal state) and the economy (the expansion of capitalism). But in contrast to other European countries, the nationalization of the past in Spain

remained, for the better part of the nineteenth century, an elite phenomenon with a weak impact on the political integration of the masses (Álvarez Junco, *Mater dolorosa* 563–65). Neither the army nor the public education system, the two main institutions in the socialization of national identities, succeeded in producing the cultural assimilation of an overwhelmingly rural, diverse population with strong local loyalties. Propertied classes were able to evade the army by paying for substitutes, and the national system of education, chronically underfunded as it was, had to face competition from Catholic schools and, to a lesser extent, from democratic left institutions such as the Institución Libre de Enseñanza. Carolyn Boyd's examination of primary and secondary school history books of the Bourbon Restoration leaves no room for doubt: "Like the political settlement of 1876 itself [the Restoration's Constitution], the books discouraged popular mobilization in defense of national ideals [...] by distancing readers from their own past in a variety of ways" (*Historia patria* 98).

This does not mean, however, that during the Bourbon Restoration, the state and the intellectual elites (especially Catholic traditionalists) were indifferent to Spain's past. Quite the contrary: the 1890s witnessed in Spain, much as in other European countries, an upsurge in the "invention of traditions," the establishment of symbols, rituals, monuments, and memorials designed to foster a sense of continuity with the past and to promote bonds of loyalty between the population and the Liberal state (Hobsbawm, "Mass-Producing Traditions"). But where Spain diverges from other European countries is in the fact that the invented traditions were primarily designed for the consumption of the urban, professional middle classes, and only occasionally reached a wider audience.

Nonetheless, during the late 1880s and early 1890s a number of commemorations bear witness to what commentators have described as the redefinition of Spanish nationalism by the political and cultural right (Álvarez Junco, *Mater dolorosa* 433–64; Pérez Garzón 87–95): among them, the commemorations of Calderón de la Barca in 1881, and of Saint Teresa of Ávila in 1882, the celebrations of the thirteenth centennial of Reccared's conversion to Catholicism in 1889, and, to be sure, the fourth centennial of Columbus's first voyage in 1892. Although the political meanings of these events were not always unanimous, they do signal the definitive mobilization of Catholic groups in favor of national ideals. Initiated by Jaime Balmes in the 1840s and achieved by Menéndez Pelayo in the early 1880s, the national-Catholic view of Spain's past grounded the continuity of the nation in the Spanish people's fidelity to both Church and Monarchy, two aspects that were certainly present in the 1892 solemnities.

Like other commemorations, the 1892 celebrations possessed "a courtly,

solemn aspect and a popular aspect” (Pavone 79). The Spanish government, with conservative leader and historian Antonio Cánovas del Castillo at its helm, planned the celebrations as a combination of intellectual activities and parades and spectacles.⁴ The erudite aspects of the celebrations can be seen in the more than forty-five lectures delivered before the Ateneo de Madrid, the capital’s most prestigious cultural institution, on different aspects of American history; in the eleven congresses that took place in Spain during the months of October and November alone (see Bernabéu Albert, 1892 76–94; Blanco, *Cultura y conciencia* 111–40); and finally, in publications by some of the most respected intellectuals of the Restoration (for instance, Emilio Castelar’s *Historia del descubrimiento de América*, Francesc Pi i Margall’s bibliophile edition of *Historia de la América antecolombiana*, and Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo’s *Antología de poetas hispanoamericanos*). The popular aspects of the celebrations, although less successful, were no less apparent: a national holiday was declared on October 12, all major Spanish newspapers included a special issue commemorating Columbus and the events of 1492, popular dances and fireworks were programmed in Spain’s major cities, and in Huelva, the royal family and the Spanish government participated in a historical reenactment of Columbus’s departure for the Indies (Abad Castillo 29–38).

The lack of integration between the erudite and popular aspects of the celebrations, as well as the limitations of the Restoration’s efforts to nationalize the past, materialized in the lectures delivered before the Ateneo de Madrid. In theory, the organizer of the lectures, Antonio Sánchez Moguel, justified them as an instrument to foster a collective sense of history among the public. For Sánchez Moguel, the explicit purpose of these lectures was to educate the wider Spanish public about “el conocimiento positivo y completo de la empresa descubridora” [the complete and positive knowledge of the discovery], a much needed effort inasmuch as the historical works about America published up until that moment “apenas si habían trascendido más allá del contado número de los eruditos” [had hardly transcended the circle of a handful of erudite men] (6). In practice, however, writer Emilia Pardo Bazán informs us that attendance was sparse in two thirds of the lectures and that, when the lectures were attended, the audience showed “apatía o frialdad” [apathy or lack of enthusiasm] (“El Descubrimiento de América, II” 19).

In spite of their apparent lack of genuine popular resonance, it is important to emphasize that the primary concern of the 1892 commemorations was the production of collective representations of Spain’s imperial past. This is ultimately what explains Columbus’s and the imperial past’s relevance: both served, by and large, the political purpose of establishing a

continuity between past and present colonialism, between what happened in the territories of the *Monarquía hispánica* and what was happening in its nineteenth-century colonial possessions in the Caribbean and the Pacific, between the “Spaniards” of 1492 (whatever this word might have meant then) and those of 1892. In other words, the 1892 commemorations engaged in the ideological production of what Ernest Renan considers to be one of the essential components of all nations: the possession of a common legacy of glorious memories (19).

However, the production of the image of Columbus as the hero of the discovery and of Spanish colonialism did not happen overnight. Rather, it was a process long in the making. Christopher Schmidt-Nowara has skillfully outlined the different steps involved in the Spanish state’s recognition of Columbus’s importance to Spanish history. The story of Spain’s love affair with Columbus, the nation’s enthusiastic if sometimes ambiguous *colonofilia* (Schmitt-Nowara’s term), unfolded during the second part of the nineteenth century. Statues of Columbus popped up in Madrid, Cartagena, Havana, and Barcelona; all over Spain, streets, plazas, and hotels were named after the illustrious discoverer; Columbus was the protagonist of intellectual gatherings (the 1881 Fourth Congress of the International Association of Americanists), learned societies (the Sociedad Colombina Onubense, founded in Huelva in 1880), and more popular, large public exhibitions (Barcelona’s 1888 Universal Exposition); and, Columbus’s remains were even the object of a heated controversy between Spain and the Dominican Republic in the late 1870s (*The Conquest* 53–75).

The dark underside of this Columbian love affair, the condition for Columbus’s entrance and legitimation into national memory, was a drastic simplification and mythicization of the historical record. In order to be the object of a celebration, as Trouillot explains, the landing in the Bahamas first had to become a clear-cut event fixed in time, as opposed to the convoluted process and series of disorderly events that Columbus and his crew must have experienced. Second, it had to be appropriately named. In fact, the naming of this “historical fact” as “the discovery of America” is in itself a narrative of (Eurocentric) power insofar as “‘Discovery’ and analogous terms ensure that by just mentioning the event one enters a predetermined lexical field of clichés and predictable categories that foreclose a redefinition of the political and intellectual stakes” (Trouillot 115). Indeed, the expression “the discovery of America” suggests that Europe is at “the center of ‘what happened’” and that “whatever else may have happened *to* other peoples in that process is already reduced to a natural fact: they were discovered” (Trouillot 115).

Thus, the naming of the “landfall” as a “discovery” determines the

imposition of a first silence: the exclusion of an indigenous perspective on the events of 1492. This silence, in turn, is linked to the long cycle of silences that have made up Europe's narrative of global dominance since 1492. In the logbook entry of October 11, 1492, Columbus depicted the inhabitants of Guanahani as beautiful, young, good-natured, seemingly obedient people who gladly accepted his trinkets, who lacked an organized religion and thus were ready to be Christianized, and who did not "traen armas ni las cognosçen, porque les amostré espadas y las tomavan por el filo y se cortavan con ignorança" [carry or have knowledge of arms, because I [Columbus] presented them with swords, and they took them by the blade, thus ignorantly cutting themselves] (Colón 111). Here the natives, who appear closer to nature than to human civilization as understood in Spain, have no part in telling their version of Columbus's landfall. Similarly, during the commemorations in 1892, their descendants or advocates had no part in narrating their version of the events of 1492. If the erasure of indigenous voices seemed essential for the production of Columbus's diary (the propagandistic account of his deeds in America), it seemed even more essential four hundred years later, when the West's urban masses were ready to consume the events of 1492 as yet another example of Western global dominance. During the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893, this story of global dominance had the United States vying to be the main protagonist and thus providing industrialized America both with a utopian vision of material and racial progress (Rydell) and with a legitimation for ongoing U.S. imperialism in Latin America (Trouillot 129). Merely a year before, in Madrid, Spanish historians, writers, journalists, and bureaucrats were busy making Spain the sole protagonist of the story. At stake was nothing less than the production of a shared understanding of Spain's imperial past.

As has been suggested, the dominant vision of Columbus was that of the Admiral "as a symbol of Spain's reinvented colonialism and national history, one to which groups from throughout the peninsula sought to affiliate themselves through various kinds of commemoration" (Schmidt-Nowara, *The Conquest* 64). During the 1892 commemorations, the Restoration regime appealed to the earlier Spanish Empire to assert its legitimacy, specifically that of its colonial policies, and thus strengthen its rule over both the metropolitan and colonial populations. This surplus of legitimacy was much needed in the 1890s, when the Restoration's intransigent policies fueled unrest in the colonies. In contrast to the Glorious Revolution's and the First Republic's open attitudes toward colonial autonomy and reform of the colonial order, which culminated in a failed attempt to shift "the basis of Spanish colonial hegemony away from slave owners and peninsular merchants

and instead to liberal creoles and freed slaves” (Schmidt-Nowara, *Empire and Antislavery* 159–60), the Restoration’s colonial policies were becoming increasingly authoritarian. Both the centralizing, fiscally repressive policies of conservative Francisco Romero Robledo and the decentralizing, reformist measures undertaken by his successor the liberal Antonio Maura Montaner, the government’s overseas ministers between 1891 and 1894, were designed to reassert the integrity of the nation (Roldán de Montaud).

For this reason, Columbus seems invariably to be depicted as the precursor of the virtues of Spanish colonialism, as the one who, with his numerous positive and negative qualities, made Spain’s glorious entrance onto the world stage possible. But, for Spanish intellectuals it was important to emphasize Spain’s role in the Columbian adventure and thus ensure that enthusiasm for Columbus himself did not take center stage. This was especially important in a context where foreigners, like Romantic, Catholic, French historian Count Roselly de Lorgues, used the figure of Columbus to critique Spain and its colonial practices. These critiques, which came to be known as the “Columbian Legend,” were rooted in Fernando Colón’s biography of his father, *Historia del Almirante* (1571) and “emphasized Spain’s brutal treatment of the saintly, visionary Columbus” (Schmidt-Nowara, *The Conquest* 80).⁵

In the face of such accusations against Spain for its ungrateful treatment of Columbus, Cesáreo Fernández Duro (1830–1908),⁶ perhaps the leading Columbian scholar of the time, delivered a lecture at the Ateneo de Madrid in which he asserted that “en parte alguna (y es natural) se han tributado al navegante insigne admiración ni honra tan altas como en España” [of course, nowhere has the illustrious seafarer received such outstanding admiration and honors as in Spain] (25).⁷ The gratitude that Spain demonstrated toward Columbus, however, was tempered by Fernández Duro and others by noting the less than flattering aspects of Columbus’s biography (such as his rule of Hispaniola). To counter Roselly’s blind admiration for the Admiral, Spanish intellectuals sought to present a self-serving depiction of Columbus, one that would protect Spain from any foreign criticism and facilitate the appropriation of Columbus as a national symbol.⁸

Needless to say, the most prominent Spanish intellectuals of the period rallied around Fernández Duro’s image of Columbus as a heroic yet flawed figure, an image that made it possible for Columbus to form part of Spain’s national memory. Delivering the inaugural lecture at the Ateneo de Madrid lecture series, Cánovas del Castillo echoed Fernández Duro’s “realistic” pronouncements by affirming that the main duty of Spaniards during the commemorations consisted in “desagraviar de notorias injusticias a nuestra raza, indudablemente digna de Colón, de su genio y de su hazaña” [making

amends for the notorious injustices done to the Spanish race, which is undoubtedly worthy of Columbus, of his genius, and of his great deeds] (“Criterio histórico” 36). Famous liberal writer Pardo Bazán concurred with Cánovas’s desire to vindicate Spain’s treatment of Columbus and its imperial past. Convinced that Fernández Duro’s superior scholarship completely invalidated Roselly de Lorgue’s critiques, she observed:

A la aseveración del Conde, de que en España ni se han cantado ni se han escrito las glorias de Colón, responde Fernández Duro con un aparato bibliográfico de poesías, vidas, viajes, y colecciones diplomáticas.

[In response to the Count’s assertion that no one in Spain has written or sung Columbus’s praises, Fernández Duro replies with a bibliographic apparatus full of poems, biographies, travel narratives, and historical manuscripts]. (“El Descubrimiento de América, I” 72)

Conservative Catholic critic Menéndez Pelayo, for his part, did not mince his words against the “fanatical charlatan” Roselly de Lorgues (“De los historiadores de Colón, I” 437) and urged all Spaniards to fight the Columbian Legend:

es la que hay que exterminar por todos los medios y hacen obra buena los que la combaten, no sólo porque es antipatriótica, sino porque es falsa y nada hay más santo que la verdad.

[we have to exterminate it by all means possible, and those who combat it certainly do great work, not only because the Columbian Legend is unpatriotic, but also because it is false, and nothing is more sacred than the truth]. (“De los historiadores de Colón, II” 67)

In sum, Spanish intellectuals approached the figure of Columbus with a sense of realistic positivism that was clearly aimed at fabricating an image of Columbus that would find its place within Spain’s glorious national memory. In order to accomplish this, they had to first discredit the Columbian Legend, which converted Columbus into a symbol of Spain’s disgrace. Ultimately, these intellectuals crafted a depiction of the Admiral that was almost as idealistic as that of Roselly’s – the only difference being that instead of working against the Spanish state, this depiction helped strengthen it.

In addition to these appropriations of Columbus as a national symbol, the 1892 celebrations were an occasion to vindicate the imperial past on a more explicit level. I will not devote too many pages here relating the 1892 commemorations’ orthodox view of the colonial past and its jingoistic celebrations of the cultural and religious ideals of Spain’s “civilizing mission”

in America because they are all exhaustively documented in a legion of primary sources. The complacent, narcissistic historical imaginary of 1892 can be traced in, among other places, the commemorative books of Emilio Castelar (*Historia del Descubrimiento de América* [1892]) and Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo (*Antología de poetas hispanoamericanos* [1893–1895]); the lectures delivered before the Ateneo de Madrid on different aspects of American history; the talks given at the Congreso Geográfico Hispano-Portugués-Americano; the articles published in *El Centenario*, the official chronicle of the festivities; and the special issues published on or around October 12, 1892 by Spanish newspapers of all ideological stripes, from *El Imparcial* to *La Época* and *El Siglo Futuro*.⁹ All of these texts display a similar logic that can be exemplified by one of the contributions to *El Centenario*, namely Emilio Castelar's 1892 essay "América en el descubrimiento y en el Centenario."¹⁰

In this essay Castelar, who had been one of the leaders of the Spanish abolitionist movement but by 1892 was an increasingly conservative republican politician, offers a narrative in which past Spanish colonialism appears as the foundation for the material and moral progress achieved by the Americas at the end of the nineteenth century. His text displays one of the crucial discursive strategies of the period: the construction of a genealogy in which the present figures as the continuation of a glorious past. The arrival of Columbus to the Bahamas is described as an organic, necessary development of Spanish Renaissance culture, which is depicted as a triumphant achievement:

[C]omo la cultura española, tan espléndida, no podía quedar encerrada entre los Pirineos y la desembocadura del Tajo y del Estrecho, necesitó extenderse, y para extenderse, mientras Portugal encontraba las perdidas Indias, nosotros evocábamos entre los dos Océanos América.

[Since such a splendid culture as that of Spain could not remain locked in between the Pyrenees and the estuary of the Tagus and the Strait {of Gibraltar}, it had to expand itself; and to do so, while Portugal was busy finding the lost Indies, we evoked America in between both Oceans]. (103)

The arrival of the Spaniards in the Americas is characterized as an act of generosity whereby the gifts of Christian religion and European science were magnanimously bestowed upon the lesser civilized peoples: "En dos años Cortés aportó a Méjico la cultura elaborada por el humano espíritu desde Abraham hasta Colón" [in two years, Cortés gave to México all of the culture produced by the human spirit from the times of Abraham to those of Columbus] (116). In the face of such putative material and

moral “improvements,” the violence of the conquest and colonization simply appears as an inherent part of human nature, as something belonging to the order of those “fatalidades inevitables” [unavoidable fatalities] (106) that have plagued the world since times immemorial.

The self-idealization of the “discovery,” conquest and colonization of America, together with the spectacular achievement of progress, are the central tropes in the modernizing rhetoric designed to celebrate (and thus legitimate) the present in 1892. America is characterized in the essay as a land gifted with “las instituciones más altas y las formas de gobierno” [the highest institutions and the most perfect forms of government], “las escuelas que pulen y abrillantan el alma” [schools that polish and refine the soul], and “las colosales máquinas que metamorfosean la materia” [colossal machines that metamorphose matter] (117). As such, according to Castelar’s (tautological) reasoning, America is both the product of a superior culture (Spanish/European culture) and the supreme proof of its superiority.

As a whole, the narrative of the conquest and colonization of the Americas created in 1892 is an example of what David Spurr calls “the rhetoric of affirmation in colonial discourse” (110). For Spurr, one of the distinguishing features of colonial discourse is the constant deployment of its authority through “techniques of self-idealization and repetition” (113). Rehearsed in *El Centenario* as well as in the official and popular forums referenced above, these orthodox views of the colonial past ultimately served “to establish a political and ethical order” (Spurr 110) that articulated and mirrored Cánovas’s imperialistic conception of the Spanish nation as outlined in his *Discurso sobre la nación* (1882).

Originally a lecture delivered at the Ateneo de Madrid on November 6, 1882, *Discurso sobre la nación* can be considered the Restoration’s official master narrative of the Spanish nation and therefore the framework in which the dominant views of the colonial past acquire their meaning. Cánovas, a respected scholar of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spain, the architect of the Restoration system and the leader of the Conservative party, unabashedly privileged the nation’s objective features (its supposedly “natural” racial, linguistic, historical and geographical bases) over its subjective features (the will of its people), profoundly affecting his conceptualization of Spain’s imperial past. Like many others during the “Age of Empire” (to borrow Eric Hobsbawm’s famous title), Cánovas affirms that the greatness of the Spanish nation is inextricably tied to its imperial origins and destiny:

Mándanos el deber nuestro, visiblemente, que entremos en el número de las naciones expansivas, absorbentes, que sobre sí han tomado el empeño de llevar a término la ardua empresa de civilizar el mundo

entero: y para comprender por qué nos lo manda, sí que fuera bueno recordar sin tregua la honra, no extinta aún, que heredamos de nuestros padres.

[Our duty clearly dictates that we become part of the group of expansive, assimilative nations that have burdened themselves with the arduous task of civilizing the whole world. And to understand why our duty dictates such a command, it is worth relentlessly recalling the honor that we inherited from our forefathers, an honor that is still alive today]. (131)

Within Cánovas's ideological scheme, it becomes clear that the events of 1492 could only be read with pride, self-satisfaction, and complacency. If past Spanish colonialism was conceived, again in a highly self-idealized form, as "the honor that we inherited from our forefathers" and as a blueprint for the nation's future endeavors, then there is no doubt that the only way that one could relate to Columbus and the Spanish conquistadors in 1892 was through jubilant celebration. The continuity that Cánovas established between the honor of late fifteenth-century "Spaniards" and the honor of late nineteenth-century Spaniards is reiterated in the commemorative speech that he delivered at the Ateneo de Madrid in 1891, where he vindicates the accomplishments of Martín Alonso Pinzón, the Captain of *La Niña*, and refers to him as "un compatriota nuestro de tal valía que, sin él, Colón mismo con ser quien era, no habría podido realizar su descubrimiento" [our countryman who was so valuable that without him Columbus, for all of his greatness, would not have been able to discover America] ("Criterio histórico" 31). By referring to Pinzón as "un compatriota nuestro," Cánovas is projecting a modern political category (Spanish nationality) on a pre-modern political subject of the Catholic Monarchs (Pinzón). He is thus first perpetrating an anachronism since "in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the idea of the 'state' as the essential concept that unified and gave meaning to the political community had not yet entered the political imagination of the Spanish polity" (Cañeque 7); and second, inserting this anachronism into a nationalist teleology whereby a glorious past is seen as the forerunner of a no less glorious present.

Cánovas's emphasis on Spain's imperialistic, objective foundations was doubtlessly appropriate for the Restoration's conservative, past-oriented cultural politics, but it also precluded the emergence of more sober, less jingoistic evaluations of the nation's imperial past. As a regime literally designed to restore, that is, to resume, the traditions embodied in the Catholic Church and the monarchical state that had been interrupted by

the democratic tendencies of the Revolutionary Sexennium (1868–1874), the Restoration instrumentalized the imperial past for social control and ideological reproduction. It is within this general political culture that one should understand the success of Castelar and Cánovas's self-idealized view of the conquest and colonization, a success that can be accounted for by a variety of factors.

First, as we have seen, it was repeated *ad nauseam* both in scholarly venues (by some of Spain's most powerful intellectuals) and popular outlets (the nation's most important newspapers). Although the incessant repetition of those self-idealized images of Spain's conquest and colonization had a downside (the eventual erosion of their claims to authority), it also had an undoubtedly powerful effect: repetition multiplied the traces vindicating Spanish colonialism, enlarged the number of sources defending Spain's rule in the Americas, and consequently reduced the space available for alternative views. In short, repetition helped secure future historical relevance – an aspect that is attested to by the fact that the “Discovery” was instituted as Spain's national holiday some twenty-five years later (in 1918) and that it continues to be celebrated today, at least in official circles, in much the same way.

Second, the state-sponsored version of the colonial past benefited from the support of one of the strongest and most influential institutions in Spain at the time, the Catholic Church, which canonized the discovery as one of its most memorable achievements. I have already mentioned that the 1880s saw the redefinition of Spanish nationalism by the political and cultural right and the definitive mobilization of Catholic groups in favor of national ideals. Within this context, the political colonialism advocated by the state was resignified as a spiritual colonialism: 1492 became a stable reference for Spanish Catholics, one that would be remembered by conservative groups throughout the twentieth century. For instance *La Época*, a conservative newspaper close to the ideological positions of Cánovas, claimed that the significance of the discovery resided in the conquistadors' planting “en el nuevo Continente la cruz, símbolo de las creencias de nuestros mayores, y la bandera de la Monarquía española, símbolo de nuestra patria” [the cross, the symbol of our forefathers' beliefs, and the flag of the Spanish monarchy, the symbol of the fatherland on the new Continent] (“El Centenario y las fiestas”). The Catholic integrist newspaper *El Siglo Futuro*, for its part, commemorated Columbus by publishing a two-part article loaded with footnotes and entitled “Misión providencial de la Iglesia católica y de la nación española en el descubrimiento del Nuevo Mundo,” where the civilizing aspect of the conquest and colonization was recast as an exclusively Catholic endeavor, one that could only be understood as part of the providential plan assigned

to a nation that had been united by the Catholic Kings (Simonet).

Third, the self-idealization of the conquest and colonization found a powerful ally in Juan Valera's *Cartas americanas* (1889) and, above all, in Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo's widely successful *Antología de poetas hispano-americanos* (1893–1895), a four-volume treatise that perpetuated the values of the “White Legend” of Spanish colonialism by canonizing a number of texts that were operative for this ideology and silencing those that opposed it.¹¹ Commissioned by the Spanish Royal Academy in 1892 as part of the celebrations, it is the first modern attempt by any Spanish literary critic to give a systematic account of Latin American literature (despite its title, it is closer to a historical reconstruction of the different national literary traditions than to a mere anthology of poetry).¹² Translated into the cultural realm, the exaltation of the virtues of Spanish colonialism became for Menéndez Pelayo a reassertion of Spain's literary prestige in its former colonies. Much like his protector Cánovas del Castillo, who thought that imperial expansion was the final goal of European nations, and much like his friend Castelar, who dismissed pre-Columbian peoples' culture, Menéndez Pelayo conceived of Spain's cultural colonization of the Americas as a glorious, morally impeccable endeavor that brought lettered culture to a land of barbaric peoples. His imperialist and racist assumptions are made clear when he proclaims that “la literatura americana es literatura colonial, literatura de criollos; no es obra de indios ni de sus descendientes” [American literature is colonial, *criollo* literature; it is not the work of Indians or their descendants”] (27: 118–19), and when he states that non-Spanish traditions belonged to “gentes bárbaras y degeneradas” [barbaric, degenerate peoples] (27: 10). One could adduce many other examples, but it is already clear that Menéndez Pelayo's erasure of any form of cultural heterogeneity, let alone cultural otherness, places his national-Catholic vision of the Latin American cultural past very much in line with the Restoration's vision of the colonial past.

Interestingly, one other factor that helped promote the success of the self-idealized view of the conquest and colonization was the fact that the influence of Menéndez Pelayo's work was not confined within Spain's borders. In his insightful reading of Menéndez Pelayo's *Antología de poetas hispano-americanos*, Arcadio Díaz Quiñones offers us a definitive account of its power within Hispanophone cultures. For Díaz Quiñones, Menéndez Pelayo not only exercised a visible influence on such disparate figures as Nicaraguan poet Rubén Darío, Uruguayan essayist José Enrique Rodó, and Mexican writer José Vasconcelos, but also was crucial for the dominant cultural and ideological practices of Hispanism as it developed in the Spanish and U.S. academies (*Sobre los principios* 123–58).

Freethinkers and Empire

But if the official, celebratory view of Spain's colonial past presented under the Restoration was so unanimously revered, what was the purpose of the endless proclamations of Columbus's deeds? What ends were served by the repeated vindications of Spanish colonialism in historical accounts, religious newspapers, and literary treatises? What are we to make of the fact that these incessant acclamations of past Spanish colonialism were continuously reasserted and recycled by the Spanish state, its official religion, and its cultural institutions? And, if the majority of intellectuals and journalists propagated *ad nauseam* the virtues of Spain's methods of colonization, was it even possible to hear the voices of dissent?

As we have seen, a fundamental component of the rhetoric of affirmation of colonialism is repetition. But, ironically, the more authority is constantly displayed and proclaimed, the less effective it becomes. Far from reinforcing the moral superiority of past (and present) Spanish colonialism, the constant celebrations that were seen in the press as well as in scholarly lectures ended up pointing to colonialism's moral abjection. At stake here is what Spurr calls the "splitting open of authority." As he explains, "once authority begins to be asserted [...] there opens up a split between assertion and authority itself, in which the latter is revealed as conditional and contingent on its representation" (124). For this reason, the insistent affirmations of Spanish colonialism through the mythicization of the imperial past read more like a desperate attempt to impose an image of cultural and moral superiority than – as most Spanish nationalists wanted – the objective realization of a self-evident, morally unimpeachable truth.

This sense of urgency can perhaps be understood better if we recall that since the late eighteenth century Spanish colonialism had faced attacks from two very different foreign sources. First, it sustained critiques from rival imperial powers (most notably the British), who saw in the earlier, pre-enlightened methods of colonization an "inescapable legacy" of "human and material waste followed by moral degeneracy" (Pagden 10). Second, Spanish colonial rule endured unrest in Spain's remaining colonies, which were more and more forcefully demanding political and economic autonomy – recall the separatist rebellions that broke out in Cuba and Puerto Rico in 1868, or the intensification of antislavery mobilizations during that same period.¹³ These *foreign* critiques of Spanish colonialism coming from both rival imperial powers and present and former Spanish colonies cast Spanish colonialism as a project on the defensive. The more Spain lost its grip on its colonies and the world, the more insistent its affirmative repetition of colonialism became.

Outside of Spain the memory of Spanish colonialism clearly was contested, but these foreign critiques do not indicate whether the cultural memory of the conquest and colonization was also challenged within Spain, at the very same moment of its production. To what extent was the vindication of past Spanish colonialism put on the defensive within Spain? Did the history of Spanish colonization in the Americas appear illegitimate in the eyes of at least a few Spanish commentators? Several largely unknown documents seem to suggest that the 1892 commemorations were also used as the instrument of a secular, non-imperialistic conception of the political community. A case in point is the prohibition of the Congreso Universal de Librepensadores, one of the many scientific congresses devoted to celebrate the fourth centennial of Columbus's first voyage. Organized by noted freemasons such as Antonio Machado y Núñez, Odón de Buen, Ramón Chies, and Fernando Lozano (the last two were coeditors of the masonic/freethinking weekly *Las Dominicales del Libre Pensamiento*), the congress paid homage to Columbus by depicting the discovery of America as the triumph of science and free thought over Catholic obscurantism – a characterization that, to be sure, involves its own share of anachronism (“A los libre-pensadores” 1).

As children of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, freethinkers defended critical thought based on science, logic and reason, and attacked clericalism in all of its manifestations. Throughout the nineteenth century, they also embraced a set of heterogeneous, anti-traditional, secular causes such as positivism, Darwinism, Left Hegelianism, the Worker's Movement and, of course, anticlericalism in all its variants (Llosa). In Spain, in contrast to other European countries, freethinkers were also often freemasons, a coincidence that might be explained by their common opposition to the Catholic Church and the Catholic Monarchy, the two institutions upon which the Restoration regime was founded (Álvarez Lázaro).¹⁴ In the 1892 congress, their plan to memorialize Columbus included the discussion of topics such as the “obstáculos puestos por la vana ciencia teológica a la ciencia positiva de Colón” [the obstacles placed on Columbus's positive science by wishful theological science] and the “influencia del descubrimiento de América en la emancipación del pensamiento” [influence of the discovery of America on the emancipation of thought] (“A los libre-pensadores” 1).

Before the police shut down the congress, Machado y Núñez managed to address the audience. In his opening speech, which was later printed in *Las Dominicales*, he reiterated the image of Columbus as “un genio eminente [que] llegó a descubrir un hemisferio desconocido, una región desconocida entre los obstáculos que le opusieron la ignorancia, las preocupaciones y el fanatismo” [an eminent genius {who} discovered an unknown hemisphere, an unknown region, amid the obstacles set up by ignorance, worries, and

fanaticism]. But more importantly, he broached a topic that had been absent from all of the other official celebrations: the history of Spanish-American independence. Allow me to quote from Machado y Núñez's speech, a document that has been all but forgotten:¹⁵

Nosotros, podemos decir, contribuimos con nuestros hijos al descubrimiento y conquista de América; América, pues, que hoy está emancipada de nosotros con justicia [...] porque nosotros, malos gobernantes, llegamos a producir en ellos un odio extraordinario a sus padres, a los que les habían dado patria y hogar, y con justicia verdaderamente, porque el régimen absolutista, porque el fanatismo y porque las preocupaciones exigían de ellos lo que era opuesto a su razón y a su inteligencia.

[It is possible for us to say that we gave our sons to the discovery and conquest of America. But America today is justly emancipated from us [...] because we were bad rulers who managed to create in them [the colonized] an extraordinary sense of hatred toward their fathers [the Spaniards], who had given them a fatherland and a home. And Spanish-Americans gained their independence with true justice because the absolutist regime, because fanaticism, and because all sorts of difficulties required them to act against their reason and their intelligence].

In the rest of his speech, Machado went into a passionate tirade against all of the historical symbols of absolutism (from the Inquisition and Emperor Charles V to his son Philip II), and in favor of a new moral life based on the principles of the French Revolution (liberty, equality, fraternity) and on those of science and justice. Contrary to the official narrative of 1892, the origin and *telos* of Spanish nationhood here is not its imperial conquests but rather its imperial losses. For Machado y Núñez, the single most important event in the conquest and colonization of the Americas was not the heroic adventures of the likes of Cortés and Pizarro, but its emancipation from them. By displacing the focus of his speech from the conquest and colonization of the Americas to the processes of Spanish-American emancipation, Machado y Núñez was positing a different *telos* for his narrative: instead of celebrating Columbus as proof of the Spanish nation's ability to compete in the imperialist race for the domination of other people (recall Cánovas's *Discurso a la nación*), he celebrated the discovery as a first step in the universal emancipation of mankind.

In the midst of the imperial fervor and the Catholic revival of 1892, the critical and, above all, secular views of the discovery and the Spanish

Empire promoted by the Congreso Universal de Librepensadores were too much for ardent Catholics to stomach. The Catholic press first demanded the government's intervention and then celebrated its repressive actions, which resulted in the prohibition of the congress after its first few sessions and in the detention of its organizing committee – soon after to be released on bail of 1,000 pesetas.¹⁶ Few voices were raised against this act of censorship. Although *Las Dominicales* and *El Nuevo Régimen* (Pi i Margall's weekly) complained vehemently about it, and *El Liberal* published a letter of protest, mainstream Spanish intellectuals hardly disapproved, which was quite understandable given that they had viewed the congress with contempt from its announcement.¹⁷

Much in line with Machado y Núñez's take on the 1892 celebrations, Ramón Chías, another of the preeminent freethinkers of the time, published an article in *Las Dominicales* on May 20, 1892 titled "La fiesta del Centenario: carta abierta." There he offered a similar perspective on the discovery, albeit peppered with nationalist allusions that made his arguments decidedly ambivalent. Like Machado y Núñez, Chías viewed the fourth centennial as an expression of the ideals of free thought and, consequently, he saw the commemoration as a "rational, universal, and secular" celebration. At first glance, the *telos* implicit in Chías's narrative is, like Machado y Núñez's, cosmopolitan and markedly non-nationalistic. For Chías, the ultimate significance of the discovery resides in its being the first stage in the march toward the unification of the world, toward

la confusión de todas las razas en una gran familia, de todas las religiones en el solo culto de la Razón, y de todos los Estados en una gran federación republicana.

[the fusion of all races into one family, of all religions into the cult of Reason, and of all States into a great, republican federation].

But unlike Machado y Núñez, Chías addresses at some length both the particular glory of the Spanish nation and the conquest and colonization of America, offering a nuanced image that is critical and praiseworthy at the same time. Chías does not hesitate to depict the conquest of America as an endeavor that earned Spain "humanity's love and respect" but at the same time he admits that this great accomplishment was full of violence and human suffering. The ambivalence (and the clichés) with which he characterizes the conquest is worth quoting:

¡Qué virtudes tan grandes y qué crímenes tan abominables contiene!
Pueblos inermes, pacíficos poseedores de una tierra pródiga, que

sin trabajo alguno les alimentaba, fueron cruel y villanamente exterminados por el codicioso rebuscador del oro y la plata. Masas de hombres sin malicia y sin ambición fueron reducidas a la más dura esclavitud. Torrentes de sangre inocente mancharon las tierras cubiertas de fragantes flores desconocidas. No hubo crimen con que aquel don de la Providencia no fuese escarnecido: el latrocinio, el asesinato, el adulterio, estuvieron a la orden del día por muchos, muchos años.

[What great virtues and abominable crimes it {the conquest} contains! Unarmed, peaceful peoples, owners of a provident land that was feeding them without toil, were cruelly and treacherously massacred by the greedy seeker of gold and silver. Multitudes of men without malice or ambition were forced into the harshest of slaveries. Torrents of innocent blood soiled lands covered with fragrant, unknown flowers. There was no crime that did not ridicule that gift of Providence {the conquest}: robbery, murder and adultery were the norm for many, many years].

Here, far from its idealized depiction in the 1892 official narrative, the conquest is an event that is simultaneously embraced and rejected.

Another element that demonstrates Chías's ambivalent, uneasy judgment on the 1892 celebrations is the fact that the article adopts the form of an "open letter" written in the second person singular and addressed to Chías's fictional friend "Antonio." Chías's observation that he is writing the letter so that Antonio may celebrate "con la conciencia tranquila y el corazón alegre el Centenario" [the Centennial with a clear conscience and a cheerful heart] despite all of the cruelties committed by Spanish conquistadors and colonizers in the Americas implies that for certain sectors of the population – or at least for the readers of *Las Dominicales* – celebrating the events of 1492 was not self-evident. Instead, it was something that required a previous pedagogical intervention (note that the article was published in May 1892, five months before the celebrations) precisely because the associations conjured up by the discovery included, as Chías noted in his letter, images of violence, exploitation, torture, and slavery. In the end, Chías's ambivalence toward the conquest and colonization is canceled by his justification of it in the name of the supposedly secular progress that it brought to America, thus perhaps foreshadowing the marriage between anticlericalism and Spanish nationalism that would prove to be such a strong force for the nationalization of the masses at the turn of the twentieth century.¹⁸ Thanks to Chías's letter, Antonio can indeed celebrate the *centenario* with a cheerful heart.

Machado y Núñez's and Chías's pronouncements against the cruelty of Spanish colonial institutions are best understood as a combination of two liberal historiographic currents: (i) the view of the Spanish past known as *austracismo*, which originated at the end of the eighteenth century and situated the end of Spain's medieval splendor, and the beginning of its decadence, with the foreign, absolutist Habsburg monarchs (especially Charles V and Philip II); and (ii) the view of the Spanish past that gained currency in the early 1850s and that for the first time questioned the role of Catholicism (including the Catholic Kings) in Spanish history, leading to the incorporation of the main tenets of the Black Legend of Spanish cruelty, intolerance, and fanaticism within liberal historiography (Álvarez Junco, *Mater dolorosa* 221–22, 392–405). Within the parameters of these two historiographic traditions, the Spanish Empire was seen more as a burden than as an asset, more as a source of cruelty and despotism than as a source of pride and glory. These liberal myths about the Spanish Empire, which were quite popular in the 1850s and 1860s, had lost their purchase by 1892, when belief in European imperialism was the norm and the scrambles for Africa and Asia were well under way. The writings of Machado y Núñez and Chías suggest, however, that these liberal myths were not completely silent at the time.¹⁹

The Failure of the Federalist Critique

As can be seen in the reaction to the Congreso Universal de Librepensadores, it turns out that the dominant narrative of the 1892 celebrations, far from being the product of unanimous consensus, rested instead upon the repression of those views that problematized the Catholic, nationalistic history of Spanish colonialism. The most theoretically and politically articulate example of this alternative vision of Spanish colonialism is to be found in Pi i Margall's pronouncements on the subject. To flesh out Pi i Margall's political use of the colonial past, I will comment on various of his writings, ranging from his early opinions on America to his later works on the 1892 celebrations and his short 1899 play on the conquest, *Guatimozín y Hernán Cortés*.

Unlike Machado y Núñez's pronouncements, Pi i Margall's vision of the colonial past is part of an alternative conception of political community, one that sought to accommodate the plural history and territorial diversity of the different regions that made up the Spanish state. The polity's federal articulation was seen as a solution to the aspirations to self-government expressed in both Cuba and Catalonia, two regions that by 1892 had made abundantly clear their discontent with their status within the state (recall the Ten Years War of 1868–1878 between Cuba and Spain, or the advent of

political Catalanism in the early 1880s). As Pi i Margall succinctly put it in *Las nacionalidades* (1877), “Somos federales precisamente porque entendemos que las diversas condiciones de vida de cada provincia exigen, no la uniformidad, sino la variedad de instituciones” [We are federalists precisely because we understand that provinces, because of their diverse living conditions, do not require uniformity but rather a variety of institutions] (276). By reconstructing Pi i Margall’s uses of the colonial past, it becomes possible to catch a glimpse of an alternative collective memory of the conquest and colonization of the Americas, one that is the product of his federalist ideology.

Written in the wake of the collapse of the First Republic, *Las nacionalidades* can be considered a counterpoint to Cánovas’s *Discurso sobre la nación* in more than one way: it sought to bring about a federal, as opposed to a unitarist (and centralist) organization of the Spanish state; it proposed that a particular nation’s “objective” characteristics (its language, natural borders, history, or racial makeup) should always be mediated by a “subjective” agreement (a consensual pact by which heterogeneous groups accept a federal power that regulates their non-national interests, such as their commercial, juridical, or security affairs) (115); it recognized the universal nature of the principle of autonomy and self-determination and therefore considered just those wars undertaken by invaded peoples against their invaders (75); and, most importantly, it deplored the imperialistic domination inherent in the nation form – as Pi i Margall put it, “Se reproduce hoy la teoría de las nacionalidades; y ¡ay! no se ve que sólo se busca en ella medios de superioridad y de engrandecimiento” [The theory of nationalities is endlessly reproduced today; but, alas, nobody sees that this is only a means to achieve superiority and expansion] (70).

All of these democratic, federalist ideas, however, were completely marginal during the Restoration. At a time when it was common to think of the nation as a purely genealogical, objective entity, and when pride in imperialism was the norm, Pi i Margall’s insistence on achieving a political order through democratic means respectful of pluralism did not fit within the limits of what was considered comprehensible in Spanish political language. Caught between the failure of the First Republic to establish a federal organization of the state, the extreme centralism and uniformity introduced by the Restoration, and the rise of political Catalanism (Villacañas Berlanga, “La idea federal” 1–2; Balcells, *Catalan Nationalism* 28–43), Pi i Margall’s federalist theories hardly stood a chance.

From the beginning, in his first important book on political theory *La reacción y la revolución* (1854), Pi i Margall alluded to the conquest and colonization of the Americas as a political endeavor that failed to establish bonds of loyalty between the metropolis and its colonies. In order to

highlight the difference of Pi i Margall's early readings of Spain's rule in the Americas, let us recall that during the Restoration, such rule was often portrayed as an inherently moral endeavor in that it brought civilization and progress to "primitive" people (recall our reading of Castelar's intervention). This self-idealization of past Spanish colonialism was nothing more than a naturalization of the violence and injustices that were constitutive of imperial rule in the first place. But instead of naturalizing colonial violence, Pi i Margall emphasized that such violence had been an integral part of the way that Spain ruled its colonies:

Nuestras leyes han levantado una valla eterna entre vencedores y vencidos; nuestros gobiernos las han entregado constantemente a la rapacidad y al despotismo de los capitanes generales.

[Our {colonial} laws have built an eternal fence between the victors and the vanquished; our governments have regularly handed over the laws to the greed and despotism of the General Captains]. (330)

He went on to explain that

Los hemos inhabilitado para todo cargo público [a los colonizados], les hemos negado toda participación en su gobierno. Los hemos puesto bajo el mando de virreyes que han ejercido una autoridad casi suprema.

[We have made it impossible for the colonized to hold public office, we have denied them the possibility of participating in their government. We have put them under the command of viceroys who have exercised an absolute authority over them]. (330–31)

Consequently, "fomentamos allí [en las colonias] el espíritu de rebelión" [we fomented the spirit of rebellion there {in the colonies}] (331).

In these proclamations, Pi i Margall's "we," the collective subject, was acknowledging its historical responsibility in a way that echoed both the pronouncements by Machado y Núñez and Chías and a long tradition of Spanish intellectuals who took a stance against the more egregious aspects of Spanish domination in America. The most famous and earliest example of this tradition is of course Bartolomé de las Casas's *Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias* (1552). Another example of this emphasis on the cruel and despotic aspects of the Spanish Empire appeared two centuries later in José Cadalso's private correspondence: in a letter to Tomás de Iriarte written in 1774, Cadalso confessed that

desde que tuve uso de razón [...] me ha llenado de espanto la posesión

de las Américas y destrucción de unos catorce millones de almas hecha por unos cuantos extremeños, que fueron allá a predicar a cañonazos la ley del Cordero.

[for as long as I can remember {...}, I have been horrified by the possession of the Americas and the destruction of some fourteen million souls carried out by a bunch of Extremadurans who went there to preach the law of Christ with cannons]. (qtd. in Froldi 125)

Finally, to offer an example closer to Pi i Margall's time and ideology, one can turn to José María Blanco White's initial sympathy for the American patriots' cause in the early 1810s. Writing in *El español*, the monthly review that he edited in London, about the pathetic situation of a Spanish Empire on the point of collapse, Blanco White asserted that it was useless to attempt to restore royal authority in the American territories before "los gravámenes que han producido la revolución [en América]" [the burdens that gave way to the Revolution {in America}] had disappeared (269). He later added, drawing on the image of the viceroy as an absolute and arbitrary ruler, much like Pi i Margall would do a few years later:

Aquellos pueblos, entregados al despotismo de un virrey o de un jefe militar, sentirán bien pronto que nada han ganado con la revolución de Madrid, y acostumbrados ya a la resistencia, volverán con el menor motivo a tomar las armas en su defensa.

[Those people, who live under the despotism of a viceroy or a military chief, will soon realize that the Revolution in Madrid has not improved their lot, and since they are used to engaging in resistance, they will rise up in arms again to defend themselves for the smallest of reasons]. (269)²⁰

What singles out Pi i Margall's proclamation from the above indictments against the tyrannical aspects of Spanish colonial power, however, is his acknowledgement that individual liberty had priority over the nation's rights for, shortly after condemning colonial despotism, he criticized the Spanish nation's attempts to crush the freedom to which colonial subjects aspired (331). In short, the collective subject that can be deduced from Pi i Margall's vision of the history of colonization is one whose substantive cultural foundations (the tradition of despotic colonial administration) are mediated and rectified by universal political ideals (a utopian belief in liberty that arises from the rationalist individualism informing *La reacción y la revolución* [Villacañas Berlanga, "La idea federal" 11]).

Pi i Margall's early attempt in *La reacción y la revolución* to conceive of the relationship between colonized and colonizer in political terms, an attempt that differs from the 1892 commemorations' conception of colonial relationships in terms of collective myths and a sense of belonging together, would have decisive implications for the particular way in which he celebrated Columbus and the discovery. A cursory look at the articles he published in *El Nuevo Régimen* in October 1892 already makes clear the relative importance that the events of 1492 had for his conception of the Spanish federation. In contrast to popular newspapers such as *El Liberal* and *El Imparcial*, *El Nuevo Régimen* did not publish a special commemorative issue on October 12, 1892. And, in the issue published on October 15, it is hard to perceive the fascination with the events of 1492 that was displayed and promoted in mainstream newspapers. In fact, the worship of Columbian history and the collective myths created around the discovery were only marginally present, if at all. The issue included commentaries on recent political events in Spain and elsewhere (there are reports on the political situation in France, Chile, and Venezuela), articles on cultural events of general interest (such as the obituaries of Ernest Renan and Alfred Tennyson), and only three historical articles focused on Columbus. The first of these, "El Centenario de Colón," claimed that the 1892 celebrations were appropriate because of the unfair treatment dispensed on Columbus during his life. Commenting on Columbus's last days in Valladolid, where he died supposedly poor and alone, the anonymous author of the article seized the opportunity to take a jab at the monarchy by way of the *Cantar de Mio Cid*, casually remarking that "Así suelen pagar los reyes a los que bien les sirven" [this is how kings usually pay those who serve them well] ("El Centenario de Colón," Oct. 15, 1892, 4). Thus, the so-called Columbian Legend, which highlighted the Catholic King's dishonorable conduct toward Columbus and hindered the appropriation of Columbus as a national symbol, made its way into the federalist weekly.

The second article in the October 15 issue, "América en la época de su descubrimiento," is an excerpt from a longer conference paper that Pi i Margall delivered before the Ateneo de Madrid and which I will analyze shortly, while the third article, "Las fiestas a Colón," also by Pi i Margall, again emphasized the justice of the Columbian celebrations based on the unfair treatment of Columbus. Far from lionizing the figure of Columbus and the discovery in the service of a unitarist national memory, Pi i Margall cast a shadow upon them by observing that America was "para nosotros los españoles motivo de decadencia y ruina" [for us Spaniards a cause of decadence and ruin] in that it "alentó la ambición, la codicia, la lujuria, y nos hizo, a la vez que héroes, bandidos" [promoted ambition, greed and lust,

and made us simultaneously heroes and bandits] (“Las fiestas” 5). The same ambivalence that dominated Pi’s opinion of Columbus’s status in collective memory also emerges when he contemplates the Spanish Empire, a system of government that was at odds with the principles of self-determination and pluralism that he developed in *Las nacionalidades*. On the one hand, Spanish rule in the Americas brought despotism, cruelty, and human suffering and, as such, had to be unequivocally rejected since it turned Spaniards into “bandits.” On the other hand, the Spanish conquest and colonization of the Americas turned Spaniards into “heroes,” since it was made possible by and contributed to the advancement of modernity (note here that Pi i Margall does not say it contributed to Spain’s glory). Thus, Columbus’s rightful place was not so much in national memory as in universal memory, since he “agrandó la tierra para todos los hombres; abrió a la ciencia nuevos horizontes y a la industria ocultos veneros de riqueza” [made the earth bigger for all of mankind, opened new horizons for science and new sources of wealth for industry] (“Las fiestas” 6).

The final point that I would like to make with regard to the discussions of Columbus and the discovery in *El Nuevo Régimen* is that they do not lend themselves to the complacent, celebratory nationalist appropriation that was the main purpose of the 1892 commemorations. The reason behind this ambivalent appropriation of Columbus and the discovery is that, for Pi i Margall, collective memory cannot be reduced to the worship of history and national character that informed the official narrative of 1892. Instead, the collective memory of the discovery is always mediated by the normative scheme of his federalist conceptions, one that guarantees the universal right to self-determination.

Importantly, Pi i Margall’s more substantive interventions in the 1892 celebrations did not focus on Columbus, the discovery, or the conquest and colonization of the Americas, but rather on the Indian civilizations that inhabited the American territories before Columbus’s arrival. Both in his lecture given at the Ateneo de Madrid, “América en la época del descubrimiento,” and in his profusely illustrated two-volume study *Historia de la América antecolombiana* (1892), Pi i Margall departed from the self-congratulatory tone and the commonplace emphasis on events that could be characterized, with varying degrees of historical simplification, as reflecting on Spain’s glory and greatness. In contrast, his depictions of Indian civilizations demonstrate the concerns of a historian guided by federalist political principles who wanted to promote a view of the Spanish state in which the cultural particularisms of the different regions could fit. Using both well-known Spanish sources like the writings of Las Casas, Díaz del Castillo or Cabeza de Vaca, as well as the Mexican chronicles of Ixtlilxochitl

and indigenous sources such as the *Popol Vuh* (2: 1911–18), Pi i Margall wrote with a prudent tone that decidedly set him apart from the simplifications and the arrogance characteristic of run-of-the-mill Spanish accounts of Indian civilizations. That said, it remains true that Pi i Margall organized the materials of *Historia de la América antecolombiana* by distinguishing between “civilized” (Aztec, Maya and Inca) and “barbarian” peoples (all others), and that he considered both groups to be undeniably less advanced than Spanish civilization at the time of the conquest (Bernabéu Albert, “La conquista” 112; Schmidt-Nowara, *The Conquest* 121).

Much like Cánovas, who anachronistically considered the subjects of the Catholic Monarchs as Spaniards, Pi i Margall projected his federalist political categories on the Indian civilizations. In “América en la época del descubrimiento” he praised the Iroquois federation where “fuera de los asuntos comunes a todos los iroqueses cada nación era autónoma” [each nation was autonomous outside of the affairs that were common to all] (18). The superiority of such political organization was unquestionable for Pi i Margall, since “Gracias a esa organización gozaron los iroqueses de una paz interior nunca interrumpida, y crecieron como ningún otro pueblo salvaje” [Thanks to such organization, the Iroquois enjoyed uninterrupted domestic peace, and they progressed like no other savage people] (19). At the same time, he made clear his rejection of monarchical and imperial forms of government that exemplified power’s tendency toward absolutism and not liberty (15–16). The paradigmatic example of such misguided political system was the Aztec Empire, a clearly despotic and self-destructing organization according to Pi:

Quiso Motezuma reunir las tres naciones en un imperio del que fuera jefe único; y preciso es confesar que [...] lo consiguió en gran parte con menoscabo de sus fuerzas y las de su patria.

[Moctezuma sought to unite three nations in one empire of which he would be the only ruler; and we must confess that {...} to a large extent he achieved this with great damage to his and his country’s powers].
(21)

Pi i Margall was reflecting on the pre-Columbian political systems of the Iroquois and the Aztecs, but surely he was also trying to legitimate his own vision for the Spanish state, sharply contrasting the virtues of a federal organization with the vices of a monarchical/imperial rule.

While Pi i Margall’s characterization of Indian peoples depended on a modern, Eurocentric vision of progress (see “América en la época del descubrimiento” 7–22), there are two elements that qualify such Eurocentrism

and distinguish it from other Spanish (and Western) accounts of the time. The first is that, within Pi i Margall's description, "barbarism" and "civilization" are relative and historical concepts that can simultaneously manifest themselves in different areas of a given civilization. If "Barbarie y cultura son dos maneras de ser de nuestra especie que carecen de valor absoluto" [Barbarism and culture are two ways of being for our species that lack an absolute value], and if Spaniards themselves were considered barbarians by Greeks and Romans (*Historia* 1: 221), then it should come as no surprise that Pi i Margall thought that slavery, even among the "savage" Indians, "distaba allí realmente de ser lo dura que era en [la civilizada] Europa" [was far less harsh than in {civilized} Europe] (*Historia* 2: 1352), or that he praised the political institutions of a "barbarian" group like the Iroquois who, as we have seen, had established a confederacy that was for Pi i Margall "una luz entre tinieblas" [a light in the darkness] (*Historia* 2: 1261). In keeping with this line of argument, Pi i Margall explained the disparity in the development between American and European civilizations in 1492 as a result not of the deficient nature of its inhabitants, but of America's isolation from the rest of the world (*Historia* 1: 3).

The second element that qualifies Pi i Margall's belief in Western superiority is that such belief does not entail the affirmation of Spanish colonial discourse. As we have seen, most Spanish commentators depicted the Indian peoples as uncivilized to better justify Spain's rule in the Americas (for instance, in Castelar's essay "América en el descubrimiento y en el Centenario" references to human sacrifices were immediately followed by a eulogy of Spanish colonialism [115–16]). In Pi i Margall, however, this nationalistic/imperialistic argument is completely absent. His representations of the indigenous peoples of the Americas were not aimed at vindicating the Spanish methods of colonization. Rather, their purpose was to provide a better understanding of the people that Spain conquered and, most importantly, to advance his federalist theories. As such, they hardly ever included references to the conquest and colonization. Thus, if these depictions implicitly reflected on the greatness of a particular civilization, it was not on the greatness of Spanish civilization but rather on that of Western civilization as a whole, a cultural system that in his view had produced the principles of liberty, democracy, and self-determination, that formed the core of his political views.

Moreover, when Pi i Margall did offer an explicit rendering of the relationship between colonizer and colonized, it hardly produced the kind of nationalist identification sought by the imperialist narratives of 1892. I have in mind here the dramatic dialogue *Guatimozín y Hernán Cortés*, a piece that Pi i Margall wrote in 1897, published in 1899, and which was only

recently unearthed by historian Salvador Bernabéu Albert.²¹ As Bernabéu Albert rightly points out, the singularity of this fictionalized verbal duel between the ghosts of the last Aztec emperor Cuauhtémoc (Guatimozín in the play) and the Spanish conquistador resides in its critique of the heroic image of Cortés promoted during the nineteenth century by such literary works as Alfonso García Tejero's ballad "Hernán Cortés" (included in *El Romancero histórico* [1859]), Carlos Jiménez-Placer's play *Hernán Cortés* (1867) or Ramón Ortega y Frías's serial novel *Conquista de México por Hernán Cortés* (1874) (113–18). In this sense, Bernabéu Albert continues, *Guatimozín y Hernán Cortés* is a text that can be inscribed into a twofold tradition: on the one hand, it belongs to a series of works that at the end of the nineteenth century internalized the Black Legend and presented an overly critical view of the conquest and colonization (for instance, Luis Vega-Rey's *Puntos negros del Descubrimiento de América*, a work that was prefaced by Pi i Margall himself); on the other hand, it foreshadows the scholarly tradition of liberal intellectuals who attempted to forge cultural alliances between Spain and its former colonies at the beginning of the twentieth century (such as Rafael Altamira, Ramón Menéndez Pidal, and Américo Castro) (119–21). While the first context proves interesting for our purposes here, the second seems slightly misguided for the centralist, cultural nationalism upon which Altamira, Pidal, and Castro based their historical understandings of the Americas is too far removed from the federalist ideals through which Pi i Margall read the conquest of Mexico in *Guatimozín y Hernán Cortés*. For this reason, I propose to read *Guatimozín y Hernán Cortés* within the context of Pi's own reflections in *Las nacionalidades*.

In order to recover the alternative, federalist collective memory produced by *Guatimozín y Hernán Cortés*, it is important to foreground the main issue debated by the two protagonists: the legitimacy of the Spanish conquest of Mexico. As Guatimozín laments: "¡Ah, Cortés! Pretendéis en vano justificar vuestra conquista. Nada hubo que la autorizase; nada vino después a legitimarla" [Alas, Cortés! It is in vain that you {the Spaniards} attempt to justify your conquest. Nothing authorized it, and nothing that came after legitimized it] (139). The play is the story of the confrontation of two worlds, the world of the colonized and that of the colonizers. Guatimozín speaks for the rich cultural world of the Aztecs (their religion, political institutions, economic life, and aesthetic traditions [134–39]), while Cortés stands for the more "advanced" world of Spanish and European cultures (Christianity, scientific and technological discoveries, alphabetic writing [126–27]). The play's structure is certainly Manichean, but the fact that it depicts two heterogeneous worlds, one that by Pi i Margall's own standards is less civilized than the other, raises a political issue that is at the heart of

Restoration Spanish nationalism: how should the state integrate that which is radically other and embodied in particular groups (the colonies, the working class, the Catalanists) whose interests are opposed to those of the government? The answer given by Cánovas, Castelar, and those who crafted an imperialistic national memory in 1892 is well known: these constituencies should abandon their particular affiliations and embrace the collective myths of an identitarian, unitarist nationalism – here it is useful to recall Cánovas’s belief that the state is “mejor constituido donde haya una sola nación, o una propia raza, y una misma lengua” [better constituted where there is one nation, or one race, and one language] (*Discurso* 100). The answer proposed by Pi i Margall in *Guatimozín y Hernán Cortés* could not be more different since, rather than erasing the heterogeneous interests of the colonized, it attempts to accommodate them within the vision of the federation.

Pi i Margall acknowledged in *Las nacionalidades* that invaded peoples had the imprescriptible right to wage war against their invaders (75), and asserted from this belief that the state must only exercise the minimum possible amount of power (115). Echoing these and earlier comments in *La reacción y la revolución* about the colonized’s “spirit of rebellion,” Pi i Margall has Guatimozín articulate his unconditional right to self-determination: in the face of the cruelty and humiliations inflicted on the Aztecs by the Spaniards,

La Nación [Azteca ...] sentía cierto disgusto que cada vez se fue acentuando y se convirtió al fin en odio. Vino la matanza de la fiesta Toxcatl, y ese odio estalló en abierta rebelión y decidida guerra.

[The {Aztec} Nation {...} felt a certain distress that grew constantly and was ultimately transformed into hatred. Then came the slaughter at the celebrations of Toxcatl, and that hatred exploded into an open rebellion and all-out war]. (129)

The character of Cortés, for his part, demonstrates why there should be limits on state power. Cortés is depicted as possessed by “un loco afán de dominarlo todo” [an insane eagerness to dominate everything] (137) that is only backed by might and not right (126), and that manifests itself in the generalized infliction of human suffering through violence, torture, and slavery (132, 138). In contrast, the ideal configuration of state power is symbolized by the way in which the Aztecs waged war and treated the vanquished:

No hicimos nunca nosotros la guerra, sino provocados por las vecinas gentes. Si las vencíamos, nos limitábamos a imponerles tributos en

especies y en sangre; no les quitábamos jamás ni sus leyes ni su gobierno.

[We never waged war unless we were provoked by our neighbors. If we defeated them, we limited ourselves to the collection of taxes in kind or in blood, but we never deprived the vanquished of their laws, nor of their government]. (138)

Taken together, these two principles – the right to self-determination and the moderation of state power – provide us with the normative content of a virtual alternative collective memory, one that is not based on the will to dominate and the erasure of cultural particularity, but rather on the pursuit of peace and commitment to pluralism. The fact that this alternative collective memory still depends on a cultural hierarchy (Pi i Margall does not question Western superiority, but merely its unjust effects) is as much an undercurrent in Pi i Margall's belief in universal imperatives as a measure of what was possible at the end of the nineteenth century in Spain. And the fact that it can only be expressed through Pi i Margall's rudimentary aesthetic principles points to Pi i Margall's own creative limitations as well as to the fact that the most talented novelists and essayists of the time, such as Benito Pérez Galdós (1843–1920), Emilia Pardo Bazán (1851–1921), or Rafael Altamira (1866–1951), adhered to the centralist collective memory promoted by the state, not the one promoted by Pi i Margall.

Contrary to the memory produced by the official 1892 narrative, this collective memory does not aim to assert the legitimacy of the Restoration's increasingly violent colonial policies, but rather aspires to challenge them. Instead of seeing imperialism as the embodiment of the nation's highest aspirations, this collective memory reconnected with the First Republic's old project of reforming the colonial regime by undermining its reliance on slavery and centralized, oligarchic rule (recall here Pi i Margall's 1854 complaint about the despotism of the General Captains). In a demonstration of coherence and political courage, Pi i Margall understood that his historical, federalist discourse required him to take a stance against the state's repressive colonial policies in the 1890s. He thus tirelessly campaigned first for Cuba's autonomy and then for its independence, writing literally hundreds of articles and giving countless speeches on the subject.²² Because of this, he was ostracized, persecuted by the government, and accused of antipatriotism by both the press and most Spanish intellectuals, including his former colleague Castelar (Jutglar 1: 89–90; Conangla Fontanilles 101–13). But Pi i Margall, who was famous for his inflexibility, was not ready to recant his political beliefs or his historical convictions. Thus on August 17, 1895,

when what would ultimately become the definitive Cuban rebellion had just broken out, he argued once again in favor of Cuba's autonomy. His parody of those who were calling for war in the name of the nation's integrity and its imperial memory is worth quoting at length:

“España es siempre España, se dice ahora; no podemos consentir, en modo alguno, la pérdida de Cuba; antes nuestra propia ruina que tanta deshonra. No importa que hayamos de gastar el último centavo y verter la última gota de sangre; hemos de asombrar a las gentes demostrándoles que aún somos los que hace tres siglos llevamos nuestras armas vencedoras a todos los ámbitos del mundo.”

¿Cabe concebir ni mayor inconsciencia ni mayor locura? En nuestro ánimo está poner fin a la guerra; basta que concedamos a Cuba la autonomía a que tiene derecho. ¿Y por qué no hemos de concedérsela? ¿Es nunca indecorosa la justicia? ¿Hay nunca humillación en dar a nuestros mayores enemigos lo que por ley de naturaleza les corresponde?

[“Spain is forever Spain,” people say these days. “In no way can we allow ourselves to lose Cuba; we should rather allow our ruin than such a dishonor. It does not matter if we have to spend the last dime and shed the last drop of blood; we have to astonish the world by showing them that we are the same people who three centuries ago paraded their victorious arms around the four corners of the world.”

Is it possible to conceive of a greater irresponsibility or foolishness? It is our intent to put an end to the war: it is sufficient, then, that we grant Cuba the autonomy that is rightfully hers. And why should we not grant it? Is justice ever shameful? Is it ever humiliating to bestow upon our greatest enemies that which belongs to them on account of their nature?]. (Conangla Fontanilles 190)

Clearly, Pi i Margall's reliance on firm, federalist, political beliefs to produce a critical view of the colonial past also informed his critical stance on the Spanish government's repressive colonial policies. In both cases, Pi i Margall maintained that the respect for cultural heterogeneity and the moderation of the power of the state were fundamental principles – and that they applied to Cuba, Catalonia, or any other nation of the Spanish state.

In terms of the larger argument being made here about the conflicting political uses of the early modern Spanish Empire, this last quotation makes an interesting point. Certainly, the means employed by Castelar, Cánovas, Chías, Machado y Núñez, and Pi i Margall to characterize the protagonists, deeds, and values of the imperial adventure inaugurated by Columbus in 1892 were quite similar – to a greater or lesser extent, they all seem to have

embraced a number of superficial, over-simplified historical interpretations in order to foster their political agendas. Perhaps that is the fate of all those who engage in commemorative activity. But where these figures part company is in their relationship to the narrative of Spanish colonialism that was being written at the end of the nineteenth century. While Cánovas and Castelar were busy providing a solid historical base for this narrative, Pi i Margall was attempting to undermine it, showing that the nationalization of Spain's colonial past was much more ambivalent than had previously been thought. This ambivalence sets the stage for the conflicting emotional responses spurred on by the demise of empire, which I examine in the following chapters.

Notes

- 1 For two uses of the critical term archive that inform my own, see Roberto González Echevarría's *Myth and Archive* and Wadda Ríos-Font's *The Canon and the Archive*.
- 2 Josep Fontana offers a succinct yet insightful analysis of the changing functions attributed in Spain to Columbus's first voyage in 1592, 1692, 1792, and 1892.
- 3 For more details on the celebration's budget, see Bernabéu Albert, *1892: El IV centenario* (60).
- 4 For a fascinating analysis of the parade that reenacted the "discovery" and conquest of America in the streets of Madrid, see Blanco's *Cultura y conciencia imperial* (95–110).
- 5 One of the main polemical issues of the Columbian Legend had to do with the way in which King Ferdinand treated Columbus upon his return to Spain after his fourth – failed – voyage. Roselly de Lorgues, in *Vida de Cristóbal Colón*, does not hesitate to proclaim Ferdinand's envy of, and ingratitude toward Columbus, whose last days he depicts with melodramatic clichés: "Así el hombre que en aquel momento hacía a la España el reino más rico, extenso y poderoso de la cristiandad, no tenía un techo propio que le abrigase, se acostaba en una cama alquilada y tenía que pedir dinero prestado para pagar su cuenta en la posada" [Thus the man who in that precise moment was making Spain the richest, largest, and most powerful kingdom in the Christian domains, did not have a roof to shelter him, slept on a rented bed, and was obliged to borrow money to pay his bill at the inn] (351). Opposing Roselly de Lorgues, Fernández Duro sides with the Spanish Crown and emphasizes "la paciencia, la parsimonia, la condescendencia verdaderamente paternal con que el Monarca maestro toleraba las genialidades infantiles de su Gobernador en las Indias, por llamarse Colón" [the truly paternal patience, temperance, and deference with which the great Monarch tolerated the infantile strokes of genius of his Governor in the Indies, only because his name was Columbus] (24).
- 6 For an insightful discussion of Fernández Duro's extensive Columbian scholarship, including his interventions in the several polemics surrounding the Admiral's figure, see Schmidt-Nowara's *The Conquest of History* (75–86). For

- a useful contextualization of the polemics surrounding Columbus during the fourth centennial, see Bernabéu Albert's 1892: *El IV centenario* (109–26). The two-part articles of Pardo Bazán (“El Descubrimiento de América en las letras españolas”) and Menéndez Pelayo (“De los historiadores de Colón con motivo de un libro reciente”) are invaluable accounts of the polemics later analyzed by Schmidt-Nowara and Bernabéu Albert.
- 7 These lectures have been edited in a three-volume book titled *El Continente Americano: conferencias dadas en el Ateneo científico, literario, y artístico de Madrid con motivo del cuarto centenario del Descubrimiento de América*. Each lecture is numbered separately.
 - 8 Bernabéu Albert characterizes the dominant interpretations of Columbus and his deeds as “realistic.” Opposed to the romantic, historical idealism of Roselly de Lorgues as well as to the denigratory view of Columbus coming from the U.S., “realist” authors such as Fernández Duro claimed that their renderings of Columbus were impartial, objective, based on an exhaustive study of written sources and thus showed all aspects of Columbus’s character. Realism was, in short, another name for a mixture of positivism and nationalism. See Bernabéu Albert, 1892: *El IV centenario* (115–21).
 - 9 I provide full bibliographic references for the books by Castelar and Menéndez Pelayo in the works cited section. The proceedings of the Ateneo are collected in *El Continente Americano*; those of the Congreso Geográfico can be found in *Congreso Geográfico Hispano-Portugués-Americano*. For the newspaper accounts, see “12 de Octubre” (*El Imparcial*), “El Centenario y las fiestas” (*La Época*) and Simonet (*El Siglo Futuro*).
 - 10 Originally published in *El Centenario* in 1892, this essay is reprinted as the prologue to Castelar’s 1892 monumental *Historia del descubrimiento de América*, a book comprised of a series of lectures on Columbian themes. According to Castelar, the book was written at the request of some very powerful New York editors who had already published several excerpts in translation (5), something which testifies not only to Castelar’s popularity in Spain and beyond, but also to how widely accepted the rhetoric of colonial affirmation was.
 - 11 As Alejandro Mejías-López notes, there is an anxiety driving Valera’s imperial nostalgia in his *Cartas americanas* (1889). According to Mejías-López, Valera’s 1888 review of Rubén Darío’s *Azul* unintentionally enacts and anxiously registers the shift in cultural authority from Spain to its former Spanish American colonies that attended the rise of *modernismo* on both sides of the Atlantic (85–94).
 - 12 The four-volume *Antología de poetas hispano-americanos* consists of a series of introductions to, and selections from, the different national poetic traditions of Latin America. A year before his death, in 1911, Menéndez Pelayo revised the introductions and published the first volume of a two-volume work that he renamed *Historia de la poesía hispano-americana*. The second volume was published posthumously, in 1913. Both have been included in the edition of Menéndez Pelayo’s complete works coordinated by Ángel González Palencia as volumes 27 and 28. I will be quoting from this edition.
 - 13 On the renewal of the Spanish colonial project after 1833 and the central, if polemical, place that slavery occupied in such a project, see Schmidt-Nowara’s *Empire and Antislavery*.
 - 14 Álvarez Lázaro’s book is one of the few sources about the main figures advocating

the secularization of Restoration Spain. It contains useful information on Fernando Lozano (whose pseudonym was Demófilo), Ramón Chías (whose pseudonym was Eduardo de Riofranco), and Odón de Buén (whose pseudonym was Lamarck) and on *Las Dominicales del Libre Pensamiento*. For an exposition of Ramón Chías's thought, see Diego Romero.

- 15 As is the case with Chías, there are practically no sources on Antonio Machado y Núñez. For an overview of his life and works, see Jiménez Aguilar and Agudelo Herrero.
- 16 For the Catholic integrist press's stance, see the editorial of *El Siglo Futuro*, "Profanaciones." The conservative *La Época* was also highly critical of the Congreso Universal de Librepensadores, but, unlike *El Siglo Futuro*, it defended the government instead of attacking it (see "Los librepensadores" and "Providencia justa").
- 17 Just contemplate, for example, how Leopoldo Alas, in a cruelly ironic commentary on the congress, claimed that free thought was "an old relic" (173), or how Pardo Bazán considered that the celebration of the congress was above all an "act of bad taste" ("El movimiento intelectual del Centenario" 100). For criticisms of the government's actions, see the editorial by Lozano in *Las Dominicales*; the editorial by Sánchez Pérez in *El Nuevo Régimen*; and the letter "Una protesta" in *El Liberal*.
- 18 For a study of the way in which anticlericalism and republicanism converged into a powerful Spanish nationalist ideology promoted by the journalist José Nakens, among others, see Sanabria.
- 19 Although both Cánovas and Castelar mounted spirited defenses of the Spanish Empire in 1892, they had earlier participated in a critical, liberal view of the empire. For Cánovas's earlier critical stance about the Spanish Empire, see Juliá 39; Castelar wrote in 1868 that "There is nothing more dreadful, more abominable, than that large Spanish empire, a shroud extended all over the planet" (qtd. in Sáinz Rodríguez 119).
- 20 For an elucidation of Blanco White's moderate liberal positions on the American rebellion, see Brading 544–51; for a fascinating account of the principles and mechanisms of viceregal power in New Spain, see Cañeque.
- 21 The full text of this dramatic dialogue is included as an appendix in Bernabéu Albert's article "La conquista después del Desastre. *Guatimozín y Hernán Cortés. Diálogo* (1899), de Francisco Pi y Margall," which is a long and lucid introduction to Pi y Margall's work. I will be quoting from this edition of Pi y Margall's work.
- 22 All of these articles and speeches are collected in Conangla Fontanilles.

CHAPTER TWO

An Incomplete Work of Imperial Mourning: Miguel de Unamuno's *En torno al casticismo*

Addressing the Post-Imperial Condition

When a young, socialist Miguel de Unamuno (1864–1936) published a series of five essays in *La España Moderna* between February and June 1895, little did he imagine the lasting impact they would have on twentieth-century Spanish literature. Compiled seven years later as *En torno al casticismo* (1902), these essays quickly became some of the most commented upon texts of the Spanish literary canon as well as the object of a bitter ideological debate within Hispanism. Critics of different ideological allegiances have used *En torno al casticismo* to highlight those aspects of the text that supported their particular concept of national community while brushing aside those aspects that contradicted it. Both the right and the left have used *En torno al casticismo* to support their own visions of the political community: on the right, Ernesto Giménez Caballero argued for the relevance of *En torno al casticismo* to Fascist ideals in the late 1920s, and in the late 1940s Pedro Laín Entralgo saw it as an exemplification of the Falangist ideals of the times; on the left, José Carlos Mainer, Pedro Cerezo Galán, and Carlos Serrano have recently presented *En torno al casticismo* as advocating a liberal nationalism, while Eduardo Subirats has decried the essays' authoritarian, undemocratic aspects, and Joan Ramon Resina and Jo Labanyi have deplored its centralizing aspects – these last three critics advocating a more plural, decentralized, democratic vision of the political community.¹

Although there have been numerous interpretations of *En torno al casticismo*'s political thrust and ideological underpinnings, next to nothing has been written on the way in which the text addresses Spain's transition from an imperial nation to a post-imperial one.² In fact, as various scholars have remarked, the Spanish Empire *qua* empire left only a few marks on *fin-de-siècle* Spanish literature (Blanco "El fin"; G. Gullón 109; Serrano, "Conciencia" 335), but Spain's imperial past certainly informed the general argument of *En torno al casticismo*, leaving a number of subtle, diffused traces.

Focusing on those passages of the essay that evoke the early modern Spanish Empire, my reading of *En torno al casticismo* will highlight the relationship between emotions attached to empire and the essay's national imagination.

Even though the original publication dates of the essays that were later compiled as *En torno al casticismo* (February-June 1895) coincided with the outbreak of the second Cuban War of Independence (February 1895) – and thus the beginning of the end of Spain's last colonies – the text's allusions to empire focus almost exclusively on the political and religious dimensions of the early modern Spanish Empire of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (what was known by contemporaries as the *Monarquía hispánica*). Unamuno's clearly historical focus sought to represent the norms and values associated with past Spanish imperialism as belonging to a foreclosed historical epoch and a morally bankrupt ideological system that despite its manifest anachronism was still at play in Spanish national consciousness. This generally critical attitude toward the *political* aspects of imperialism is congruent with Unamuno's opposition to the Cuban War (Serrano, "Conciencia" 350 and "Unamuno"), which he saw as "un producto de nuestra rapacidad y torpeza económica, hija de disparatados proteccionismos y monopolismos" [a product of our rapacity and economic clumsiness, the daughter of ludicrous protectionisms and monopolisms] (qtd. in Rabaté and Rabaté 172). At first glance, then, the references to the early modern Spanish Empire in *En torno al casticismo* seem to critique the historical basis of Spain's contemporary imperialism in Cuba and to dismantle what Unamuno called "el estúpido jingoísmo de esta atrocidad de la guerra de Cuba" [the stupid jingoism of this atrocious Cuban War] (qtd. in Rabaté and Rabaté 160). However, as we shall see in what follows, Unamuno's lack of reflection on the cultural aspects of imperialism in *En torno al casticismo* burden the text's attempt to break ties with Spain's imperial values.

Bearing these considerations in mind, this chapter explores the emotional climate surrounding the Habsburg Empire in *En torno al casticismo*, arguing that it affords the possibility for new readings of the text as performing an incomplete work of mourning. *En torno al casticismo* is an essay that can be read as a response to what Unamuno perceived as the death of imperial values embedded in the national-religious formation known as *casticismo*. Despite being published before the Disaster of 1898, *En torno al casticismo* foreshadowed the painful, complex, and ambiguous adjustments that Spanish culture would later have to make as it strove to accept the loss of its last imperial remains – a process that, as we shall see, was far from successful.

Although the five essays of *En torno al casticismo* are not, as Unamuno claimed, the first to explore "la psicología de nuestro pueblo" [the psychology of our people] (273), they certainly stand out as one of the first and

finest examples of the genre.³ Like other *fin-de-siècle* Spanish intellectuals before and after him, Unamuno approached the “problem of Spain” as an eminently psychological problem, as a conflict that played out within Spaniards. This psychological dimension already appears in the opening paragraphs of the essay when Unamuno frames his reflections on *casticismo* – the traditional, conservative, chauvinistic set of customs, values, and dispositions characteristic of Spanish culture – as an investigation into “[los] problemas que suscita el estado mental de nuestra patria” [the problems stirred by the mental state of our fatherland] (128). At the end of the first essay he again states that his study is “un examen de conciencia” [an examination of the conscience] of the Spanish people (154), thus reinforcing the analogy between the individual and the collective, between individual Spaniards and the Spanish people. Immediately thereafter, he cautions that if such psychological probing is to be successful, it must be carried out fully acknowledging the problematic or even pathological nature of the dispositions that make up the national psyche:

Volviendo a sí, haciendo examen de conciencia, estudiándose y buscando en su historia la raíz de los males que sufren, [los pueblos] se purifican de sí mismos, se anegan en la humanidad eterna.

[It is by turning to themselves, by searching their souls, studying themselves and searching in their history for the root of their illnesses that peoples purify and submerge themselves in the waters of eternal humanity]. (154)

While the cure for the malady draws heavily on religious and penitential imagery and seems to consist in reaching a state where a people’s particular attachments are combined with universal values (this is, at least in part, what is meant by the rather obscure metaphor of a people submerging themselves in the waters of eternal humanity), its etiology seems far from clear. What exactly is the root of Spain’s illnesses? Is it even possible, at the end of the nineteenth century, to identify an essence, a foundation, a basic structure that explains, to use Unamuno’s terms, “el marasmo actual de España” [Spain’s present stagnation] (247)? *En torno al casticismo* provides an exceedingly simple answer to these questions: the key to Spain’s paralysis lies in “nuestro núcleo castizo” [our *castizo* or pure core] (247), which for Unamuno is the product of the physical conditions found in Castile (its central geographical location in the Iberian Peninsula, its climate, and its landscape).

Bearing the clear epistemological imprint of a mixture of naturalism and idealism derived from the evolutionary determinism of Hippolyte Taine

(1828–1893) (Ramsden, 1898 *Movement* 51–95), *En torno al casticismo* develops a threefold argument by means of dense, digressive, exuberant, and highly suggestive prose. First, it identifies the main components of this *castizo* core, which include psychological traits (such as dogmatism, intransigence, and individualism), political characteristics (such as the spirit of conquest and expansionism, unitarism, and blind submission to authority), cultural features (such as isolation from the main currents of European thought) and economic elements (such as an aversion to work and endemic poverty). It then analyzes the ways in which *castizo* values have manifested themselves in major works of the Spanish literary canon (such as Pedro Calderón de la Barca’s plays or San Juan de la Cruz’s poetry). And finally, it calls for a breaking of ties with this traditional system of *casticista* norms and values by suspending and transforming them into a system of beliefs that combines particular identifications (which incorporate the *Volksgeist* of the Spanish people) and universal values (which represent an underlying common humanity that is open to European culture). The belief system resulting from this Hegelian *Aufhebung* (Cerezo Galán, *Las máscaras* 176) designed to overcome the values of *casticismo* is embodied in what Unamuno alternatively calls “intrahistory” (*intrahistoria*) or “eternal tradition” (*tradición eterna*), two concepts that are in direct opposition to the merely historical, superficial existence of *casticismo* and its chauvinistic traditions.

Empire and *casticismo*

The Spanish Empire, in its early modern configuration, is evoked several times in the text when discussing *casticismo*. Empire figures as either a material effect of the political and religious values of *casticismo* or as a decisive narrative component, a crucial element of the historical myths and legends it engendered. In Unamuno’s account, Castile’s ideals of conquest and evangelization, “la idea del unitarismo conquistador, de la catolización del mundo” [the idea of a conquering unitarism, of the world’s Catholicization] (*En torno* 166), made the Castilian people “uno de los pueblos más universales, el que se echó a salvar almas por esos mundos de Dios, y a saquear América para los flamencos” [one of the most universal of peoples, one that went about saving souls all over the world and plundering the Americas for the Dutch] (*En torno* 165). The use of the term “plunder” to depict the colonization of the Americas, which in late nineteenth-century Spain almost invariably figured as a work of compassion and civilization (recall Castelar’s or Cánovas’s intervention in the 1892 commemorations), suggests that Unamuno, a writer of *sui generis* socialist ideas, viewed the imperial adventure with considerable animosity.⁴ The term was also a

way of having his readers emotionally distance themselves from the glory associated with the conquest and colonization of the Americas, which, as we have seen, was widely celebrated during the 1892 commemorations.

Unamuno gives the reader another indication that the imperial past's privileged place in the national imagination needed to come to an end when he considers the conquistadors as the paradigmatic subjects of a traditional, outdated ideology such as *casticismo*:

Si se buscasse la filiación de nuestros *conquistadores* en América estoy seguro que se hallaría que los más de ellos eran, como Hernán Cortés y Pizarro, de tierras de dehesas y montaneras, y no de las pingües y mollares huertas.

[If one were to trace the genealogy of our conquistadors in America, I am sure that one would find that the majority of them, like Hernán Cortés and Pizarro, came from lands of pastures and meadows, not from lands of lush, fertile orchards]. (*En torno* 276)

For Unamuno, the conquistadors hail from the Castilian plateaus where *casticismo* originated and, because of this, he sees them as wandering shepherds who resorted to the imperial adventure to flee the poverty to which their land condemned them.

The problem is that, once the conquistadors arrived in America, they showed no work ethic whatsoever – and this was one of the worst accusations one could face in *fin-de-siècle* Spain, when disciplined work was emerging as the cornerstone of the reformed national subject. Seeing the conquistadors as an embodiment of “nuestro castizo horror al trabajo, [y] nuestra holgazanería” [our *castizo* aversion to work {and} our laziness] (*En torno* 196), Unamuno writes:

En ninguna parte arraigó mejor ni por más tiempo lo de creer que el oro es la riqueza, que aquí, [...] Los pobres indios preguntaban a los aventureros de *El Dorado* por qué no sembraban y cogían, y en vano propusieron los prudentes se enviaran a las Indias labradores. Francisco Pizarro, en el momento de ir a pasar su Rubicón, traza con la espada una gran raya en tierra y dice: “Por aquí se va al Perú; por acá se va a Panamá a ser pobres; escoja *el que sea buen castellano* lo que más bien le estuviere.”

[Nowhere else did the identification of gold with wealth take deeper, more permanent roots than here {...} The poor Indians asked the adventurers of *El Dorado* why they did not sow and reap, and it was in

vain that prudent officials suggested that farmers be sent to the Indies. Francisco Pizarro, when crossing his Rubicon, draws a sharp line in the dirt with his sword and says: “This way you go to Peru; that way you go to Panama to be poor; he *who is a good Castilian* chooses whatever suits him best]. (*En torno* 197; emphasis in orig.)

Importantly, the heroic figure of the conquistadors is doubly negated here. Their military feats are not recognized because for Unamuno militarism is not a value, but rather another undesirable character trait associated with *casticismo* (see *En torno* 199, 248; Cerezo Galán, *El mal del siglo* 111); at the same time, their personalities are reduced to an incarnation of indolence and greed, a characterization that situates Unamuno’s rendering well within the parameters established by the Black Legend of Spanish colonial brutality denounced by Rafael Altamira in *Psicología del pueblo español* (1902) and later, most famously, by Julián Juderías in *La leyenda negra* (1914).

By stripping the conquistadors of their heroism, by removing them, as it were, from the national pedestal, Unamuno is free to redefine heroism in terms of what had become one of the privileged categories of turn-of-the-century political discourse: the people. Indeed, for Unamuno true heroism does not reside in dazzling military conquests, or in the no less spectacular accumulation of riches, but rather in the humble, daily work carried out by a mass of anonymous Spaniards who display “el heroísmo sostenido y oscuro, difuso y lento, del verdadero trabajo” [the heroism of true work, a heroism that is both sustained and unsung, diffuse and slow] (*En torno* 199). The stark contrast between Unamuno and Cánovas del Castillo, who saw the nation’s glory in the accumulation of power, territories, and international prestige (Blas 32), could not be more evident. While Cánovas’s narrative of the Spanish nation was structured by a number of great political and military figures instrumental in the making of the early-modern empire – Charles V, Gonzalo Fernández de Córdoba, Philip II – (*Discurso* 134–39), Unamuno’s revolves around the people, a new historical subject that, as we shall see, makes numerous (if often equivocal) appearances in *En torno al casticismo* (see especially 144–48 and 264–82).

Another facet of Unamuno’s indictment of *casticismo*’s imperial values can be seen in his highly critical understanding of the role that religion played in Spanish imperial expansion. Unamuno’s claim is that, in Spain, Catholicism was an instrument of social cohesion and ideological uniformity: “[la religión era una] institución para sustento de la máquina social y mantenimiento del orden y del silencio y de la obediencia a la *ley*” [religion was an} institution devoted to the support of the social machine and to the preservation of order, silence, and obedience to the *law*] (*En torno* 213). But when Catholicism was

transplanted to the colonies, it acquired a more sinister ideological function, that of masking colonial exploitation:

La religión cubría y solemnizaba. Para que les enseñaran “las cosas de nuestra santa fe católica” *encomendaban* indios a los aventureros de América. ¡Extraña justificación de esclavitud!

[Religion concealed and solemnized. So that Indians could be taught “the things of our holy Catholic faith,” they were entrusted to the adventurers of America. What a strange justification for slavery!]. (*En torno* 215; emphasis in orig.)

It is worth recalling here that for Catholic, traditional sectors of Spanish society, who were the stalwarts of *castizo* ideology, the discovery, conquest and colonization of the Americas was essentially a religious – and thus an inherently justified – endeavor. Francisco Javier Simonet (1829–1897), for instance, wrote in the traditionalist newspaper *El Siglo Futuro* that the glory of the discovery and colonization of the Americas belonged above all to the Catholic Church, which inspired and prepared it:

señalando a nuestros católicos monarcas el fin cristiano y civilizador que debían cumplir con preferencia en la conquista y ocupación del Nuevo Mundo, e interesándose eficazmente por la felicidad temporal y eterna de sus moradores.

[showing our Catholic monarchs the Christian and civilizing ends that were to be their priorities in the conquest and settlement of the New World, and {by} taking an active interest in the temporal and eternal happiness of its inhabitants] (1).

Given the framework of military heroism (Cánovas del Castillo) and religious exaltation (Simonet) in which Spanish imperial legacies were conventionally interpreted during the Restoration, Unamuno's view of the conquest and colonization of the Americas as an undesirable effect of *casticismo* was nothing if not critical. Unamuno's reflections are not only a meditation on Spain's national traditions, but also an attempt to undermine the legitimizing structures of the Restoration system. These legitimizing structures were sustained, among other things, by transmitting a stereotyped sense of history to Spanish schoolchildren through textbooks that included what one contemporary historian has described as “una mera sucesión de reinados y de acontecimientos militares generalmente magnificados, cuando no fabulados” [a mere succession of reigns and military events that were generally magnified, if not outright fabricated] (Jover Zamora, “Aspectos”

778). Within this mythified view of Spanish history, the discovery of the Americas was transformed into the affirmation of Spanish colonialism (recall our observations about the 1892 commemorations of Columbus's first voyage) and the conquest of the Americas was reduced to a single, supposedly glorious battle, the Battle of Otumba where Cortés and his Tlaxcalan allies decisively defeated the Mexicas who had driven them out of Tenochtitlan during the infamous "Noche Triste" of June 30, 1520.

To have a better sense of the distance that separates the myth of Otumba from the historical event, we can turn to Bernal Díaz del Castillo's *Historia verdadera de la conquista de la Nueva España*, an account where this battle bears all of the traces of uncertainty, complexity, and confusion that historical events have for those who lived them. For Díaz del Castillo, the fight that took place on the plains of Otumba was not a clear-cut event, but rather a series of chaotic occurrences that resulted in an unexpected victory thanks to two developments which, of course, were completely removed from the heroic, nationalist meanings conjured up by the toponym "Otumba." First, Díaz del Castillo notes, the battle could not have been won without the contribution of the Tlaxcalan, "[que] estaban hechos unos leones, y con sus espadas y montantes y otras armas que allí apañaron hacíanlo muy bien y esforzadamente" [who fought like lions, battling with great skill and courage with their swords, long swords, and other makeshift weapons] (322). Second, the victory hinged on the moment in which a young cavalier, Joan de Salamanca, finished off the Aztec commander and tore away his banner, throwing the Indian army into disarray and consternation (322). Therefore it seems clear that the battle was neither an exclusively "Spanish" affair (whatever "Spain" might have meant during Díaz del Castillo's lifetime) nor an occasion to parade Spanish military superiority (since the victory came about almost by chance).

Trying to expose the fallacy of these historical myths, Unamuno cast an ironic light on those who had transformed the Spanish Empire into a cultural myth of the Restoration.⁵ Thus, when he summoned his readers to recall "la vivaz expansión del espíritu castellano, que produjo tantos misioneros de la palabra y de la espada, cuando el sol no se ponía en sus dominios" [the lively expansion of the Castilian spirit, which produced so many missionaries of the word and the sword, when the sun never set in its dominions] (*En torno* 167), he was also warning them against those who pronounce

conminaciones en esa lengua de largos y ampulosos ritmos oratorios que parece se hizo de encargo para celebrar las venerandas tradiciones de nuestros mayores, la alianza del altar y del trono y las glorias de

Numancia, de las Navas, de Granada, de Lepanto, de Otumba y de Bailén.

[admonitions in that rhetorical style made of long and pompous oratorical cadences, a style that seems crafted to celebrate the revered traditions of our elders, the alliance between the altar and the throne, and the glories of Numancia, las Navas, Granada, Lepanto, Otumba, and Bailén]. (*En torno* 132)

A few years later, in 1901, the regenerationist intellectual Joaquín Costa also called for Spaniards to put their fixation with past military glories behind them, uncannily echoing Unamuno's pronouncement almost word for word:

Deshinchemos esos grandes nombres: Sagunto, Numancia, Otumba, Lepanto, con que se envenena a nuestra juventud en las escuelas, y pasémosles una esponja.

[Let us deflate those big names: Sagunto, Numancia, Otumba, Lepanto, with which our youth is poisoned in school, and let us agree not to talk about them anymore]. (284)

In their pronouncements, both Unamuno and Costa are trying to undo the rhetorical transformation of the Battle of Otumba into a symbol that connotes the Spanish Empire's military greatness. This rhetorical effect, which gathers its strength from Otumba's position in a series of undisputed symbols of "Spanish" valor – the sieges of Numancia (133 BC) and Sagunto (219 BC) and the Battles of Lepanto (1571) and Bailén (1808) – is questioned by both Unamuno and Costa. What they are denouncing is what Roland Barthes called the naturalization of history through myth:

Myth does not deny things, on the contrary, its function is to talk about them; simply, it purifies them, it makes them innocent, it gives them a natural and eternal justification, it gives them a clarity which is not that of an explanation but that of a statement of fact. (143)

Turned into the mythological signifier denounced by Unamuno in *En torno al casticismo*, "Otumba" simply stated the fact of Spanish imperialism without the need for explanation; it was an indication that the military greatness of the Spanish Empire came, as it were, from eternity. Placed within a larger perspective, Unamuno's indictment of the conquest as cultural myth can be seen as part of the wider attack that young intellectuals were waging on the Restoration's presentation of power as spectacle, as a collection of empty words and images (Subirats, "España" 328).

The problem with Unamuno's arguments, as with those of other *fin-de-siècle* Spanish intellectuals, such as Azorín, Ángel Ganivet, and Ramón Menéndez Pidal, is that in attempting to dispel the cultural myths of the Restoration, they engaged in a good deal of national myth-making themselves. As Javier Varela has remarked, this tendency toward the elaboration of myths is common in times of crisis, "cuando, sobre todo por los intelectuales, se percibe una amenaza a los valores que definen la identidad colectiva" [above all when intellectuals perceive a threat to the values that define collective identity] (21). Unamuno himself remarked a few years later:

¡Desgraciado del pueblo que, descansando en sus antiguas tradiciones y leyendas, cesa en la labor vivificante de labrarse leyendas y tradiciones nuevas!

[Unhappy is the people who, resting on its ancient traditions and legends, fails to engage in the vivifying task of carving out new legends and traditions for itself!]. (*Obras* 3: 875)

Ironically, the Restoration legends that Unamuno opposes and the ones that he fabricates have something in common: their centralism, their metonymical consideration of Castile as the whole of Spain and therefore as the region better suited to impose its language and culture – an idea that echoes the tenets of a type of domestic neo-imperialism. Even in *En torno al casticismo*, a book that still holds some hope for regionalism (163), centralism is foreshadowed in Unamuno's naturalization of the historical violence by which Castilian culture imposed itself throughout Spain.⁶ Far from acknowledging it, he explains it away as a product of geographical circumstances, of Castile's central position in the Iberian Peninsula: "Castilla ocupaba el centro, y el espíritu castellano era el más centralizador, a la par que el más expansivo" [Castile occupied the center, and the Castilian spirit was the most centralizing and expansive of all] (164). And this is all he has to say about centuries of conflict between Castile and the other peninsular communities.⁷

But returning to the treatment of the Spanish Empire in *En torno al casticismo*, it is important to note that there is another way in which Unamuno critiques the imperial values associated with traditional, *castizo* Spanish identity: he portrays the empire, both in its incarnation as a real historical entity and a cultural myth, as a moribund ideal. In 1895, Unamuno seems to view the ideology of *casticismo* as the spiritual component of a dead social formation that nonetheless still inhabits the present: "En esta crisis persisten y se revelan en la vieja casta los caracteres castizos, bien que en descomposición no pocos" [In this crisis, the *castizo* character traits persist

and manifest themselves in the old caste, although many of them are in a state of decomposition] (*En torno* 247). As with other components of the ideology of *casticismo*, Unamuno seeks to break ties with imperialism by characterizing it as a relic of an exhausted past, as the ruin of a foreclosed historical epoch. However, the problem in *En torno al casticismo*, as in Spanish society, is that imperialism is approaching death but is not quite dead yet. This is why Unamuno makes Don Quixote a symbol of imperial adventurism and repeatedly calls for his death:

Hay que matar a Don Quijote para que resucite Alonso Quijano el Bueno, el discreto, el que hablaba a los cabreros del siglo de la paz.

[We have to kill Don Quixote, to resurrect Alonso Quixano the Good, the prudent one, he who spoke about the century of peace to the goatherds]. (*En torno* 244)

A few pages later, he insists on making Quixotism a stand-in for *casticismo*'s imperial and militaristic meanings, by declaring that

hoy es la vida de nuestro pueblo vida de guerrero en cuartel o la de Don Quijote retirado con el ama y la sobrina.

[today the lives of our people are like the lives of warriors confined to their barracks, or like Don Quixote's when he abandoned his adventures and returned home to his housekeeper and niece]. (*En torno* 248)

In "¡Muera Don Quijote!" [Death to Don Quixote!], an article published in *Vida Nueva* on June 25, 1898, after the United States had entered the War of 1898, Unamuno repeats his call for the death of Cervantes's hero as a way to forget the insidious historical ideals of universal Catholicism and of imperialism that were part and parcel of *casticismo*:

Hay que olvidar la vida de aventuras, aquel ir a imponer a los demás lo que creíamos les convenía y aquel buscar fuera un engañoso imperio.

[We have to forget the life of adventure, that drive to impose upon others what we thought best for them, that exterior search for a deceptive empire]. (*Obras* 7: 1195)⁸

And he refers again to Spain as a specter, as "[un] fantasma histórico simbolizado en una tela de colores" [{"an} historical ghost symbolized by a colored canvas] (*Obras* 7: 1195).

Thus, when Unamuno called for Don Quixote's death in the late 1890s, he was, in effect, attempting to make his fellow citizens forget the values

associated with imperialism, to cure their melancholic attachment to them. The wish to kill, then, names above all the psychic process of mourning, a severance, an interruption of recollection that represents a necessary step toward regaining a normal, healthy attitude to life. Unamuno identifies the end of this process of mourning and the attainment of a healthy attitude to life with the creation of a new sense of peoplehood. The death of the Spanish nation (a merely historical entity constituted by pernicious dispositions and the myths of *casticismo*) would give way to the birth of an authentic people whose existence seems more utopian than real (an eternal entity constituted by peaceful, Christian values that is open to European ideas):

La nación española – la nación, no el pueblo – molida y quebrantada, ha de curar, si cura, como curó su héroe, para morir. Sí, para morir como nación y vivir como pueblo.

[If the crushed, broken Spanish nation is to be cured – the nation, not the people – it has to be cured, just as its hero was, in order to die. Yes, to die as a nation and to live as a people]. (*Obras* 7: 1195)

In contrast to Unamuno's later work, where death figures as nothingness and as a perpetual source of existential angst,⁹ death here is encoded in two distinct, if related, discourses: in the idiom of psychology (death as a condition of possibility of forgetfulness) as well as in that of politics (death as a condition of possibility of the rebirth of a people). While in the discourse of psychology the trope of death triggers the psychic process of severance, and thereby signals the exhaustion of *casticismo* – and, consequently, of imperialism – in the discourse of politics it makes the existence of a new political community possible. These two discourses converge when we realize that the forgetting of empire, understood as both a historical reality and a cultural myth, is a necessary condition for the emergence of new senses of peoplehood.

Mourning Imperial Values

To argue that the formation of a new political identity out of the *castizo* entrenched sense of political community requires the definitive death of *castizo* ideology is to realize that *En torno al casticismo* comes to terms with a loss, the loss of *casticismo* and its imperial values, a set of ideals that had had great significance for the Spanish ego for, as Unamuno points out, “Castilla ha hecho la nación española” [Castile made the Spanish nation] (*En torno* 162). Three years before the loss of the last colonies – remember that the essays in *En torno al casticismo* were published in *La España Moderna* between

February and June, 1895 just as the second Cuban War of Independence was beginning – Unamuno was already beginning to undertake what Freud calls “the work of mourning.”

In his famous paper “Mourning and Melancholia” (1917), Freud understands mourning as a process involving a slow, gradual, and painful work of severance that begins when the subject accepts the non-existence of the lost object and ends when he or she breaks all emotional ties to it. This process results in the freeing of the libido and its investment into a new object.¹⁰ Just as the relinquishing of emotional ties is “carried out bit by bit, at great expense of time and cathectic energy, and [...] the existence of the lost object is [thus] psychically prolonged” (Freud 245), Unamuno’s separation from the values of *casticismo* is a slow and grueling process. This can be seen in his discussions of the Castilian landscape, his analysis of Spanish literature, and his critical evaluation of *castizo* dispositions. Consider, for instance, his detailed, lyrical evocations of the physical and climatic factors that have shaped the lives of Castilians and that of the conquistadors, whose uniform, tenacious character is explained by the Castilian landscape itself:

es [...] un paisaje monoteístico este campo infinito en que, sin perderse, se achica el hombre, y en que siente en medio de la sequía de los campos sequedades del alma.

[this infinite country {...} is a monotheistic landscape where man shrinks but does not get lost, where he feels in the midst of the drought of the fields the dryness of his soul]. (*En torno* 174)

Or consider his exhaustive recollection of the *castizo* values inherent in Spanish thought and literature. Most notably, he addresses the canonical plays of Calderón, which, he says, exemplify “este espíritu disociativo, dualista, polarizador” [this dissociative, dualist, polarizing spirit] (*En torno* 191), a spirit incapable of perceiving nuances and expressing genuine human conflict. He then opposes the spirit of Calderon’s plays to that of Shakespeare’s, a spirit which succeeded in “sumirse en el fondo eterno y universal de la humanidad” [delving into humanity’s eternal and universal depths] (*En torno* 190). Or, finally, consider his painfully meticulous recalling of the *castizo* dispositions still in existence in contemporary Spanish society, which ranged from dogmatism and inner anarchism to the lack of a strong work ethic or the presence of a militant, legalist form of conduct, to cite just a few (*En torno* 248–66). At the end of this protracted process of mourning, of carefully detaching the libido from each component of *casticismo*, the Spanish ego is able to transfer its libido onto an alternate object: the people and its *intrahistoria*.

Once the work of mourning is accomplished, a new story about the past can be told in which the silent life of the people replaces *casticismo* and its loud, forceful imperial values as protagonists. By means of a densely woven web of metaphors Unamuno approximates, without unequivocally articulating, the political community's greatest asset, its *intrahistoria*, the foundation upon which a new sense of peoplehood is to emerge. In a famous passage at the beginning of the essay, the *intrahistoria* of the people is compared with

la vida silenciosa de los millones de hombres sin historia que a todas horas del día y en todos los países del globo se levantan a una orden del sol y van a sus campos a proseguir la oscura y silenciosa labor cotidiana y eterna, esa labor que como la de las madréporas suboceánicas echa las bases sobre que se alzan los islotes de la historia.

[the silent life of millions of men without a history who, at all times and in all parts of the world, get up with the sun and go about their obscure, silent, eternal daily work in the fields, the work upon which, much like the suboceanic reefs, the islets of history are erected]. (*En torno* 145)

In the depths of *intrahistoria*, in this agrarian, national-popular consolatory fantasy, there seems to be little room for either celebratory accounts of the colonial past or the individual heroism of the conquistadors for both seem to be relegated to the realm of the merely historical, to the superficial strata where historical accidents occur. By invoking the notion of *intrahistoria*, it is as if Unamuno attempted to replace the oligarchic, militarist, Catholic, national myth of the Restoration with a pseudo-liberal, pacifist, vaguely Christian national mystique.

To use Rogers Smith's terminology in *Stories of Peoplehood*, the story or myth of peoplehood that Unamuno begins to tell is an ethically constitutive story (64–65), a fable of identity that downplays political and economic themes so as to underscore the worth of a particular group of society – in this case, the anonymous masses excluded from the oligarchic power structure of the Restoration. As an economically and politically marginal collective subject, these masses cannot appeal to the possession of riches or political power to articulate their sense of worth, but they can surely take pride in being the bearers of a brilliant, if largely unknown, culture and in possessing a valuable, if largely unarticulated, political will. Drawing on the apparently incompatible traditions of German Romanticism and French Enlightenment symbolized by the contributions of Johann Gottfried Herder and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (Serrano, “Entre Herder y Rousseau”), Unamuno conceives intrahistoric bonds as the expression of both a pre-existing,

permanent organic culture and of an ongoing, evolving subjective will.¹¹ On the one hand, *intrahistoria* is identified with *Volksgeist*:

una hondura del alma común en que viven y obran todos los sentimientos y aspiraciones que no concuerdan en forma definida, [...] una verdadera subconciencia popular.

[a depth of the common soul where feelings and aspirations act and exist even when they are not fully in agreement, {...} a true popular subconscious]. (*En torno* 264)

On the other hand, it is described as a social contract, as when Unamuno writes that “la doctrina del pacto [...] es la que, después de todo, presenta la razón intra-histórica de la patria; su verdadera fuerza creadora, en acción siempre” [the doctrine of the pact {...} is the one which, after all, offers us the fatherland’s intra-historic reason, its always ongoing, truly creative force] (*En torno* 159). Thus, membership of the intrahistoric Spanish political community has a paradoxical quality in that it is simultaneously a matter of unreasoned attachment (a primordial condition) and a matter of principled choice (a reasoned, political commitment). While the principled choice requires the manifestation of a conscious will, the primordial condition involves a series of unconscious, permanent, objective features, among which language stands out:

La lengua es el receptáculo de la experiencia de un pueblo y el sedimento de su pensar; en los hondos repliegues de sus metáforas (y lo son la mayoría de los vocablos) ha ido dejando sus huellas el espíritu colectivo del pueblo [...].

[Language is the vessel of the experience of a people and the sediment of its thought; in the deep folds of its metaphors (and most words are indeed metaphors) the collective spirit of the people has left its marks {...}]. (*En torno* 161)

By the end of *En torno al casticismo*, however, this seeming contradiction seems to resolve itself in a rather abrupt manner. Instead of suggesting that the contradictions of *intrahistoria* might evoke a truth that is not immediately apparent, Unamuno chooses to privilege the (permanent, primordial) cultural component of *intrahistoria* over its (ongoing, principled) political counterpart. It should come as no surprise, then, that while Unamuno praises the people’s cultural manifestations, customs and folklore (*En torno* 263), he also makes two highly significant political statements: one, he dismisses the democratic, progressive Glorious Revolution of 1868 as an “inauthentic,”

castizo phenomenon – a commonplace stance among young, *fin-de-siècle* intellectuals who saw nineteenth-century liberalism as a bankrupt ideology; and two, he vindicates the popular brand of a reactionary political ideology such as Carlism, which he valorizes as “un irrumpir de lo subconciante en la conciencia, de lo intra-histórico en la historia” [an irruption of the subconscious into consciousness, of the intrahistoric into history] (*En torno* 267). At this point we understand that the primary (and most consistent) component of Unamuno’s story of peoplehood is language, not political will. Indeed, when he abandoned the concept of *intrahistoria* around 1900 (Serrano, “Entre Herder y Rousseau” 188), language continued to figure as a crucial element in his later work. And it is precisely through this centrality of language, which Unamuno understands as a closed, univocal, stable universe, that the stage is set for the imperial specters that had been expunged from *En torno al casticismo* to return, albeit in a highly sublimated manner. In 1895, Unamuno succeeded in breaking emotional ties with the political, military, and religious dimensions of the early modern Spanish Empire, but in failing to address its cultural aspects, he did not successfully mourn this important aspect of the Spanish Empire. This would have momentous consequences for Unamuno’s later attitude toward the cultural production of the non-Castilian peoples that were part of the “first” Spanish empire, specifically those of the Latin American republics and Catalonia (although the same argument could be made about his native Basque culture).

By 1900, when Spanish American *modernismo* was attaining the apex of its prestige and its “conquest of the metropolitan [Spanish] literary field” was well under way (Mejías-López 85–124), Unamuno’s silence regarding Spain’s imperial cultural narratives in *En torno al casticismo* would come back to haunt him. As Alejandro Mejías-López has pointed out, “For many writers in Spain, like Unamuno, modernismo took the form of imperial nostalgia, caused to a considerable extent by their unwillingness to recognize the ‘inverted conquest’ that had shaped their writing in the first place” (179). Indeed, for the Unamuno who writes essays on Spanish American literature and who, in his later work, revisits the imperial past in his notion of a transatlantic Hispanic community, the peoples of Spain and Latin America are in fact the same people. Political, economic, and cultural differences are erased insofar as they figure as superficial manifestations of a deeper, organic community rooted in a common language that, despite its pan-national character, still bears the name “Spanish”:

El lenguaje, instrumento de la acción espiritual, es la sangre del espíritu, y son de nuestra raza espiritual humana los que piensan y por tanto sienten y obran en español.

[Language, an instrument of spiritual action, is the blood of the spirit, and those who think and therefore feel and act in Spanish belong to our spiritual human race]. (*Obras* 4: 646)

That is what allows Unamuno to claim, contradicting his earlier indictments of the conquistadors and imperial myths, that José Martí and José Rizal are as Spanish as Hernán Cortés and Vasco Núñez de Balboa (*Obras* 4: 646). No matter that Martí and Rizal were the victims of a system of imperial domination that was made possible by Cortés and Balboa, among others: in the protoplasmic depths of the spiritual race differences of all kinds simply dissolve, much as in those of *intrahistoria*.

One consequence of such dissolution of difference is that the conquest and colonization of the Americas is cast as a purely cultural, glorious and, one might add, heavily masculinely-coded endeavor: “¿No es nada cultural crear veinte naciones sin reservarse nada y engendrar, como engendró el conquistador, en pobres indias siervas hombres libres?” [Is it not a cultural achievement to selflessly create twenty nations and to engender free men out of poor Indian slaves, as the conquistadors did?] (*Del sentimiento* 311). In 1895, Unamuno might have condemned “the idea of a conquering unitarism, of the world’s Catholicization” (*En torno* 166), but in his later Hispanist work this idea of unitarism returns, trading its Catholic and militaristic appearance for a linguistic form.¹²

Similar to his ambivalence regarding unitarism, Unamuno’s relationship with Catalan culture was marked by contradictory emotions.¹³ He admired the modernity of Catalan culture while fearing (even loathing) its political ambitions. He corresponded extensively with Catalan modernist writers – the most famous of whom was his friend Joan Maragall – while at the same time condemning the political aspirations of the Catalan people.¹⁴ The vague regionalism of *En torno al casticismo*, in which he affirmed that “el regionalismo y el cosmopolitismo son dos aspectos de una misma idea y los sostenes del verdadero patriotismo” [regionalism and cosmopolitanism are two sides of the same coin and the pillars of true patriotism] (*En torno* 163), was soon to be replaced by the consideration of Catalanism as a problem, as a movement that caused distress by putting forward “un modo de sentir la vida privada y pública muy distinta de como la siente el hijo de las mesetas centrales” [a way of experiencing private and public life which is very different from the one experienced by a son of the central plateaus] (*Obras* 7: 452).

Unamuno’s changing attitude toward the value of regionalism is a function of his linguistic essentialism and cultural nationalism, which centered, as we have seen, around the notion of Castilian as an instrument

of spiritual action. This is most clearly seen in his frankly chauvinistic positions on the Catalan language. While in 1896, he may have encouraged the use of written Catalan in Catalonia (see “Sobre el uso de la lengua catalana” in *Obras 4*: 503–06), by 1908 he was decrying the possibility that the Catalan language might acquire any type of official recognition: “la única lengua nacional de España es la lengua española; la única lengua, lengua íntegramente española y además, lengua internacional, lengua mundial” [the only national language in Spain is the Spanish language; the only language, an entirely Spanish language and, what is more, an international language, a world language] (*Obras 4*: 375). What to make, then, of Unamuno’s opinions about Latin American and Catalan cultures? How is one to describe his engagements with these cultures if not through the use of terms like imperialism or neo-imperialism? Ultimately, as Joan Ramon Resina observes, Unamuno seems to have linked “the end of political empire to the founding of a language empire and the achievement of linguistic supremacy over historical and geographical contingencies” (“For Their Own” 121).

The narrative of mourning offered by *En torno al casticismo* succeeded in exorcising the most traumatic specters of the Spanish imperial past, those that related to the religious justification of political domination and economic exploitation. But in the affirmative, essentialist, cultural story of peoplehood that it proposed, the possibility for these specters to return in an idealized manner, haunting future developments of Unamuno’s thought, was already inscribed. Ultimately, what *En torno al casticismo* suggests is that, despite Unamuno’s efforts, the ghost of empire continued to live on, “for ghosts are the return of the repressed of history – that is, the mark of an all-too-real historical trauma which has been erased from conscious memory but which makes its presence felt through its ghostly traces” (Labanyi, “Introduction” 6). This pattern of incomplete severance with the meanings conjured up by the Spanish Empire, as we shall see in more detail in Ángel Ganivet, testifies as much to the ambivalence felt by early twentieth-century intellectuals *vis-à-vis* the imperial legacies as to their need to regain a cultural prestige that had been steadily fading away since the seventeenth century and that was being increasingly questioned by the growing prestige of Spanish-American *modernismo* and by the rise of sub-state nationalisms, of which Catalonia was the paradigmatic example.

Notes

- 1 These readings of *En torno al casticismo* can be found respectively in Giménez Caballero’s “Carta a un compañero”; Laín Entralgo’s classic yet partisan book *La generación del 98*, where Falangist ideology is more clearly visible in the author’s

- choice to brush aside the contradictory, heterodox judgments of the '98ers and to focus instead on their "ensueños de españoles" [patriotic dreams] (494), which in the last pages of the book show their true ideological colors (see 455-502); Mainer, *Historia, literatura, sociedad* (200); Cerezo Galán, *El mal del siglo* (101-26); Serrano, "Entre Herder y Rousseau"; Subirats, "Cuarteto español"; Resina, "For Their Own Good"; and Labanyi, "Nation, Narration, Naturalization."
- 2 In this respect, it is curious to note that the critical literature that reads Unamuno as simply one of the intellectuals that advocates a cultural, neo-imperialist will to power in the former American colonies does not perform a detailed, in-depth analysis of *En torno al casticismo*. See, for instance, Fiddian, Santos-Rivero, and Venegas. One of the few critical articles that focuses on Unamuno's opposition to the colonial wars is Blanco's "El fin del imperio español."
 - 3 In the prologue to the 1902 edition, Unamuno claims that his essays were the first in a long line of texts devoted to the exploration of Spain's national character, such as Ángel Ganivet's *Idearium español* (1897), Macías Picavea's *El problema nacional* (1899), Martínez Ruiz's *El alma castellana* (1900), Ramiro de Maeztu's *Hacia otra España* (1899), and Rafael Altamira's *Psicología del pueblo español* (1902). However, it is worth recalling that Lucas Mallada's *Los males de la patria* (1890), which can be properly considered the foundational text of the essayistic tradition of national self-reflection, was published five years before Unamuno's earliest essay (Juaristi 17).
 - 4 Unamuno joined the socialist party (PSOE) in 1894, and published extensively in *La Lucha de Clases*. For details of the ideology of early Unamuno, see Blanco Aguinaga 57-116 and Rabaté.
 - 5 Of course, as several critics have noted and as I will discuss shortly, Unamuno engages in a good deal of (national) myth-making himself in *En torno al casticismo*. For a recent critique of this aspect of Unamuno's text, see Labanyi, "Nation, Narration, Naturalization."
 - 6 In his later works he would abandon the occasional anti-Castilian overtones of *En torno al casticismo* for an aggressive Castilian mystique. The following passage from "La crisis actual del patriotismo español" (1905) provides a good example of Unamuno's changing positions on this matter: "Sean cuales fueren las deficiencias que para la vida de la cultura moderna tenga el pueblo castellano, es preciso confesar que a su generosidad, a su sentido impositivo, a su empeño por imponer a otros sus creencias, debió su predominancia" [Whatever the Castilian people's deficiencies for the life of modern culture, it is necessary to confess that they owe their superiority to their generosity, to their sense of imposition, and to their determination to impose their beliefs upon others] (*Obras* 1: 1293).
 - 7 Small wonder, then, that Jo Labanyi recently argued that "by privileging the landscape of Castile as an image of the national soul, the 1898 writers are forging [...] a new brand of nationalist sentiment which proposes a supposed geographic uniformity as a way of naturalizing a belief in the need for cultural uniformity" ("Nation, Narration, Naturalization" 133). For a general discussion of the myths of the 1898 Generation, see Abellán's *Sociología del 98* (38-46); for a specific discussion of the mythification of Castile in the 1898 authors, see Varela 145-76.
 - 8 Unamuno would later recant his calls to kill Don Quixote in *Vida de Don Quijote y Sancho*, chapter LXIV, part II, where he begs for Don Quixote's pardon (476),

here a completely autonomous character that only bears some resemblance to Cervantes's. For an understanding (and a critique) of Quixotism as a heroic, nationalist idealism in the early twentieth-century essay, see Britt Arredondo.

- 9 See, among many other works, *Vida de Don Quijote y Sancho* and *Del sentimiento trágico de la vida*.
- 10 Although Freud revised his early account of mourning in later writings such as *The Ego and the Id* (1923), the process described in "Mourning and Melancholia" can help us better understand Unamuno's efforts to relinquish emotional ties to *casticismo*: "Reality-testing has shown that the loved object no longer exists, and it proceeds to demand that all libido shall be withdrawn from its attachments to that object [...] Nevertheless its orders cannot be obeyed at once [...] Each single one of the memories and expectations in which the libido is bound to the object is brought up and hypercatheted, and detachment of the libido is accomplished in respect of it [...] The fact is, however, that when the work of mourning is completed the ego becomes free and uninhibited again" (245). For an important revision of Freud's early mourning theory that reformulates his distinction between mourning and melancholia, see Abraham and Torok.
- 11 Carlos Serrano resolves this contradiction between Herder's theory of *Volksgeist* and Rousseau's theory of social contract by claiming that Unamuno did not perceive these theories as contradictory, but rather as complementary and compatible with his socialist ideology (Serrano, "Entre Herder y Rousseau" 195).
- 12 In fact, this linguistic neo-imperialism can be traced back to Unamuno's 1894 claim that *Martín Fierro*, the great epic of Argentinean literature, was a poem "español hasta los tuétanos" [Spanish to the marrow] (*Obras* 4: 719). For his part, José Luis Venegas convincingly demonstrates that the model for the assimilation of difference and the presentation of a Hispanic cultural community as given can be found in Unamuno's cultivation of the epistolary genre. Other relevant sources for analyzing and contextualizing Unamuno's neo-imperialist view of Latin American literature and history include Fiddian 88–93; Loureiro, "Spanish Nationalism"; and Santos-Rivero. For a contrasting, more positive view of Unamuno's engagement with Spanish American culture that nonetheless smooths over his neo-imperial propensities, see Maíz.
- 13 It is beyond the scope of this chapter to discuss the complex and changing relationship between Unamuno and Catalan culture in detail. For a recent engaging account, see Bastons i Vivanco's dissertation "Unamuno i la cultura catalana."
- 14 For a brief study and selection of Unamuno's correspondence with Catalan modernist writers, see Bastons i Vivanco's "Unamuno y los modernistas catalanes." Unamuno and Maragall exchanged forty letters between 1900 and 1911, all of them published in *Epistolario y escritos complementarios: Unamuno-Maragall*. Their respective visions of Spain are aptly exposed in an article by Lladonosa Vall-Llebrera.

CHAPTER THREE

Fin-de-Siècle Imperial Melancholia: Ángel Ganivet's *Idearium español*

Theorizing Imperial Ambivalence

Spanish imperialism in the Americas was a selfless endeavor that, despite being misguided, greatly benefited the colonies in the long run. That, at least, is the ambivalent characterization of the early modern Spanish Empire that Ángel Ganivet (1865–1898) offers in his essay *Idearium español* (1897), a work that has been described as “el texto clásico y fundante del nacionalismo español” [the classic and founding text of Spanish nationalism] (Abellán, “Introducción” 15). Written and published in the midst of the imperial crisis sparked by the Cuban War of Independence (1895–1898), *Idearium español* addresses Spain’s transition from an imperial to a post-imperial nation in a curious manner. While it remains silent about Spain’s “new colonialism” in the nineteenth century in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines, it has much to say about other European colonialisms in Africa and Spain’s “old colonialism” in the Americas – that is, about the colonial practices that took place in the territories of what contemporaries knew as the *Monarquía hispánica*.

In addition to various references to British imperialism (123–24), Belgian imperialism in Africa (139), and the status of Spain’s former colonies in Latin America (202–16, 226–27), one often finds the early modern Spanish Empire metonymically associated with some of its main figures (from Charles V and Philip II to the conquistadors) and cultural dispositions (the spirit of conquest itself).¹ But one would be hard pressed to find a single reference to the system of administrative domination and fiscal exploitation that Spanish Liberals established in their colonies in the Antilles and the Pacific in the mid-nineteenth century. This system, which was based upon the enslavement of African peoples in the Antilles and the forced labor of Filipino peasants, the fiscal pillaging of local treasuries, and the political repression of the rights and aspirations of colonial societies, saw its successful institutionalization between 1858 and 1861. Shortly thereafter,

it revealed its many weaknesses – just recall that the Ten Year’s War against Spain broke out in eastern Cuba a mere seven years later in 1868.² By 1897, when *Idearium español* was published, the definitive crisis of the nineteenth-century Spanish colonial system was evident to all, but Ganivet only made occasional references to it in his works, characterizing it as a pre-modern colonial system, and thus inherently “spiritual” and generous, as if it were an idealized continuation of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century empire.³

In this chapter, I will examine *Idearium español*’s fixation with the early modern Spanish Empire in the context of Spain’s transition from an imperial state to a post-imperial one, paying special attention to the author’s ambivalent relationship to the imperial dimension of Spanish national identity. Succinctly put, I will argue that the essay relates to the loss of imperial ideals in a manner that resonates with Freud’s account of melancholia. As Freud remarked, when a melancholic tie is formed with a lost object, “the relation to the object is no simple one; it is complicated by the conflict due to ambivalence” (256). As we shall see in what follows, the identification process associated with melancholia provides the key to explaining why the symbolic loss of a series of thoroughly idealized imperial values, which Ganivet ambivalently experienced, is such a crucial element in the formation of Spanish national identity.

That *fin-de-siècle* intellectuals ambivalently related to a soon-to-be-lost Spanish Empire, that they simultaneously projected the opposing affects of love and hate upon the signifiers of imperial power, should come as no a surprise. On the one hand, we should keep in mind that in the late 1890s imperialism did not have the charge of immorality and illegitimacy that it has today. In an age when, as Eric Hobsbawm notes, “about one-quarter of the globe’s land surface was distributed and redistributed as colonies among a half-dozen states” (*The Age of Empire* 59), empire was more an object of desire than a cause for abjection. As a result, it also became a crucial component in the national imaginaries of capitalist countries: “la posesión de un imperio pasó a ser el criterio supremo para valorar, no ya a un Estado, sino a la nación a la que representaba” [the possession of an empire became the undisputed standard by which to evaluate not only a State but also the nation that it represented] (Álvarez Junco, *Mater dolorosa* 503). On the other hand, as we have seen with Unamuno, imperialism was an obsolete tool for political legitimation because the core values of the modern Spanish idea of empire were identified with those of traditional, reactionary social forces (the commercial oligarchy, the military, and the religious orders). Ambivalence thus marked how many Spanish intellectuals related to empire, but for each of them it acquired its own specific form. The case of Ganivet, for instance, contrasts with that of Unamuno. For Unamuno, ambivalence

toward empire manifested itself in two different moments and textualities (recall the fleeting anti-imperialist stance of *En torno al casticismo* and the cultural neo-imperialism of his later, Hispanist work). However, Ganivet's *Idearium español* internalizes the loss of imperial ideals in such a way that the early modern Spanish Empire is often valorized and devalued in the same sentence or paragraph.

Although Ganivet's ambivalence toward empire in *Idearium español* has not been theorized as such (that is, as a specific way of relating to the loss of imperial ideals), it certainly has informed the secondary literature on his views on the subject of colonialism. As several critics have noted, issues of imperialism and colonialism lie at the heart of Ganivet's fiction and essays (particularly, his novel *La conquista del reino de Maya por el último conquistador español Pío Cid* [1897] and *Idearium español*). Critics thus far have produced two mutually incompatible sets of interpretations. Some critics have argued that Ganivet's works are undoubtedly anti-colonialist and that they question Western conceptions of progress, while others have contended that there is a more or less covert colonialism present.⁴ In between these diametrically opposed interpretations, one finds a number of critics that try to account for both the imperialist and anti-imperialist elements in Ganivet's works, thematizing ambivalence as an integral part of his writings.⁵ Concerning *Idearium español* more specifically, such ambivalence is hinted at in readings that interpret the essay as a nationalist mystique that seeks to recover Spain's former greatness (Shaw 58) and as a "call for national renewal [that] reflects an intellectual-cultural will to power in the former and contemporary colonies" (Aronna 64).

I would like to take these critical allusions to *Idearium español*'s "imperial ambivalence" one step further. Like Shaw and Aronna, I will assume that ambivalence structures Ganivet's thoughts on empire, but I would like to propose a theory that not only registers such ambivalence, but explains it. In other words, I will integrate ambivalence into a more general account of the ways in which the claims of the imperial past encroach upon *Idearium español*'s wish for a strong national identity. The first step in proposing such a theory will consist in asking how Ganivet characterizes Spain's expansion in the Americas and elsewhere. Secondly, I will examine the function such expansion has in his theory of a Spanish spiritual community that is about to lose its last imperial remains. As I have already suggested, we shall find him using distinctly melancholic strategies that come to terms with the loss of imperial ideals not by disavowing them but by identifying with them.

Independence, Expansion, Modernity

As several commentators have pointed out, it is difficult to read *Idearium español* without making reference to Unamuno's *En torno al casticismo*. Indeed, the two essays display a number of striking similarities: they are both mainly concerned with the so-called "problem of Spain," they employ a similar method of study (the consideration of Spain's ills as an eminently psychological problem), they arrive at an equally pessimistic diagnosis of the state of Spanish society (which in both texts is seen as undergoing a spiritual crisis and as lacking a guiding principle) and, finally, they offer a comparable solution to Spain's national crisis (which can be summarized as a call for greater collective self-knowledge) (Ramsden, *1898 Movement* 12–17; Fox, "Introducción" 26). These parallels notwithstanding, it bears emphasis that many of *Idearium español's* conceptual incongruities and stylistic deficiencies are not present in *En torno al casticismo*, a work whose literary stature seems well above that of Ganivet's.⁶

As a whole, and taken as ideological performances, both Unamuno and Ganivet's projects can be described as attempts at national reconstruction based on an idealist, foundational narrative that established a necessary link between the political community's origin and its destiny. In the case of *Idearium español*, what Ganivet calls "la restauración de la vida espiritual de España" [the restoration of Spain's spiritual life] (257) requires that Spaniards conduct themselves in accordance with the nation's soul or moral being, an entity that has two main components: one, a Senecan type of stoicism that under Arabic influence developed into Christian mysticism and fanaticism (97–100), and two, what he calls the "territorial spirit of independence" (120–28). At the innermost core of Spanish national character we thus find two contradictory dispositions: an impulse toward conquest and subjugation (derived from Christian fanaticism), and a drive toward retreat and autonomy (derived from the spirit of independence). As Ramsden puts it, "on the one hand there is the crusading fervour that calls for expansion; on the other hand there is the territorial spirit of independence that demands withdrawal" (*Ángel Ganivet* 86).

In acknowledging that conquest and withdrawal are crucial ingredients in Ganivet's account of the Spanish nation, one recognizes a fundamentally ambivalent libidinal structure in the essay and confronts the question of how Spain's imperial practices in Latin America and elsewhere are related. The issue here, as elsewhere in the essay, will be to assess whether this particular set of events (Spain's past imperial actions) is in agreement or contradiction with the fundamental traits of the Spanish national character. The centrality that national character, or the national soul, has

in the story of peoplehood told by *Idearium español* can be gauged from both a narrative and ethical perspective. From a narrative viewpoint, it is a major “constitutive event” in that it is “necessary for the story, driving it forward” (Abbott 24). Indeed, without the events surrounding the creation, manifestation, and future development of the national soul, *Idearium español* would tell an altogether different story. But the importance of the national soul is no less apparent from a moral viewpoint, for *Idearium español* is what political theorist Rogers Smith describes as an “ethically constitutive” story, that is, a narrative that presents “membership in a particular people as somehow intrinsic to who its members really are, because of traits that are imbued with ethical significance” (64).

Smith’s account of political membership is helpful in explaining the abundance of essentialist cultural references in *fin-de-siècle* Spanish national projects. According to Smith, most narratives of peoplehood blend economic, political, and ethically constitutive elements to moderate the repressive, dogmatic senses of political community attached to the affirmation of particularistic, self-contained identities (59–60). But *Idearium español* – like *En torno al casticismo* – offers little in the way of economic or political arguments. When Ganivet seeks to inspire trust and a belief in the worth of his proposed political community (a Spain with a restored spiritual life), he does so not by arguing for the economic and political benefits that such political community would bring to its members but by arguing that Spaniards should reclaim those components of Spanish history (Senecan stoicism and the territorial spirit of independence) that are constitutive of Spaniards’ identities. In fact, like many of his contemporaries, he profoundly distrusts the institutional arrangements of the Restoration regime and thus sees politics as a secondary, derivative issue when compared to the discourse on identity. Politics is incidental, while identity is primary (despite always being a retrospective construction – a point which seems to elude Ganivet):

Los poderes [públicos] no son más que andamiajes [...] lo esencial es la obra que, ya de un modo ya de otro, se ejecuta. La obra de restauración de España está muy cerca del cimiento.

[Public] powers are nothing more than the scaffolding [...] what is essential is the work that, in one way or another, gets done. The work of Spain’s restoration is very close to the foundations]. (243)

As far as economic benefits are concerned, *Idearium español*’s primary focus on collective ethics and stoic virtues relegates the promise of prosperity to the realm of the accidental. In his *sui generis* summary of Seneca’s teachings, Ganivet counsels his readers thus:

No te dejes vencer por nada extraño a tu espíritu; piensa, en medio de los accidentes de la vida, que tienes dentro de ti una fuerza madre, algo fuerte e indestructible, como un eje diamantino, alrededor del cual giran los hechos mezquinos que forman la trama del diario vivir.

[Do not let yourself be conquered by anything that is foreign to your own spirit; think, in the midst of the vicissitudes of life, that you have within you a constituent force, something strong and indestructible, a sort of diamond-like axis around which the miserable facts that make up the texture of daily life revolve]. (85–86)

Like Dr. Andrey Yefimitch Ragin, the protagonist of Anton Chekhov's unsettling novella "Ward no. 6" (1892), Ganivet valorizes certain virtues of the self (asceticism and inner peace) over the foolishness of a materialist world. But the main problem with Andrey Yefimitch's stoicism, as with that of Ganivet's *Idearium español*, is that the consolation that stoic principles may bring to the mediocrity and corruption of the world is illusory. This was well understood by Ivan Dmitritch Gromov, the well-educated paranoid locked up in Ward no. 6. For him, it was clear that stoic principles were hardly plausible in a modern (i.e. capitalist) context: "A doctrine which advocates indifference to wealth and to the comforts of life, and a contempt for suffering and death, is quite unintelligible to the vast majority of men, since that majority has never known wealth or the comforts of life" (73). The Senecan type of stoicism advocated by *Idearium español*, much like the kind defended by Andrey Yefimitch, was surely a symptom of *fin-de-siècle*, unevenly modernized societies (such as Russia and Spain), but it could hardly serve as a valid model for the construction of the self.⁷

A helpful contrast to Ganivet's and Chekov's narratives about the impossibility of adapting to a fully modernized society can be seen in Max Weber's *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. While Weber's description of the Protestant ethic rationalizes the ascent of the bourgeoisie to power and proposes a model for self-construction that is valid in a modern, capitalist context, *Idearium español* clearly falls short in this respect. Instead, it foreshadows the painful deficiencies of early twentieth-century Spanish national projects, which sought to evade contemporary economic and political issues by eternalizing a fragment of Spain's past (I have in mind here Azorín's *El alma castellana*, Unamuno's *En torno al casticismo*, or Maeztu's *Defensa de la Hispanidad*).

The lack of political and economic elements in *Idearium español*, together with the narrative and ethical centrality of the national soul, brings with it a puzzling paradox: the essay simultaneously affirms the value of a crucial element in the success of Spanish imperialism (the expansionism

inherent in Christian fervor) and a fundamental ingredient in its demise (the withdrawal from foreign lands). This striking juxtaposition of incongruous ideas can be seen in the essay's depictions of some of the main protagonists and events of the colonization of the Americas. For instance, Ganivet reacts to the European demonization of the conquistadors – specifically Heinrich Heine's depiction of Hernán Cortés as a “robber captain” in his *Romanzero* (1851) – by mounting a blanket defense of the Spanish conquest as an act totally consistent with the nation's crusading fervor. This defense of Spanish colonialism, which was harshly criticized by Unamuno in their 1898 epistolary exchange (*El porvenir* 186, 215), is based on the characterization of the conquistadors as “legítimos guerrilleros” [legitimate guerrilla warriors] (138) who conquered “por impulso natural hacia la independencia, sin otro propósito que demostrar la grandeza oculta dentro de la pequeñez aparente” [by a natural impulse toward independence, with no other purpose than to show greatness hidden within apparent insignificance] (139).⁸ Lamenting Europe's incomprehension of the conquistadors, Ganivet adds:

Cuando Europa, pues, habituada a la acción regular de la milicia y del comercio, ve a unos cuantos aventureros lanzarse a la conquista de un gran territorio, no pudiendo o no queriendo comprender la fuerza ideal que les anima, los toma por salteadores de caminos e interpreta las crueldades que por acaso cometan, no como azares del combate, sino como revelación de instintos vulgares, sanguinarios [...].

[When Europe, accustomed to the regular action of military forces and commerce, sees a handful of adventurers embark upon the conquest of a great territory, it is incapable or unwilling to understand the ideal force that inspires them, and instead takes them for highway robbers and interprets the cruelties they may have committed not as the vicissitudes of combat but as the revelation of vulgar, blood-thirsty instincts {...}]. (140–41)

The *ad hominem* quality of Ganivet's vindication of the conquistador's idealism contradicts not only the “European view” of Spanish colonialism (a notoriously fuzzy abstraction that refers to the perspective of a fully modernized society) but also – and this is what is both significant and puzzling – his own general view of the conquest and colonization of the Americas. Shortly before and after the above-quoted apology of Spanish colonialism, Ganivet rejects the entire imperial enterprise as a deviation from the territorial spirit of independence, which is conceived as a product of physical conditions, a result of the fact that “los territorios tienen un carácter natural que depende del espesor y composición de su masa” [territories have a natural character

that is a function of the thickness and composition of its mass] (121). In Ganivet's historical narrative, Spain's American empire acquires the status of a historical error and of an unnatural, un-Spanish endeavor insofar as it contravened the ideals of self-government and non-aggression inherent in the notion of independence. "Apenas constituida la nación," he writes,

nuestro espíritu se sale del cauce que le estaba marcado y se derrama por todo el mundo en busca de glorias exteriores y vanas, quedando la nación convertida en un cuartel de reserva, en un hospital de inválidos, en un semillero de mendigos.

[As soon as the nation constituted itself, our spirit overflowed its boundaries and spilled into the whole world in search for vain, exterior glories, transforming the nation into a reserve barrack, a hospital for the disabled, and a hotbed for beggars]. (174)

As this quotation suggests, the territorial spirit of independence, which is one of the components of the national soul, has both an explanatory and a normative dimension. A notion redolent of Hegel and Taine, the spirit of independence provides the key to Spain's history and makes it intelligible:

la evolución ideal de España se explica sólo cuando se contrastan todos los hechos exteriores de su historia con el espíritu permanente, invariable, que el territorio crea, infunde, mantiene en nosotros.

[Spain's ideal evolution can only be explained when all of the exterior facts of its history are contrasted with the permanent, invariable spirit that the land creates, instills and maintains in us]. (120)

But the revitalization of the spirit of independence, its renewed consideration as a guiding principle for national action, is also considered a *sine qua non* condition for the nation's future regeneration, which is envisioned as a strict return to tradition:

España comienza ahora una nueva evolución o ha de comenzarla en breve y en ella ha de continuar siendo la España tradicional [...] Pero lo que nosotros debemos tomar de la tradición es lo que ella nos da o impone: el espíritu.

[Spain is now starting, or should start momentarily, a new stage in its evolution in which it has to remain the traditional Spain {...} But what we have to take from tradition is that which it gives us or imposes upon us: the spirit]. (232)

Simultaneously justifying the conquistadors and disavowing Spanish imperialism, *Idearium español* displays an ambivalence concerning empire that comes to the fore more clearly in its general evocation of the conquest of the Americas. Castilian expansion across the Atlantic figures both as an enterprise rooted in the depths of the national soul and as an event imposed by exterior forces (identified here, rather unoriginally, with God's providential designs):

Los descubrimientos y conquistas en América, que tan profunda brecha nos abrieron, tenían también su justificación en nuestro carácter, en nuestra fe y en la fatalidad providencial con que nos cayó sobre los hombros tan pesada carga.

[The discoveries and conquests in America, which opened such a profound fissure in us, also had their justification in our character, in our faith, and in the providential fatality with which such a heavy burden fell upon our shoulders]. (181)

Ganivet's simultaneous attraction to, and rejection of, empire is likewise exemplified in his observations about the Habsburg monarchs most responsible for expansion: whereas Charles V is seen as a shrewd yet foreign monarch who never understood the native territorial spirit of independence "porque él miraba a España desde fuera y nos atribuía las mismas ambiciones que a él, nacido en el centro del continente, le atormentaban" [because, born in the center of the continent, he looked at Spain from the outside and attributed to us the same ambitions that tormented him] (185), Philip II appears in a more favorable light, as a coherent, decidedly Spanish, idealist king who was willing to "arriesgar el dominio material por sostener el imperio de la religión" [risk material dominance in order to perpetuate the empire of religion] (187).

The opposition between a material order (the accumulation of land) and an ideal order of things (here identified with religion) is central to the essay's argument, for it provides the terms with which Ganivet imagines a solution to Spain's decadence and the role that imperialism played in it. It is already possible to discern this conflict between materialism and idealism in the threefold structure of *Idearium español* (each section simply titled "A," "B," and "C"): the preference for the ideal order of things that Ganivet shows in the first two parts, where he relates the events surrounding the constitution of the national soul and its manifestation in four spheres of national activity (military, legal, artistic, and foreign policy; see 83–237), culminates in the third part, where he affirms that "nuestro papel histórico nos obliga a transformar nuestra acción de material en espiritual" [our historical role

oblige us to transform our material actions into spiritual ones] (240). He goes on to add:

España ha sido la primera nación europea engrandecida por la política de expansión y conquista; ha sido la primera en decaer y terminar su evolución material, desparramándose por extensos territorios y es la primera que tiene ahora que trabajar en una restauración política y social de un orden completamente nuevo.

[Spain has been the first European nation to be aggrandized by pursuing a politics of expansion and conquest; it has been the first to decline and conclude its material evolution, spreading itself over extensive territories, and now it is the first that has to work for the political and social restoration of a completely new order]. (240-41)

In this new, spiritual order where Spain will regenerate itself and regain its lost preeminence – where it will again be “the first” – its former colonies play an important if subordinated role since they are to be the object of an intellectual pedagogy. With utopian fervor and inflated rhetoric, Ganivet writes:

[...] si por el solo esfuerzo de la inteligencia lográsemos reconstituir la unión familiar de todos los pueblos hispánicos e infundir en ellos el culto de unos mismos ideales, de nuestros ideales, cumpliríamos con una gran misión histórica, y daríamos vida a una creación, grande, original, nueva en los fastos políticos; y al cumplir esa misión no trabajaríamos en beneficio de una idea generosa, pero sin utilidad práctica, sino que trabajaríamos por nuestros intereses, por intereses más trascendentales que la conquista de unos cuantos pedazos de territorio.

[{...} if through the exclusive effort of our intelligence we were able to reconstitute the union of all Hispanic peoples into a single family and inspire in them the cult of the same ideals, of our ideals, we would accomplish a great historical mission and we would give life to an awesome, original, and new creation in the annals of politics; and by accomplishing such a mission we would not be working in the service of a generous idea devoid of practical utility, but rather in the service of our own interests, interests that transcend the conquest of a few tracts of land]. (242)

This utopian vision of Spanish-American fraternity, with its implied affirmation of Spain’s cultural hegemony over Latin American nations, relates on the one hand to the liberal regenerators’ efforts to reconstruct

the nation by strengthening the existing cultural ties with Latin America, and on the other to Ganivet's visceral rejection of modernity (note here that the celebration of ideals and intelligence is opposed to territorial expansion, which, as we shall see, is identified with modern imperial plunder).⁹

Born in a small provincial town (Granada in 1864), Ganivet first came into contact with modern, urban life while holding diplomatic posts in Antwerp, Helsinki, and Riga between July 1892 and November 1898. During this short period of time, he composed and published all of his major works. In contrast to the Baudelaire of *Les Fleurs du Mal* (1857) who produced lyric poetry out of the shock experience of modern life – “the kind that manifests itself in the standardized, denatured life of the civilized masses” (Benjamin 314) – Ganivet invariably relates to such experience with contempt, disgust, and no small amount of anxiety.¹⁰ For him, the realm of ideals (of philosophy, religion, art, and poetry) and the material realities of modern life are not only opposed but incompatible. When aspects of modern experience, such as the industrialization of production, the rise of private ownership and, most importantly for us, the expansion of capitalist imperialism appear in *Idearium español*, they are systematically depicted as crass, materialistic developments that are doomed to failure.¹¹ Hence Ganivet's professed loathing of both private and collective property and his declared preference for moneylenders and artisans over bankers and industrial workers (142–45). Hence, too, his condemnation of the second phase of European expansion (c.1870–1914) that was based on the economic exploitation of Asia and Africa. The Dutch, British, and Belgian empires (the latter familiar to Ganivet thanks to his stay in Antwerp) are critiqued as debased versions of the Spanish Empire, as political structures whose “colonización se transformó en negocio comercial, en algo útil, práctico, sin duda, pero que ya no era tan noble” [method of colonization was transformed into a commercial venture, into something which was surely useful and practical, but which was not so noble] (139). “Todo el progreso moderno,” writes Ganivet, “es inseguro, porque no se basa sobre ideas, sino sobre la destrucción de la propiedad fija en beneficio de la propiedad móvil” [Modern progress is unstable because it is not built on ideas, but rather on the destruction of fixed property in the interest of mobile property] (143). However, the Spanish Empire of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, precisely by virtue of its “early modern” character, is exempt from such accusations of mutability and destruction.

There are two very different methods of colonization for Ganivet: an earlier method that incorporates colonial subjects into European civilization and a modern method that exploits wealth and creates markets. The first method is carried out by “los antiguos conquistadores” [the old conquistadors], the second by “los modernos comerciantes” [modern traders] (228). Reduced

to its most simple expression, Ganivet's thesis can be condensed in the following sentence:

La verdadera colonia debe costar algo a la metrópoli, puesto que colonizar no es ir al negocio, sino civilizar pueblos y dar expansión a las ideas.

[The true colony should cost the metropolis something, for to colonize is not to be in business but rather to civilize peoples and expand ideas].
(227)

The extent to which Ganivet silences the material aspects of the nineteenth-century Spanish imperial experience in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines while idealizing the early modern empire in America can be apprehended by recalling Hannah Arendt's description of imperialism as an ideology driven by economic expansion. In *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, she argues that "expansion as a permanent and supreme aim of politics is the central political idea of imperialism" (125) and goes on to observe the contradictions and political limitations inherent in political entities (empires) whose logic is based on an economic concept: "this concept [expansion] is not really political at all, but has its origin in the realm of business speculation, where expansion meant the permanent broadening of industrial production and economic transactions characteristic of the nineteenth century" (125). Ganivet might have chosen to speak of "the expansion of ideas" instead of the expansion of economic markets, but the truth of the matter is that the profit motive had been a steady companion of Spanish colonialism since Columbus's first voyage to the nineteenth-century colonial enterprises in the Caribbean and the Pacific. Commenting on the latter, a recent historical account strikes at the heart of Ganivet's idealization by remarking that "las ayudas a la metrópoli constituyeron el principal interés del Estado en relación con sus remotas posesiones de las Antillas y del mar de China" [the State's main interest in its remote possessions in the Antilles and the South China Sea resided in their economic assistance to the metropolis] (Fradera, *Colonias* 547).

In his highly selective and deeply nationalistic criticism of modern European imperialism, Ganivet radicalizes the views of those nineteenth-century advocates of the Spanish imperial tradition, such as José del Perojo, Rafael María de Labra and Víctor Balaguer, who "rejected the vision of capitalist modernity articulated by [Adam] Smith and others – one based on individual liberty, initiative, and accumulation of wealth – in favor of the broader cultural impact of Spain on conquered lands and peoples" (Schmidt-Nowara, *The Conquest* 34). Indeed, the logic of the nineteenth-century

vindication of Spain's civilizing mission in the Americas is pushed to its limits in *Idearium español*, where it is represented as both a historical error (insofar as it contravenes the spirit of independence) and a self-sacrificing endeavor whose benefits are only apparent in the colonies:

la antigua colonización representa para la metrópoli una pérdida de fuerzas que a primera vista no ofrecen un resultado beneficioso, pero que a la larga fructifican donde deben fructificar, esto es, en las colonias.

[the earlier colonization represents a loss of strength for the metropolis, one that at first glance does not offer a beneficial result, but that in the long run proves fruitful where it should, that is, in the colonies]. (228)

This ambivalent flight from the materiality of modern imperialism into the realm of pure ideas that purportedly characterized the early modern Spanish Empire surely implies a desire to escape from the commodification of modernity, but it also indicates a retreat into the realm of interiority, into a self devoid of contingencies and exterior constraints.¹² In order to find a solution to the dilemmas posed by modern colonialism to the national self, Ganivet advocates a return to the classics. In one of his most oft-quoted passages, he summarizes his project for national regeneration by nationalizing Augustine's notion of the inner man: "Noli foras ire; in interiore Hispaniae habitat veritas" (237). Thus, the self created out of an antagonism to the commodification of modern life and the decadence of the imperial nation is expressed as a return to interiority, as a recognition that truth dwells within the borders of the Iberian Peninsula. What could be less imperialistic than this inward-looking program for national regeneration? But if this is true, how is one to understand the last assertion of the essay, where Ganivet imagines the regenerated Spanish self as one that will find "una inmensidad de pueblos hermanos a quienes marcar con el sello de nuestro espíritu" [an immensity of fellow peoples upon whom we can impress the stamp of our spirit] (268)? What could be more imperialistic than this aspiration to leave a (cultural) mark on the peoples of Latin America?

Much like Unamuno's focus on the Spanish people's *intrahistoria*, Ganivet's emphasis on inner regeneration can be read as a response to the new militarist nationalism that was clinging to the idea of empire. As Enric Ucelay-Da Cal observes, "If the militarists wanted to regain a sense of outer projection of the state as a way of renewing nationhood, and thereby developing mass participation in public affairs, the left rejected anything but the exploration of inner space, the forgotten Spain that was the 'origin of the race'" ("The Restoration" 130). The task that young, heterodox intellectuals

like Unamuno and Ganivet had set for themselves was the construction of new senses of peoplehood out of the Restoration's prevailing sense of political identity – one that was Catholic, monarchic, and imperialistic. In *Idearium español*, however, this task remains even less complete than in *En torno al casticismo*. In Ganivet's political imagination the new Spanish self certainly renounces action in favor of ideas but, as we have seen, it does not really break with imperial values. In fact, the cultural and civilizing values that were part and parcel of Spanish imperialism are internalized as part of the new Spanish self: they are the ideals with which Latin American nations are supposed to identify (*Idearium español* 242).

The Paradox of Empire and Melancholia

In an attempt to solve what we might call “the paradox of empire” in *Idearium español*, the simultaneous celebration and devaluation of imperial ideals as constituent elements of the national soul, I turn again to Freud's “Mourning and Melancholia” (1917). We have seen that *En torno al casticismo* is a text that reflects a Freudian economy of mourning, where the central aim is to sever ties with imperial ideals and substitute them with the consoling fiction of *intrahistoria*. *Idearium español*, in contrast, is a melancholic text that comes to terms with the loss of imperial ideals not by disavowing them, but rather by identifying with them.

In Freud's early theories, melancholia names a pathological failure to mourn, one that is characterized by feelings of self-aggression and self-punishment that arise from an object-relation blemished by ambivalence. This ambivalence originates in “all those situations of being slighted, neglected or disappointed, which can import opposed feelings of love and hate into the relationship” (251) and precludes the possibility of liberating the ego from its libidinal attachment to the lost object. As Freud puts it:

The object-cathexis proved to have little power of resistance and was brought to an end. But the free libido was not displaced on to another object; it was withdrawn into the ego. There, however, it was not employed in any unspecified way, but served to establish an *identification* of the ego with the abandoned object. Thus the shadow of the object fell upon the ego, and the latter could henceforth be judged by a special agency, as though it were an object, the forsaken object. In this way an object-loss was transformed into an ego-loss and the conflict between the ego and the loved person into a cleavage between the critical activity of the ego and the ego as altered by identification. (249; emphasis in orig.)

The internal work of melancholia thus entails a double process. On the one hand, the melancholic ego strengthens the connection with the lost object (here imperial ideals) by withdrawing it into the ego (a process that recalls Ganivet's return to interiority) and adopting some of its features. On the other hand, such identification establishes a division within the psyche, one that is responsible for the melancholic's internalization of aggression. Divided into the ego, the id, and a "critical agency" (what Freud would later call the superego), the psyche is transformed into a stage where both a love relation (the identification with the object) and a hate relation (the aggression of the "critical agency" against the ego) are performed.¹³

Bearing this process in mind, it is not difficult to see that there are several aspects of *Idearium español* that make it a paradigmatic melancholic text. First and foremost, as we have seen, the essay constitutes a textbook example of the ambivalence Freud describes as a precondition of melancholia. Even Spain's empire in the Americas during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, for all of its glory and supposedly lofty ideals, figures as a historical error and as a burden. The ambivalent characteristic of melancholia, Freud tells us, "is either constitutional [...] or else it proceeds precisely from those experiences that involved the threat of losing the object" (256). Either possibility seems pertinent to explain the ambivalence concerning empire in *Idearium español*: ambivalence structures, at its most basic level, Ganivet's relation to empire, but it can also be seen as a reaction to the threat of losing the last colonies. In its constitutional dimension, ambivalence is like a dye that seeps into every sentence that recalls events or figures associated with empire. The above-quoted depictions of the discovery and conquest of the Americas are exemplary here, for these occurrences simultaneously appear as blessings and curses, as events that had their justification in the Spanish national character and that were simultaneously considered burdens imposed by fatality (181). At the same time, there is textual evidence that these feelings of love and hate may have been activated by the threat of being dispossessed of the last colonies. Not only is *Idearium español* written in the summer of 1896, when all of the participants in the war saw the United States's intervention (and thus the impending loss of the colonies) as only a matter of time (Balfour, *The End* 21),¹⁴ but the essay itself works within the assumption that sovereignty over the last colonies will be lost in the near future:

sólo podemos aspirar a que el mantenimiento de nuestra dominación no nos cueste demasiados sacrificios, y para ello hemos de [...] renunciar a la dominación "materialista" [...] y conceder más importancia que a la administración directa de las colonias por la metrópoli, a la conservación de nuestro prestigio.

[we can only hope that maintaining our dominance will not imply too many sacrifices on our part, and for this we must {...} renounce the “materialist” domination of the colonies {...} and concede greater importance to the conservation of our prestige rather than to the direct metropolitan administration of the colonies]. (228)

Whether constitutional or contingent, there can be little doubt that the relationship of *Idearium español* to empire is one marred by ambivalence.

Second, Ganivet’s account of the regenerated Spanish self’s inner world bears numerous traces of the kind of identification Freud describes, in which the ego takes on the characteristics of the lost object. As we have already seen, the regenerated Spanish self is littered with tropes suggestive of an imperial will to power. It is a self that relishes the prospect not only of imposing its cultural values on the Latin American nations (242), which will then be marked with “el sello de nuestro espíritu” [the stamp of our spirit] (268), but also of attempting a future conquest of Africa once the nation’s regeneration is complete. Qualifying his earlier prescription for national introspection, Ganivet leaves the door open for a future mission in Africa in *El porvenir de España*:

Yo decía también que convendría cerrar todas las puertas para que España no escape, y, sin embargo, contra mi deseo, dejo una entornada, la de África, pensando en el porvenir.

[I also said that it would be better to close all doors so that Spain does not escape, and yet, thinking about the future, I am leaving one ajar against my wishes, the door to Africa]. (205)

As we know, this very modest “conquest” of Africa happened in the end more by accident than by political will when Spain accepted a limited sphere of influence in northern Morocco by virtue of the Treaty of Algeciras in 1906.¹⁵

Third, and finally, the essay abounds in examples of the internalized aggression that Freud sees as characteristic of melancholic subjects. The inhibition of the melancholic’s ego, what Freud calls “a lowering of the self-regarding feelings to a degree that finds utterance in self-reproaches and self-revilings” (244), is most evident in the last part of the essay, where Ganivet directs numerous accusations against the national self (of which he is, of course, a part). For instance, Ganivet complains that “vivimos en perpetua guerra civil” [we live in perpetual civil war] (239). And he adds that this state of internal strife is generated by the Spaniards’ inability to adopt new, constructive ideas:

las ideas, en vez de servir para crear obras durables [...] sirven para destruirlo todo, para asolarlo todo, para aniquilarlo todo, pereciendo ellas también entre las ruinas.

[ideas, instead of being used to create durable works {...} are used to destroy everything, to devastate everything, to annihilate everything to the point that they too perish among the ruins]. (240)

His precise diagnosis of the Spanish self is that it suffers from aboulia, an “extinción o debilitación grave de la voluntad” (247) [an extinction or grave weakening of the will] that Max Nordau saw as one of the characteristics of degenerates in his famous work *Degeneration* (1895).¹⁶ Nordau described aboulia as “a disinclination to action of any kind, attaining possibly to abhorrence of activity and powerlessness to will” (20), a notion that clearly resonates with Freud’s description of the melancholic’s inner world, which is characterized by “a profoundly painful dejection, cessation of interest in the outside world, loss of the capacity to love, [and] inhibition of all activity” (244). Unable to find a guiding idea, the will of the aboulic nation is paralyzed. It is able to accomplish routine, instinctive acts but fails to bring to fruition more free acts, “como sería intervenir conscientemente en la dirección de los negocios públicos” [as conscious participation in the direction of public affairs would entail] (251). Only a book such as *Idearium español*, full of clear, constructive ideas (what Ganivet calls “ideas redondas” [rounded ideas] as opposed to “ideas picudas” [sharp ideas] [259]), could enable the melancholic to properly mourn the loss of imperial ideals. But, of course, we know that *Idearium español*, an essay that has been described as “a work of intoxicated, therapeutic intellectualization” (Ramsden, *Ángel Ganivet* 150), did not succeed in breaking the melancholic attachment to imperial ideals, just as it did not help Ganivet himself avoid the most extreme form of melancholic self-punishment, suicide.¹⁷

With this, we are now in a position to explain, rather than simply register, the imperial ambivalence that structures the formation of national identity in *Idearium español*. Understood within a Freudian economy of loss, this ambivalence is not simply the result of the essay’s contradictions and shortcomings, but also, and most importantly, the precondition for the formation of a melancholic tie with the forsaken ideals of imperial grandeur. Forced to confront the loss of imperialism as a grounding value of national identity, the story of peoplehood told by *Idearium español* is a narrative that introjects and identifies with such imperial values, adopting their drive for expansion. At the same time, *Idearium español* openly rebels against such identification, emphasizing the need for withdrawal and introspection. One

of the ways in which one can explain the fact that the imperial past figures in the text as both an object of love and hate is, precisely, through Freud's account of melancholia.

If we think back to other texts by Ganivet, we find that this ambivalent and melancholic rendering of past imperial ideals already made an early appearance in the last chapter of *La conquista del reino de Maya*, Ganivet's first novel. When the protagonist, Pío Cid, realizes that he has failed to modernize the imaginary kingdom of Maya according to the principles of nineteenth-century European colonialism (famously summed up by Joseph Conrad in *Heart of Darkness* as "the merry dance of death and trade" [17]), he has a dream in which the ghost of Hernán Cortés appears to him and helps him realize that such (material) failure is indeed a (spiritual) success. As Cortés puts it to Pío Cid,

Conquistar, colonizar, civilizar, no es, pues, otra cosa que infundir el amor al esfuerzo que dignifica al hombre, arrancándole del estado de ignorante quietud en que viviría eternamente. Yo veo pueblos que adquieren tierras y destruyen razas, y establecen industrias, y explotan hombres; pero no veo ya conquistadores desinteresados y colonizadores verdaderos.

[To conquer, colonize and civilize is nothing other than to instill love into the effort that dignifies man, tearing him away from the state of ignorant lethargy in which he would otherwise live eternally. I see people who acquire land and destroy races, who establish industries and exploit men; however, I do not see disinterested conquistadors and true colonizers]. (370)

Cortés, the old conquistador schooled in the "spiritual" values of early Spanish colonialism, redeems Pío Cid, the new conquistador blinded by ideas of modern progress, and helps him to "remontar mi espíritu a esas alturas ideales" [raise {his} spirit to those ideal heights] (368). Much as in *Idearium español*, Pío Cid introjects and identifies with a series of idealized imperial values that are exemplified by Cortés and that primarily had a cultural existence – for such is, presumably, the consistency of those "alturas ideales."

My objective in calling attention to the melancholic form and content of *Idearium español* has not been to argue for or against an imperialistic reading of the essay, but rather to complement previous interpretations by reframing the question of imperialism so as to better observe its ambiguous political implications. Recent evaluations of *Idearium español*'s political meanings have rightly pointed out that Ganivet's essentialist,

Castilian-centered notion of the national soul is deployed at the expense of the stateless nationalist movements that were gaining momentum in the Iberian Peninsula (Labanyi, "Nation" 132; Resina, "A Spectre"). Ganivet's own opinions on the political aspirations of the plurality of cultures that make up the Spanish state bear out these judgments, for he makes clear that no other region may challenge Castile's hegemony. As he wrote in one of the letters of *El porvenir de España*: "Yo soy regionalista del único modo que se debe serlo en nuestro país, esto es, sin aceptar las regiones" [I am a regionalist in the only way one should be a regionalist, that is, without accepting the regions] (228). Tackling the political implications of imperialism, other critics have observed that "it is difficult to overstate the impact that Ganivet's exaltation of Spanish imperialism would have on Spain's later involvement in Africa" (Martin-Márquez 100) and that Ganivet's representation of Africans is unabashedly colonialist (Agawu-Kakraba). All of these ethical and political evaluations of Ganivet's works are certainly important contributions that reveal how an essentialist, reified concept of national community can be consonant with cultural and political imperialism. But if one accepts that ambivalence structures Ganivet's fable of identity from the most general down to the most basic units of discourse, then one should also grant that its political implications cannot be univocal – a feature that perhaps explains the essay's continued success and conflicting interpretations.

In closing, I would like to suggest that what gets lost in these political interpretations is that the story of peoplehood told by *Idearium español* is a narrative that also (but surely not only) seeks to do away – in an admittedly equivocal and insufficient manner – with the Restoration's use of empire as a tool for political legitimation. If we recall the socially symbolic meanings that empire had in Europe at the time, Ganivet's 1897 injunction to concentrate energies within national borders can be seen as nothing less than a call for a new, non-imperialistic type of international policy. For the 1897 Spanish reading public bombarded with imperialistic propaganda, the idea of relinquishing imperial possessions because they were a deviation from the traditional Spanish spirit of independence would certainly have been a surprising if not a clearly anti-patriotic gesture.¹⁸ As we now know, however, it was an anti-imperialistic gesture that, as it was being expressed, was also blatantly ignoring the nineteenth-century Spanish imperial experience in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines, and was indicating a clear drive toward expansion both within the Iberian Peninsula and in Africa. Such, it seems, are the predicaments and shortcomings of the ambivalent, melancholic stories of peoplehood that structured, in part, the national experience in turn-of-the-century Spain.

Notes

- 1 My references to *Idearium español* come from the critical edition prepared by Fernando García Lara, published by Diputación de Granada and Fundación Caja de Granada in 2003.
- 2 This extremely succinct description of the rearticulation of the Spanish colonial model during the nineteenth century is only meant to highlight the material aspects of Spanish imperialism that are completely absent from the pages of *Idearium español*. For a comprehensive account of the workings and weaknesses of the Spanish colonial system in the Caribbean and the Philippines, see Fradera's *Colonias para después de un imperio* (535–664).
- 3 Ángel Ganivet held diplomatic posts in Antwerp, Helsinki, and Riga between July 1892 and November 1898. Writing a letter to his friend Unamuno from Riga in the summer of 1898 (an epistolary exchange that was later collected in *El porvenir de España*), Ganivet observed that “Cuando perdamos nuestros dominios se nos podrá decir: aquí vinieron ustedes a evangelizar y a cometer desafueros; pero no se nos dirá: aquí venían ustedes a tomar carbón” [When we lose our colonies they will be able to say to us “you came to evangelize and commit outrageous acts,” but they will not be able to say you came to take coal] (201). By characterizing the Spanish empire in the Caribbean and the Pacific as a pre-modern political system, Ganivet was, ironically enough, reproducing the North American and, more generally, Anglo-Saxon denigration of Spanish imperialism as a backward, pre-modern ideology – but for Ganivet, of course, this was a good thing.
- 4 For the anti-colonialist interpretation, see Gallego Morell, *Sobre Ganivet* (164); in a parallel line of interpretation, Franco proposes a reading of *La conquista* that emphasizes Ganivet's questioning of the Western idea of progress. In contrast, Agawu-Kakraba stresses the novel's colonialist meanings, Barriuso sees it as an anachronistic, compensatory imperialist fiction (86–101), and Britt Arredondo interprets it as a quest for spiritual conquest that affirms “an essential, ahistorical Spanish national-imperial identity” (129).
- 5 Santiáñez-Tió's interpretation emphasizes that *La conquista*'s anti-colonialist stance is undermined by the its metaliterary dimension, which turns literary creation into a form of conquest itself (225), and Martín-Márquez believes that there is a shift in Ganivet's views on colonialism between *La conquista* and *Idearium español*, one that she registers as the transformation of “[Ganivet's] own brilliant satire of colonization [*La conquista*] into a fraudulent action plan for national regeneration [*Idearium español*]” (100).
- 6 In pronouncing this judgment I am merely following a well-established critical tradition. *Idearium español*'s historical incongruities were already noted by Rafael Altamira as early as 1902 (see *Psicología del pueblo español* [102]) and most famously by Manuel Azaña, who observed that the essay's poor reasoning manifested itself in a series of defects such as “ligereza en la observación, insuficiencia del análisis, arbitrios sugeridos por una inclinación personal o empleo de palabras aturdidamente, guiándose de la apariencia mejor que del contenido” [flippancy in observation, insufficiency in analysis, judgments based on personal inclination or the reckless use of words, all guided by appearance rather than content] (71).
- 7 The inconsistencies and lack of practicality of Ganivet's thoughts have been

highlighted by a number of critics. See, among others, Cerezo Galán, *El mal del siglo* (116); Ramsden, *Ángel Ganivet's Idearium español*; Shaw 58–60.

- 8 Upon reading *Idearium español*, Unamuno addressed a series of open letters to his friend Ganivet (they had met in Madrid in the spring of 1891, while sitting together in a competitive examination [*opositando*] for a University Chair of Greek). They were published, along with Ganivet's replies, in *El Defensor de Granada* between June 12 and September 17, 1898. They were later collected and published by Biblioteca Nueva as *El porvenir de España* in 1912. My references to *El porvenir* come from E. Inman Fox's edition of *Idearium español* that figures in the bibliography.
- 9 José Carlos Mainer has studied the way in which Spanish regenerationist intellectuals looked to strengthen cultural and economic ties with Latin America in their proposals for national reform in "Un capítulo regeneracionista"; on this subject, see also Pike 146–230, and Valero Juan.
- 10 For a lucid exposition of Ganivet's relationship to modern society and art, see Santiañez-Tió 26–116.
- 11 I use the term "capitalist imperialism" after Alejandro Colás's description of this process of European overseas expansion in the late nineteenth century. For Colás, "it was the enormous advances in communications, transport, technology and finance, all fuelled by industrial capitalism, which facilitated and spurred on the imperial circuits of capital" (97). This is the imperialism against which Ganivet is writing. The problem is that, in doing so, he idealizes the ideological justifications of the early modern Spanish Empire, a political entity that did not oppose capitalist imperialism but rather made it possible.
- 12 Here I appropriate Santiañez-Tió's insight that Ganivet's asceticism parallels that of Schopenhauer in that both seek to attain the silencing of the will through aesthetic experience (54–57).
- 13 I am fully aware that Freud's accounts of mourning and melancholia evolved in light of the devastating effects of World War I. I draw here on "Mourning and Melancholia" (1917) rather than on *The Ego and the Id* (1923) because Freud's early model of subjectivity (arguably a less complex and sophisticated one) resonates well with that of *Idearium español* (especially with regard to the pathological aspects of melancholia). For an engaging account of the evolution of Freud's theory of mourning and melancholia within his later model of subjectivity, see Clewell.
- 14 For the details on the circumstances in which *Idearium español* was written, see Gallego Morell, *Ángel Ganivet* (125–29) and García Lara.
- 15 For an excellent study of the significance of Africa and Africans to Ganivet's thought, see Martín-Márquez 85–100.
- 16 For a fascinating account of Ganivet's (and Unamuno's) use of aboulia and, more generally, of turn-of-the-century psychology, see Jurkevich.
- 17 Ganivet committed suicide by throwing himself into the waters of the River Dvina in Riga (present-day Latvia) on November 29, 1898. For an account of his last days, see Gallego Morell, *Ángel Ganivet* (171–88).
- 18 The jingoistic, war-mongering tone of the mainstream Spanish press was repeatedly denounced by, among others, Unamuno ("¡Muera Don Quijote!") and Maeztu (see, for instance, "La prensa" in *Hacia otra España* [139–41]). The pro-war opinions of the established press are described by Balfour, *The End of the Spanish Empire* (11–48) and Álvarez Junco, "La nación en duda" (405–12).

CHAPTER FOUR

The Anatomy of Imperial Indignation: Ramiro de Maeztu's *Hacia otra España*

Anger and Indignation

In 1899 Ramiro de Maeztu published *Hacia otra España*, a collection of newspaper and journal articles that stands out as a remarkable contribution to regenerationism, the *fin-de-siècle* intellectual movement that reflected on the theme of national decadence and offered practical proposals for reforming Spain.¹ Like other regenerationist (and modernist) texts, such as *En torno al casticismo* and *Idearium español*, *Hacia otra España* follows some of the conventions of the essay form and displays a basic opposition between what is old or decadent and what is new, emerging and vigorous.² This polarity, which has an unequivocal social dimension in Maeztu, symbolizes a distinction between an illusory Spain (made up of imperial legends and conquering myths, of unproductive classes and destitute peasants, of corrupt politicians, the state, and the Church) and a real one (made up of the industrial bourgeoisie, the working classes who valued hard work, and the intellectuals, a handful of “individualidades sensatas y energéticas” [sensible and energetic individuals] who were lucid enough to anticipate the nation’s illnesses (*Hacia otra España* 149).

Maeztu’s enthusiasm for the values of a new Spain – this *otra España* to which his essay aspires – springs from a deep sense of dissatisfaction with traditional social agents and values. Notorious as an eccentric nonconformist, Maeztu did not hesitate to express his anger over the way in which noble values in Spanish society (discipline and hard work, the ethic of conflict, the will to power) were corrupted by the influence of the State and the Church. “Maeztu, en aquella época,” recalls Pío Baroja, “era muy agresivo” [Maeztu, at that time, was very aggressive] (169). This aggressiveness manifested itself in relation to the things Maeztu both loved and hated. For instance, when he saw Benito Pérez Galdós’s *Electra*, a controversial play that had become a symbol for anticlericalism, he was so enthused that he cried out “¡Abajo los jesuitas!” [Down with the Jesuits!] (P. Baroja 209). Later, when

Maeztu read a tepid review of the play, he was so flabbergasted and enraged at the author, Azorín, that he insulted and physically threatened him (P. Baroja 209–10).³ Other contemporaneous anecdotes corroborate the notion of Maeztu's exuberant personality. Ricardo Baroja (Pío's less famous brother) wrote that "Ramiro de Maeztu era entonces de carácter violento" [Ramiro de Maeztu had a violent character then] (37) and he gave the following proof: "le pegó dos palos a un tontaina que había escrito un artículo desagradable para [su amigo] Valle-Inclán" [he walloped an idiot who had written an article that {his friend} Valle-Inclán disliked] (37). José María Salaverría stated, with more than a tinge of resentment, that Maeztu's "furia epiléptica" [epileptic fury] was a self-conscious, cultivated pose (*Nuevos retratos* 64). These brief anecdotes allude to the fact that emotional excess was a fundamental part of Maeztu's life. Importantly, it was also a decisive aspect of his writing, as he himself indicates: "Se escribe [...] no con reglas y fórmulas, sino con las entrañas, con el temperamento, con la sangre, con el cuerpo" [One writes {...} with one's guts, with temperament, with blood, with the body, not following rules and formulas] (*Artículos* 261).

Clearly, it is hard to understand Maeztu without considering emotions. Maeztu's impassioned, almost maniacal character has led José Luis Villacañas Berlanga to describe him as an *energúmeno*, an expression that in Spanish refers to someone possessed by the Demon, someone seized by an overwhelming fury or frenzy ("El carisma"). According to Villacañas, Maeztu's condition as an *energúmeno* (what in English could be described as a lunatic) goes a long way in explaining his fall from critical favor.⁴ While his contemporaries Unamuno and Ortega – both of whom established an intellectual dialogue with Maeztu at some point in their careers – enjoy a positive reception (the former is valorized as a genuine interpreter of the "Spanish soul" and the latter is revered as a towering figure of modern Spanish philosophy), Maeztu is, by and large, a forgotten intellectual figure (Villacañas Berlanga, "El carisma"). At best he is remembered as an eccentric, ideologically inconsistent minor writer and at worst as a delusional journalist who traded his youthful Nietzschean enthusiasm for the most reactionary elements in the Spanish cultural tradition.

Even the story of his death in front of a firing squad does not garner sympathy. After the proclamation of the Second Republic in 1931, Maeztu relentlessly labored to radicalize the social forces of the right by plotting against the government and by attempting to revive the cause of the imperial, sixteenth-century Catholic Monarchy in the years preceding the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939). This led to his arrest and subsequent execution in the early hours of November 1, 1936. Right before his execution, he is supposed to have addressed the firing squad in the following terms:

“¡Vosotros no sabéis por qué me matáis, yo sí sé por qué muero, porque vuestros hijos sean mejores que vosotros!” [You don’t know why you are killing me, but I know why I will die: I will die so that your children will be better than you] (qtd. in González Cuevas 359). To be sure, neither Maeztu’s self-description as a sacrificial lamb, nor the fact that his more traditionalist works were lionized by some sectors of the Francoist cultural establishment (see Villacañas Berlanga, *Ramiro* 413–79), have made his critical reception any easier. As a result, Maeztu figures in the tradition of Spanish literature as an inconvenient intellectual figure, one whose writings project an emotional excess that is not easily assimilated by the institutional structures of canon-formation. After all, who wants to preserve and valorize the works of an angry *energúmeno*, of someone whose faith in his ideas was so extreme that he verged on delirium?

And yet, I believe that it is precisely this emotional excess in Maeztu’s writings that provides us with invaluable insights into the emotions attached to empire in Spain’s early twentieth-century national imaginary. When directed toward empire, Maeztu’s legendary anger takes the form of indignation in the pages of *Hacia otra España*. Succinctly put, Maeztu is outraged by the actions of the representatives of Spain’s nineteenth-century empire in the Caribbean and the Pacific and by the weight that the early modern Spanish Empire had in contemporary society. Taking my cue from Nietzsche’s reflections on the role of historical knowledge, I will argue in this chapter that Maeztu is a critical historian who views the imperial past with indignation and who seeks to replace the old-fashioned, pre-industrial glories of the Spanish empire in America with the industrial bourgeoisie’s conquest and colonization of the Castilian plains. In other words, Maeztu is not indignant at the idea of empire in itself, but rather at how the empire was administered in the late nineteenth century in terms of both the actual colonies and the ever-revered myths of empire.

To describe the main features of Maeztu’s indignation at certain aspects of the Spanish Empire, I will focus on his essay *Hacia otra España* and several of his lesser-known articles belonging to the same period, which are collected in the volume edited by E. Inman Fox *Artículos desconocidos (1897–1904)*. On a first read, *Hacia otra España*’s starting point parallels that of Unamuno’s *En torno al casticismo* and Ganivet’s *Idearium español*: the pain felt when faced with the image of a defeated, broken nation. Referring to the motives behind the book, Maeztu confesses in the prologue that “mueve mi pluma el dolor de que mi patria sea chica y esté muerta y el furioso anhelo de que viva y se agrande” [my pen is moved by the pain caused by my shrinking, dying fatherland as well as by the overwhelming desire that it live and grow larger] (48). Shortly thereafter, in the first section, titled “Páginas

sueñas” [Loose pages], he turns this pain into open hostility as he provides a sarcastic critique of contemporary Spanish society in terms of its paralysis, a diagnosis that recalls Unamuno’s reflections on the nation’s *marasmo*. In the second part, titled “De las guerras” [On wars], Maeztu addresses the Spanish-Cuban-American War of 1898 and the question of imperialism in a fragmentary manner, producing a rare, first-hand analysis of its causes, development, and consequences. In a tone that alternates between precise, objective observations and utopian, impassioned commentaries, Maeztu interprets the war in Cuba as an economic conflict between business owners of Spanish origin and workers, peasants, and landowners of *criollo* origin. According to Maeztu, Spain had no chance of perpetuating its sovereignty over the island and thus, like a handful of other intellectuals such as federalist republican Francesc Pi i Margall and socialist Pablo Iglesias, he was opposed to the colonial wars even though he was enlisted in the Spanish Army.⁵ Maeztu takes pride in explaining that his anti-war stance was not the result of a dogmatic application of certain political principles, but rather of his intimate knowledge of Cuba’s economic situation:

los azares de mi vida han formado mi educación en Cuba y Norteamérica, en los ingenios azucareros, en el comercio y las fábricas de Tabaco.

[the ups and downs of my life have meant that my education has taken place in Cuba and North America, in the sugar refineries, in commercial activities, and in tobacco factories]. (*Hacia otra España* 94)

Claiming the authority that comes from experience and objective analysis, the third and most optimistic part of the text, “*Hacia otra España*” (Toward another Spain), lays out Maeztu’s vision for Spain’s redemption, one that can be summarized as a call for the simultaneous creation of a strong national bourgeoisie and working class through a vigorous industrialization of the nation.

Within *Hacia otra España*’s general argument, Spain’s nineteenth-century empire in the Pacific and the Caribbean embodies everything that is wrong in Spain. As an outrageous “sistema de expoliación” [system of plunder] (*Artículos* 245), the nineteenth-century empire is the product of the corruption of the State, the dogmatism of the Church, and the irresponsibility of Spanish capitalists: “El régimen colonial era un pacto entre los políticos de Madrid, las Comunidades religiosas y los grandes especuladores de toda España” [The colonial regime was a pact between Madrid politicians, religious communities, and great speculators from all over Spain] (*Artículos* 244). Maeztu’s sense of outrage at the colonial system is further revealed in another passage where he writes that “Nosotros no teníamos para América

y Asia, sino ladronzuelos de la política y órdenes religiosas” [We only had political crooks and religious orders for America and Asia] (*Hacia otra España* 107).

A regime made up of crooks, speculators, and pernicious religious orders is a fundamentally unjust political system.⁶ For this reason, in *Hacia otra España* Maeztu relentlessly attacks those who fought for the perpetuation of the empire during the colonial wars of 1898, even if his general opposition to the war is occasionally muddled by a sense of patriotic honor (*Hacia otra España* 114–15, 119–21). According to Maeztu, the social agents intent on prolonging the colonial injustice were the successive Spanish governments that mismanaged the war, which for him “son y han sido siempre malos” [are and have always been bad] (*Hacia otra España* 140); the weak yet ambitious members of the military, like General Ramón Blanco, who followed the war strategy dictated by the press at the expense of tens of thousands of lives:

[Blanco] todo lo sacrifica hoy para obtener la efímera corona con la que premian los periódicos a aquellos que les sirven en sus campañas; lo sacrifica todo, hasta su vida, que es la vida de los 100.000 soldados que le acompañan en la heroica agonía de Cuba española.

[{Blanco} sacrifices everything to obtain the ephemeral crown awarded by newspapers to those who serve them well in their campaigns; he sacrifices everything, even his life, which is the life of the 100,000 soldiers who accompany him in the heroic agony of Spanish Cuba]. (*Hacia otra España* 130)

Finally, he criticized the irresponsible press, who ignored its duty to inform its readers and instead

nos lanzó a la guerra con los Estados Unidos [...] suponiendo que pervivía en el país el espíritu del Cid Campeador y el concepto calderoniano del honor.

[threw us into the war against the United States {...} assuming that the Cid’s spirit and Calderón’s concept of honor were still prevalent in the country]. (*Hacia otra España* 160)⁷

Maeztu’s allusions to the “crooks,” “speculators,” and irresponsible journalists that were sustaining Spain’s imperial dreams, together with his generally irate tone, are a good indication of the annoyance, anger, and indignation aroused in him by the colonial crisis of 1895–1898. Maeztu’s annoyance at the empire is beyond doubt, but is it appropriate to label his response as angry or indignant? To what extent can we even distinguish

between annoyance, anger, and indignation? Are they not very similar emotions involving the expression of dissatisfaction with a given situation?

If we take annoyance as the baseline emotion for anger and indignation, then annoyance could be defined as simply registering dissatisfaction without attributing blame or making any other kind of judgment (Solomon 208). This then leaves us with the rather more complex task of defining anger and indignation. While some do not distinguish between them (Nussbaum, *Hiding* 99–107), others see these two emotions as having quite different cognitive structures. One of the first to point out important differences between the two was Aristotle, in Book II of *Rhetoric*. For Aristotle, anger (*orgē*) is a desire for retaliation “because of an apparent slight that was directed, without justification, against oneself or those near to one” (116, 1378a). One is always angry at a particular individual or category of individuals, for instance those “who speak badly of, and scorn, things they themselves take most seriously” (119, 1379a). By contrast, one is indignant (*to nemesan*) if one is “distressed at the evidence of unworthy success” (143, 1387a), even when such success has no direct effect on one’s wellbeing. Simply put, although Aristotle considers anger and indignation related emotions, they are distinct in that anger involves a personal slight while indignation does not, for it is an impersonal emotion.

This simple distinction is confirmed by current literature on the subject, which draws heavily on and extends Aristotle’s definitions. Glossing Aristotle’s views, Marlene Sokolon writes: “by definition, indignation concerns circumstances that can in no way affect the indignant subject himself. Indignation cannot be self-motivated revenge but is a response to attempts to achieve or obtain what is not suitable” (149). Robert Solomon agrees and complicates Aristotle’s definition by introducing moral judgments into the cognitive structure of indignation. According to Solomon, anger “is a judgment that someone has wronged *me* (or one of my friends), but it has no evident suprapersonal meaning” (208), while indignation “contains, as part of its conceptual structure, the moral judgment that *this is morally wrong*” (207; emphasis in orig.). He goes on to add that such wrongness “need not have anything in particular to do with me, my tastes, or my personal values” (207). Solomon’s insight about the moral claims embedded in indignation is echoed by Victoria Camps, for whom indignation produces “una reacción general, no referida a nadie en concreto, frente a ciertas actitudes que se desaprueban” [a general reaction, which is not referred to anyone in particular, in the face of certain attitudes of which one disapproves] (162). Finally, Antonio Valdecantos further refines the above insights by taking them in two slightly different directions. He argues that indignation, even if it is impersonal, nonetheless involves an attribution of responsibility

(79) – for, as Valdecantos puts it, one cannot be indignant when it rains or when one is stung by a wasp; one is only indignant at an event or a state of affairs produced by a human agent (78). He also observes that indignation is an “inquisitive, reflexive” emotion that is based on a set of reasons that the indignant individual expects others to share (80).⁸

Combining Aristotle’s rather narrow understanding of indignation with current contributions on the subject, we can loosely approximate a concept of indignation that reflects its customary usage in the Spanish (and English) language: (i) indignation involves an evaluation of a state of affairs or, more narrowly, of whether a person deserves his or her situation; (ii) the evaluation embodies a suprapersonal judgment, which is based on a set of publicly articulated reasons, that such a state of affairs is morally wrong; and finally (iii), there must exist an attribution of responsibility. All of these elements are at play when Maeztu uses the word *indignación* in *Hacia otra España*. In fact, he only explicitly uses the term three times, each when he is reacting to when businessmen of Santiago de Cuba, who declared themselves to be fervent Spanish patriots, refused to pay customs duties according to Spanish tariffs. Maeztu writes: “Indignó el hecho a los periódicos que ofician de patriotas. Compartamos por una vez su indignación” [the newspapers that claim to be patriotic became indignant at this fact. Let us for once share in their indignation] (*Hacia otra España* 135). He then adds:

Nuestra indignación llegará a la cólera si pensamos en que de comerciantes se formaba aquel partido titulado español *incondicional* (*sic*).

[Our indignation will reach the level of fury if we think that those who formed that *unconditionally* Spanish political party were the same businessmen {who refused to pay customs duties}]. (*Hacia otra España* 135; emphasis in orig.).

But, as we shall see, indignation is also at play more generally in Maeztu’s reaction to the prominence achieved in national life by the agents of the Spanish Empire and its supporters. The first requirement for an indignant response concerns an evaluation of a given state of affairs. We have already mentioned that Maeztu saw the colonial regime as a pact between corrupt politicians, greedy speculators, and the religious orders. Immediately thereafter, he goes on to specify that such social agents attained their comfortable position by means that were morally (if not legally) reprehensible:

Los políticos de Madrid enviaban a Ultramar a sus deudos, con permiso especial para enriquecerse; las Comunidades religiosas respetaban

el secreto de nuestra mala administración [de las colonias] a cambio de que les consintiéramos, prácticamente, la plena soberanía sobre Filipinas; los grandes especuladores se callaban cuanto sabían de la mala política y la mala gestión religiosa, a cambio de que se les respetaran sus monopolios bancarios y el sistema de explotación mercantil creado por unos aranceles irritantes. En realidad, políticos, especuladores y Comunidades religiosas formaban un solo organismo explotador.

[Madrid politicians sent their relatives overseas with a special permit to get rich; the religious communities kept the secret of our mismanagement {of the colonies} in exchange for practically having full sovereignty over the Philippines; the great speculators kept silent about both the political and religious mismanagement provided that their banking monopolies and the system of mercantile exploitation created by outrageous tariffs were respected. In truth, politicians, speculators, and religious communities were part of a single exploitative organism]. (*Artículos* 244)

The moral condemnation embedded in the above description, which constitutes the second requirement for indignation, is amplified on three distinct yet related levels. Maeztu uses each of these levels to persuade his readers to share in his indignation. On one level, Maeztu observes that those who profited from the colonial regime did not defend the colonies when they were under attack: “nuestras clases directoras no dieron un solo voluntario a los ejércitos de Cuba y Filipinas” [not a single member of the ruling classes volunteered in the armies of Cuba and the Philippines] (*Artículos* 245). And then he adds that those who sacrificed their lives

pertenecía[n] a esa inmensa mayoría del pueblo español que nada ganaba con el sistema de expoliación a que políticos, frailes y especuladores habían reducido las colonias.

[belonged to the great majority of the Spanish people who gained nothing from the system of plunder to which politicians, friars, and speculators had reduced the colonies]. (*Artículos* 245)

Significantly, Maeztu considers the harm done by the agents of empire not as a personal offense, but rather as an issue of “trascendencia nacional” [national import] (*Artículos* 245), making such harm a suprapersonal question and thus confirming that he is indignant, not simply angry, at the representatives of the colonial regime.

On another level, Maeztu's condemnation of the privileged situation enjoyed by the agents of empire is part of a larger moral conflict that was having momentous consequences for Spain as a nation. According to Maeztu, Spain's gravest problem resided in the fact that

ha prevalecido, erigiéndose en directora y dominadora, la raza de los inútiles, de los ociosos, de los hombres de engaño y de discurso, sobre la de los hombres de acción, de pensamiento y de trabajo.

[the prevalent race, which is made up of good-for-nothing men, idlers, cheaters, and charlatans, rules and dominates the race of men who act, think, and work]. (*Hacia otra España* 65)

The prevalence of corrupted values and the disregard for discipline and hard work was so widespread within Spanish society that Maeztu thought that Spaniards looked more like the colonized than the colonizer: "No parece sino que España es la colonia y el archipiélago [filipino] la metrópoli" [It looks like Spain is the colony and the {Filipino} archipelago the metropolis] (*Hacia otra España* 99). Thus, Maeztu condemns the colonial regime not only because its representatives (the politicians, the religious orders, and the speculators) were weak, hypocritical individuals who did not dare defend their own interests but also because their mere existence was the result of a series of detrimental values that Maeztu, much like Nietzsche in *On the Genealogy of Morals*, sought to criticize and reevaluate.⁹

The third level of Maeztu's moral condemnation of the undeserved privileges of imperial officials has to do with the fact that their actions violated the moral principles put forth in *Hacia otra España*. Generally speaking, these principles can be described as a commitment to a new Spain, a nation where strong, life-affirming, self-made individuals would flourish. But what exactly are the values of this *otra España*, this new Spain that is supposed to do away with both the harm done by those who profited from the colonies and their corrupted values? What is it, specifically, that Maeztu wants his readers to envision for the future of their nation?

An answer to these questions can be found in those articles that discuss the profound economic and social transformations that were taking place in Spain at the time.¹⁰ For Maeztu, "la latente solidaridad española" [the latent Spanish solidarity] (*Artículos* 144) is above all an economic – as opposed to a historical or cultural – phenomenon, one that is readily evident in the more advanced, industrialized regions of Spain, such as the Basque Country and Catalonia. The path toward Maeztu's *otra España* is thus the path toward material prosperity, economic success, and the ability to compete on a global market, three things that were sorely lacking in the colonies.

Maeztu's new national imaginary is constituted by a fully modern, economic community that has broken free of the State's and the Church's grip, that has done away with the corruption of the colonial regime, and that is ruled by a strong national bourgeoisie and proletariat, two social forces resulting from the momentous changes that were transforming Spanish society at the beginning of the twentieth century. Among such transformations, which were enthusiastically embraced by Maeztu, the following stand out: the acceleration of urban expansion in Spain's main cities (surely Madrid and Barcelona, but also Valencia and Bilbao), the collapse of the traditional agrarian sector, and the correlative growth in the industrial, financial, and service sectors.¹¹

As argued in Chapters 2 and 3, these changes were registered as catastrophic events in *En torno al casticismo* and *Idearium español*, two essays that greatly idealized rural, pre-industrial life (think of Unamuno's identification of *intrahistoria* with the silent life of Castilian peasants or of Ganivet's diatribes against modern political and economic institutions, including nineteenth-century European empires). The contrast with *Hacia otra España* could not be greater in this respect: rather than masking and displacing the development of world capitalism, Maeztu will embrace it, making it a central component of his discussion of Spain's historical burdens, among which the empire in the Caribbean and the Pacific figures prominently.

Now, let us turn briefly to the third and final aspect of our definition of indignation. We have seen how Maeztu fulfilled the first and second requirements for indignation, for he performed an evaluation of whether imperial officials deserved their privileged situation and he made a suprapersonal judgment, based on a set of publicly articulated reasons, that such a situation was morally wrong. It is now time to explain how Maeztu related to the third requirement for indignation, the attribution of responsibility. This is a rather straightforward endeavor for the attribution of responsibility is already implied in the fact that Maeztu is indignant at the actions and omissions of the representatives of empire. Certainly, it is possible to imagine an instance in which it might prove more difficult to attribute responsibility for the state of affairs leading to an indignant response.¹² In the case of *Hacia otra España*, however, it is clear that imperial officials are the ones responsible for creating the deplorable situation at which Maeztu becomes indignant. In the aftermath of the crushing defeat of 1898, the attribution of responsibility for the Disaster was something of a national pastime in which several social groups were targeted, from the military, the government, and the Queen Regent to the press and the Masonic lodges (Balfour, *The End* 50–51). Beyond the above implicit

attribution of responsibility to imperial officials for their amoral conduct at the helm of the colonial regime, Maeztu reflected on the larger issue of the responsibility for the Disaster in an article entitled “Responsabilidades,” where he declared all of Spanish society responsible for the defeat (*Hacia otra España* 139–41).

Maeztu’s indignation at the representatives of the colonial regime is ultimately concerned with the harm done by their undeserved privileges, which can be calculated in both economic and symbolic terms – imperial officials certainly got rich, but they also held politically relevant posts and their view of Spain as an imperial power was the dominant one up until the colonial crisis of 1895–1898 (for this last point see Chapter 1). Succinctly put, Maeztu’s indignation is a response to the question of what those leading the nation merited. In Book II of his *Rhetoric*, Aristotle notes that “those who think themselves deserving of things they do not believe others deserve are prone to indignation toward the latter and about these things” (144, 1387b). Maeztu certainly belonged to this category of indignant people. As an intellectual, he saw himself as being one of those

individualidades sensatas y enérgicas, perspicaces y estimuladas por una ambición noble, que en público y en privado venían advirtiéndolo a la nación el gran engaño de que era víctima al juzgarse y las grandes enfermedades que la debilitaban.

[sensible, energetic, and shrewd individuals motivated by a noble ambition who, both in public and in private, warned the nation of the delusion it was under and of the great ailments that debilitated it]. (*Hacia otra España* 149)

Because of their noble ambitions and analytical insights, the intellectuals’ task was to “conservar la vida nacional y perpetuarla” [conserve and perpetuate the life of the nation] (*Hacia otra España* 65). The reality, however, was that intellectuals occupied a marginal, precarious position in *fin-de-siècle* Spain. Maeztu himself confessed to his impotence when he wrote: “somos literatos, gentes sin poder y sin dinero” [we are men of letters, people without power or money] (*Hacia otra España* 103). When one thinks of himself as the creator or the leader of a new, regenerated nation, and when one judges those in power as undeserving of their privileged position, indignation seems an appropriate response. That it was the dominant response employed by Maeztu when writing about the colonial regime in *Hacia otra España* speaks as much to his individual personality as to the insecure social standing of intellectuals at the time.

Nietzsche's Critical History

In addition to the unjust workings of the colonial system, there is another source of indignation related to the Spanish Empire in *Hacia otra España*. More specifically, Maeztu is indignant at the excessive weight of the traditions associated with the early modern Spanish Empire at the turn of the century. For instance, in the article entitled "Un suicidio," he refers to Spain's imperial history from the beginning of the sixteenth century up until the end of the nineteenth as "el fracaso de cuatro siglos" [a four-hundred-year failure] (*Hacia otra España* 106). The use of the term "failure" to depict four hundred years of imperial history already suggests that Maeztu is condemning that part of the nation's past which had, as recently as 1892, been the object of numerous celebrations (see Chapter 1). In another passage in the same article, he bitterly complained that Spain "mírase siempre en la leyenda, donde se encuentra grande" [looks at herself in the mirror of legend, where she sees herself as grand] (*Hacia otra España* 107).

This type of self-delusion, which came at the end of a crescendo of national vices that included the corruption of politics, the hypocrisy of religion, the poverty of the nation, and the irresponsibility of the press, allows us to catch a glimpse of Maeztu's indignation because it implies a suprapersonal judgment that imperial myths were morally wrong. But because the reasons for this judgment are not explicitly explained, the condemnation of the myths of empire can only be considered the inchoate stage of indignation. To understand Maeztu's reasons for his moral condemnation of imperial myths, it is important to bear in mind that in *Hacia otra España* Maeztu's discomfort with the imperial past extends to the past more generally. Indeed, one striking aspect of the essay is that there are only a handful of references to Spain's past, a feature that is even more extraordinary when one compares it with the writings of fellow regenerationists Joaquín Costa, Miguel de Unamuno, and Ángel Ganivet. Costa, who was arguably the most notable regenerationist intellectual, legitimized his programs for social and political reform by presenting them as having illustrious historical precedents. He fashioned the Catholic Kings (111–55) and the seventeenth-century *arbitrista* tradition of economic thought (157–79), among others, as forerunners to his programs for national regeneration. In 1898 he famously used the figure of the Cid to speak against imperialism and militarism, summoning Spaniards to "[echar] doble llave al sepulcro del Cid, para que no vuelva a cabalgar" [double-lock the Cid's sepulcher, so that he does not go riding about again] (254).³³ Similarly, Unamuno's *En torno al casticismo*, arguably also a regenerationist essay, can be read through and through as an attempt to overcome Spain's conservative and militaristic traditions, as

an attempt to supersede the merely historical manifestations of the Spanish people by recalling their “intra-historical” roots, which lie in the past and are symbolized by the quiet life of Castile’s peasants. And finally, Ganivet’s *Idearium español* is nothing but a historical exegesis of the Stoic, Christian, and Arabic roots of the Spanish “territorial spirit” in order to advocate a return to the nation’s native spirit of independence. In all of these accounts, the lessons that Spain could derive from its past to remedy its present ills figure prominently. This is not at all the case, however, with *Hacia otra España*.

In contrast to his fellow regenerationists, Maeztu sees history as part of the problem, not the solution. His claim is that the history of the Spanish Empire is particularly loathful because it hinders the nation’s future development by creating a false image of national grandeur. As he puts it,

Arrastra España su existencia deleznable, cerrando los ojos al caminar del tiempo, evocando en obsesión perenne glorias añejas, figurándose ser siempre aquella patria que describe la Historia.

[Spain drags along its pitiable existence, closing its eyes to the passing of time and obsessively evoking ancient glories, always imagining itself to be that nation that History describes]. (*Hacia otra España* 107)

Possessed by the image of its past glories, Spain is, for Maeztu, a nation that needs to cure itself by coming to terms with the fact that “la Historia expansiva y conquistadora de nuestra patria ha de acabarse con la centuria” [our fatherland’s expansive and conquering History should come to an end with the century] (*Hacia otra España* 123). According to Maeztu, to focus on the present challenges of modern life, Spain has to renounce its imperial past because it led both to the corrupt colonial regime of the late nineteenth century and to the misguided aspirations of what he called “el [régimen] burocrático-teocrático-militar que ahora impera” [the bureaucratic-theocratic-military {regime} that prevails today] (*Hacia otra España* 100) – in other words, the Restoration system. These are, in a nutshell, Maeztu’s reasons for condemning the imperial past (and they are also the cause of his indignation).

Now that we have seen Maeztu’s reasons for judging the myths of empire immoral, we should explain who is responsible, in his eyes, for the hypertrophy of the imperial past in public life. In contrast to Maeztu’s indignant reaction to the corruption of the colonial regime, in this instance it is not as easy to make an attribution of responsibility. Who can be considered responsible for the circulation of the myths of empire among the Spanish public? As Chapter 1 has argued, those responsible were the

State and its organic intellectuals. This is not, however, the answer given by Maeztu. At one point, he seems to be indirectly blaming the founders of the Spanish Empire when he considers them responsible for the colonial defeat. He writes:

Tiéndenla [la responsabilidad de la derrota] nuestros antepasados, que fueron un imperio colonial tan grande que para sostenerlo hubo de despoblarse el suelo patrio, el *verdadero* suelo patrio.

[{The responsibility for the defeat} belongs to our ancestors, who created a colonial empire so big that they had to depopulate the native land, the *authentic* native land, to maintain it]. (*Hacia otra España* 140; emphasis in orig.)

This attribution of responsibility would go something like this: by founding an overstretched colonial empire, the Spaniards of the sixteenth century weakened the Spanish nation and made it possible for the myths of empire to be endlessly repeated by “la corriente patriotera de los periódicos” [the jingoistic current of the press] (*Hacia otra España* 140).

But even if, as Maeztu suggests, the hypertrophy of the imperial past in public life can be seen as one of the causes of the colonial defeat, insofar as it fueled the press’s jingoism and convinced the Spanish public to support the colonial war (*Hacia otra España* 140, 154–55), it surely does not seem reasonable to blame a series of long-dead historical actors for the continued presence of the imperial traditions. There must be other agents, contemporaries of Maeztu, who were more clearly responsible for the promotion of the imperial past. Their identity is revealed in *Hacia otra España* when Maeztu argues that the polemic between the supporters and the adversaries of the Cuban War is in fact a polemic between two incompatible instincts: the traditional and the critical. He claims that while supporters of the war have fallen into the ideological trap of tradition and are only able to look backwards to perceive past greatness, the adversaries of the war, by perceiving the actual weaknesses of the country, are able to look forward and have hope in the country’s future (*Hacia otra España* 134). Those guided by the traditional instinct, Maeztu continues, are incapable of making a distinction between

la España que soñaban, la España de la tradición, y la España que los hechos revelan. Han formado sus almas en el culto a las cosas muertas, embellecidas por la pátina de los siglos. Han mirado a su patria bajo la luz esplendorosa del pasado. Y la quieren así [...] o no la quieren de ningún modo.

[the Spain they dreamt of, the Spain of tradition, and the Spain revealed by facts. They have shaped their souls by worshipping dead things embellished by a patina of many centuries. They have looked at their fatherland through the magnificent lens of the past. And they want their fatherland to reflect this image {...} or they do not want it at all]. (*Hacia otra España* 133–34)

From this it is clear that those responsible for the circulation of imperial myths are the traditionalists, those that Maeztu calls the “defensores del sentido histórico nacional” [defenders of the national historical sensibility] (*Hacia otra España* 134). Their emotional investment in the imperial past, which is made up of complacency and satisfaction, is for Maeztu morally reprehensible because it idealizes the nation’s immoral past and it makes the nation act under the delusion of strength. Their weakness, which is precisely what gravely disqualifies them in Maeztu’s eyes, is that they do not believe in their nation’s future. For this reason, he adds, “aspiran a embellecer su presente modesto y humilde, con el cumplimiento de su modo de ser legendario” [they seek to embellish the nation’s modest and humble present by observing its legendary existence] (*Hacia otra España* 134).

Opposed to the traditionalists are those guided by the critical instinct, which Maeztu describes as follows:

El instinto crítico, que ya en tiempos de nuestros padres juzgó el pasado frente al tribunal de la razón, y hubo de condenarlo al conocer la gran debilidad interna que ocultaban los esplendores de otros siglos, se rebela hoy contra esa joroba de heroísmo suicida que nos legó por toda herencia aquel pasado y aspira a conquistarse libremente, la *parte de sol* que aún reserve el destino a nuestra España.

[The critical instinct, which already in our fathers’ times made the past stand trial before the court of reason and ended up condemning it because it was aware of the internal weakness concealed by the splendors of other centuries, rebels against the burden of suicidal heroism handed down by that past as our only inheritance, and aspires to freely conquer for itself those sunny spots that destiny might still have reserved for Spain]. (*Hacia otra España* 134; emphasis in orig.)

It is fascinating to note here the significant analogies between the critical instinct and the emotion of indignation, for they will allow us to provide a richer, more theoretically informed description of Maeztu’s disposition toward the myths of empire. Both the critical instinct and the emotion of indignation perform an evaluation of a state of affairs based on a set of

reasons (here the past is made to “stand trial before the court of reason”); the content of the evaluation is in both cases a moral condemnation of the given state of affairs (here the critical instinct condemns the past “because it was aware of the internal weakness concealed by the splendors of other [one might add imperial] centuries”); and they both feed off of the commitment to a more just reality (here Maeztu is indignant in the name of “those sunny spots that destiny might still have reserved for Spain”).

From a theoretical viewpoint, Maeztu's opposition between a traditional and a critical instinct recalls Nietzsche's discussion of the antiquarian and the critical uses of history in “On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life,” the second of his *Untimely Meditations* (1874). Nietzsche's influence on the young Maeztu is easy to establish for not only did he devote a long article to Nietzsche in 1899 entitled “Nietzsche y Maquiavelo” (*Artículos* 117–22), but he also repeatedly quoted him in *Hacia otra España* (see, for instance, 153, 202, 206). Critics of different persuasions have also remarked on this influence (Blanco Aguinaga 169; Fox, “Ramiro de Maeztu” 31–34; Sobejano 318–37; Villacañas Berlanga, *Ramiro* 57–65). But what, to my knowledge, has not been noted is the way in which Nietzsche's reflections on the uses of history and Maeztu's indignant reaction to the myths of empire are mutually illuminating.

It is true that in “On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life,” Nietzsche does not dwell on the emotional dispositions of the critical historian. He only mentions that the critical historian “wants to be clear as to how unjust the existence of anything – a privilege, a caste, a dynasty, for example – is, and how greatly this thing deserves to perish” (76). The critical historian thus seems dissatisfied with things as they are and he aspires to destroy them in the name of justice. Like the indignant person, the critical historian seeks to right a wrong. The means he will employ to do so also involve, as in the case of indignation, a judgment: in a language that recalls Maeztu's above description of the critical instinct, Nietzsche argues that critical history, in opposition to the antiquarian sense of continuity and veneration of the past, possesses and employs

the strength to break up and dissolve a part of the past [...] by bringing it before the tribunal, scrupulously examining it and finally condemning it; every past, however, is worthy to be condemned – for that is the nature of human things: human violence and weakness have always played a mighty role in them. (75–76)

In the light of Nietzsche's description of the critical use of the past, Maeztu's indignation at the imperial past in the name of Spain's future can be

properly characterized as the task of a critical historian. Conversely, Maeztu has shown that the core sentiment that animates the critical historian is indignation.

The Conquest of the *meseta* as a Second (Imperial) Nature

Maeztu followed two distinct strategies to assuage his indignation at the imperial experience. First, he attempted to diminish its importance, making it one of the Spanish people's traits, but certainly not the most valuable or determining one. Whereas in 1892 the Restoration had hailed Columbus as a symbol of the Spanish state's imperial powers, a mere seven years later Maeztu sought to downplay the conquering deeds of the Spanish people:

Podrán los cañones yanquis cerrar el libro de nuestra historia colonial; podrán poner término provisionalmente a nuestras gloriosísimas conquistas; pero la conquista ha sido sólo uno de nuestros múltiples destinos; quizás por haber consagrado a ella nuestras iniciativas hemos sufrido la decadencia agrícola, la comercial, la artística.

[The Yankee cannons can close the book on our colonial history; they can put a provisional end to our most glorious conquests; but conquest itself has been but one of our multiple destinies; perhaps because we devoted so much of our energies to it we have endured a period of decadence in agriculture, commerce, and the arts]. (*Hacia otra España* 127)

The second way in which he let go of his indignation at the historical Spanish Empire involved the idea of an internal colonization. Indeed, Maeztu replaced the source of his indignation (the actual Spanish Empire and its myths) with the fiction of a modern, bourgeois empire contained within Spain's borders. Much like Nietzsche's critical historian, he wielded his indignation to passionately fight the legacies of what for him was a dead past (the imperial one) so as to replace it with a new past, one that would hold the promise of prosperity and modernity for the future. As Nietzsche wrote,

The best we can do is to confront our inherited and hereditary nature with our knowledge, and through a new, stern discipline combat our inborn heritage and implant in ourselves a new habit, a new instinct, a second nature, so that our first nature withers away. (76).

Maeztu looked for these new habits and instincts in a variety of traits that were already present in the Spanish people but that were either

underappreciated or underdeveloped. Thus, hope resided for Maeztu in the inborn qualities of the Spanish people: “la española es una raza sobria, fuerte, fecunda y sana” [the Spanish race is a sober, strong, fecund, and healthy one] (126); in the beautiful bodies of Spanish women: “En esas caderas arrogantes cabe otra España, si acaso ésta se hundiera” [In those arrogant hips there is room for another Spain, if this one were to sink] (121); or in the vitality and *joie de vivre* of certain urban public spaces: “nada más lujoso, nada que dé mejor idea de la alegría de vivir que el aspecto de nuestros paseos y de nuestros teatros” [nothing is more luxurious, nothing gives a better sense of our zest for life than the look of our avenues and theaters] (*Hacia otra España* 144).

But these new habits and instincts, which were designed to inform Spain's new imperial adventures, found their most clear expression in Maeztu's panegyric to the entrepreneurial capacities of Bilbao – a synecdoche for the more advanced, industrialized regions of Spain, namely the Basque Country and Catalonia. Maeztu certainly admires Bilbao's material prosperity, but he finds even more commendable the set of values and attitudes that made it possible: the drive for economic success, the will to work hard, and the search for material pleasures (*Hacia otra España* 88). Indeed, Maeztu's argument offers an economic thesis where the historical conquest of the Americas (a glorious yet ultimately failed and misguided endeavor in his eyes) is refigured as the internal conquest of the dry, barren, unproductive *meseta castellana* by the industrialized, capitalist periphery. In Maeztu's industrial imagination, the old dream of conquering territories in the Americas gives way to the new dream of conquering the plateaus of Castile:

¿Quién duda de que las nuevas Indias, y consiguientemente la nueva España, están en esas llanadas hoy estepas, en esos montes preñados de minerales, en esos ríos que se pierden miserablemente?

[Who doubts that the new Indies, and therefore the new Spain, reside in those plains that today are steppes, in those mountains full of minerals, in those rivers whose waters are miserably lost?]. (*Hacia otra España* 215)

The new heroes of this industrial conquest are not the famous conquistadors of America who, lest we forget, were still hailed in 1892, but rather Basque and Catalan businessmen. And their ideals are not those of a patriotism inextricably linked to monarchy and religion, but rather those associated with economic gains:

Se hará esta industrialización no por patriotismo, ni por equidad, sino por espíritu de lucro, para asegurar mercados a las fábricas, como se hizo con la colonización de las praderas del Far West por los industriales yanquis del Este a mediados del siglo.

[This industrialization will not be achieved on account of patriotism or equity, but rather profit; it will be done to secure markets for the factories, much in the same way that Yankee, east coast industrialists colonized the Far West's prairies in the mid-nineteenth century]. (*Hacia otra España* 172)

In contrast to Unamuno's *En torno al casticismo*, where the quiet life of Castilian peasants is appropriated (and mythified) as the expression of Spain's *intrahistoria*, in Maeztu, Castile appears as a backward, exhausted community that was misguided into believing in the glories afforded by imperial, military conquests:

Yo bien sé que Castilla, madre pródiga y poco calculadora, se ha quedado sin sangre por darla a un mundo nuevo, por regarla con soberbia grandeza en todos los confines del planeta.

[I am well aware that Castile, a generous and uncalculating mother, was left without blood when it gave it to a new world, spraying it with superb greatness around the four corners of the world]. (*Hacia otra España* 165)¹⁴

Maeztu may well pay lip service to Castile's historical achievements, but there is no doubt that for him there is no future for the region unless it renounces the dreams of conquest that elicited his indignation and accepts instead to be conquered. Without the capitalist colonization of Castile, prosperity will never be achieved in Spain:

La colonización de Castilla es un doble negocio de importancia suprema para el litoral. Colócanse los ociosos ahorros y se agrandan mercados a las industrias.

[The colonization of Castile is a double deal of the utmost importance to the coastal regions. It allows them to put their idle savings to good use and to increase the markets for their industries]. (*Hacia otra España* 167)

In this context, the intellectuals' task is to celebrate and further this new conquest by writing what he calls "la epopeya del dividendo y del negocio"

[the epic of dividends and business deals] (*Hacia otra España* 167). When he emphasizes how support for his vision of “another Spain” will produce great economic benefits for all, Maeztu leaves aside his indignation and presents himself as a worthy representative of the young, radical intellectuals that were attempting to create a modern, dynamic people. Read in Gramscian terms, *Hacia otra España* is a text that constructs Maeztu as an “organic” intellectual in search of his social class – at times he appears as an organic intellectual of the industrial bourgeoisie while at others he seems to side with the working class.¹⁵

For Gramsci, the distinctive features of “organic” intellectuals come into view when they are contrasted with those of “traditional” intellectuals. According to the binary scheme in his famous essay “The Intellectuals,” “organic” intellectuals accompany (and to a certain extent, make possible) the emergence of a new social class by giving it “homogeneity and an awareness of its own function not only in the economic but also in the social and political fields” (5). In contrast, “traditional” intellectuals are tied to the previous economic structure without their being aware of this dependence, putting “themselves forward as autonomous and independent of the dominant social group” (7). What Maeztu most definitely is not is a traditional intellectual. In fact, *Hacia otra España* shows, time and again, Maeztu’s disdain for traditional intellectuals. For him, these intellectuals are the ones who represent the interests of everything that is wrong with Spain: the interests of the Church, of the State, and of Castilian landowners. They are the oft scorned “bohemia leguleya que ha venido gobernando desde hace un siglo” [pettifogging, bohemian lawyers who have been ruling the nation for the last century] (*Hacia otra España* 166).

What is not so clear, however, is what kind of an organic intellectual Maeztu aspires to be. Certainly, it is not difficult to discern the directive function of organic intellectuals that Gramsci describes in Maeztu’s auroral rhetoric, in his passion for bringing about a new historical era. He confidently exclaims: “Comienza para España la época del trabajo y la reconstitución” [Spain is starting a new epoch of work and of reconstitution] (*Hacia otra España* 161). But when Maeztu simultaneously shows enthusiasm for the industrial bourgeoisie’s conquest of the Castilian plains and the strengthening of the working class, he muddles Gramsci’s clear-cut scheme, where social class rigorously determined the social function of an intellectual. One was either an intellectual of the bourgeoisie or the working class. However, in Maeztu’s reasoning there is no contradiction in fighting for the emergence of both a strong national bourgeoisie and a strong national proletariat because he knows that none will exist lest the nation rapidly industrializes itself. As he puts it: “de la España del período burgués que ahora se está incubando

saldrá una formidable agitación obrera” [out of the Spain of this brooding bourgeois period will come a formidable working class unrest] (*Hacia otra España* 172–73).

As the writer of the 1898 Generation most influenced by Nietzsche, Maeztu’s emotional response to the imperial defeat was mediated by a series of Nietzschean motifs such as the heroic pathos of the overman, the superiority of noble morality over slave morality, and the affirmation of a Dionysian sense of life (Sobejano 318–37). To these themes we could also add the indignant assessment of both the late nineteenth-century colonial regime and the imperial past, a necessary precondition to judge the events of 1898 not as the end of Spain’s glorious history but as a new beginning, as the possibility of an optimistic future ruled by a strong national bourgeoisie and working class.¹⁶ In sum, *Hacia otra España* can tell the economic, Social-Darwinist story of Spain’s participation in a new era of expanding economic activity because it subjected the imperial experience to two distinct operations: first, through its author’s indignation, it condemned it as a dark period of damaging political and religious domination that generated even more pernicious historical myths about Spain’s power and capacities for conquest; and second, it resignified the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century conquest and colonization of the Americas as the early twentieth-century conquest and colonization of the Castilian plains by the emergent industrial bourgeoisie. It is only after this double transformation that *Hacia otra España* incorporates the imperial past into the constitution of Spaniards as a modern political people.

Readers familiar with Maeztu’s writings will readily note that this indignant, modernizing disavowal of the imperial experience contrasts sharply with his later work, especially his deeply traditionalist, utopian essay *Defensa de la Hispanidad* (1934). While in the late 1890s Maeztu sees the early modern Spanish empire in the Americas as a foreclosed historical epoch whose pernicious effects nonetheless survived in its last colonial possessions, by the early 1930s he views the imperial project (especially the legacies of Rome and of Catholicism) as a weapon against the liberal humanist tradition which inspired the proclamation of the Spanish Second Republic (1931–1939). Emphasizing the Catholic ideal of salvation, he writes in 1934 that “La Hispanidad es el Imperio que se funda en la esperanza de que se puedan salvar como nosotros los habitantes de las tierras desconocidas” [*Hispanidad* is the Empire founded upon the hope that the inhabitants of unknown lands save themselves as we did] (*Defensa* 240), a statement that squarely contradicts the young Maeztu’s socialist and anticlerical views. What at the end of the nineteenth century was judged with indignation and was considered an unusable repository of archaic national values that

paralyzed the will to live (the empire), thirty years later was given a radical new life – something that testifies as much to the inconsistency of Maeztu's normative commitments as to the theocratic, conservative drift of both his social views and political positions.

Notes

- 1 Regenerationism sought to unite the middle classes and the bourgeoisie by proposing, among other measures, “the setting up of agrarian credit schemes, the extension of communication and distribution networks (more canals and railway lines), the decentralization of government, investment in training and basic education, the reform of the judiciary and the introduction of social security benefits [...] All this had to be accompanied by electoral reform to eliminate fraud and dismantle the cacique system” (Balfour, *The End* 70). For an account of the different ideological tendencies within regenerationism, see Cerezo Galán's *El mal del siglo* (221–54).
- 2 The book is divided into three parts: “Páginas sueltas” [Loose pages], “De las guerras” [On wars], and “Hacia otra España” [Toward another Spain]. Of the thirty articles in the first two parts, only fifteen are dated: they were written between August 1896 and September 1898. In the third part, only one article is dated (“La asamblea de Zaragoza,” November 1898). One can read this decision to date the articles as Maeztu's attempt to give us a glimpse of the evolution of his thoughts on the “problem of Spain” before, during, and after the Spanish-Cuban-American War.
- 3 For an engaging account of the polemic between Maeztu and Azorín, see Fox's *Ideología y política en las letras de fin de siglo* (65–93).
- 4 As José Luis Villacañas points out in “El carisma imposible,” Maeztu is an *energúmeno* who nonetheless provides us with the paradigmatic ethos of early twentieth-century Spanish intellectuals.
- 5 For a clear formulation of Maeztu's position regarding the Spanish-Cuban-American War, see the article “¿Qué se debe hacer de Cuba? Cuatro palabras con sentido común” in *Artículos desconocidos* (59–64).
- 6 The early Maeztu was violently anticlerical because, among other things, he saw the influence of the Catholic Church as a burden on Spain's capitalist modernization. As he put it in “El dinero frente a la iglesia,” an article published on March 26, 1899 and collected in his *Artículos desconocidos*, “No se puede citar un solo caso de un self-made man (hombre enriquecido por sí mismo) educado por religiosos” [One cannot name a single case of a self-made man educated by religious institutions] (81). To understand Maeztu's thoughts at the turn of the century, I have found the following primary and secondary sources useful: Maeztu, *Artículos desconocidos*; Blanco Aguinaga, *Juventud del 98* (157–75); Fox, “Ramiro de Maeztu”; Villacañas Berlanga, *Ramiro de Maeztu* (57–105).
- 7 On the role of the press see also *Hacia otra España* (58–59; 71–72; 117; 129–31; 129–31; 139–40; 151–62).
- 8 With respect to reasons for indignation, see also Nussbaum, *Hiding from Humanity* (100–01).

- 9 As I will make clear, Nietzsche's thought was crucial for the young Maeztu's intellectual development.
- 10 See, for instance, the three-part article "Solidaridad española" in *Artículos desconocidos* (137–48), or the article "Bilbao" in *Hacia otra España* (87–89).
- 11 A native of Bilbao, Maeztu was particularly proud of the new work ethic that was emerging from the iron mines surrounding the city. For a useful overview of these economic changes, see García Nieto and Yllán 192–202; for an excellent study of the cultural and social changes that occurred around 1900, see Salaün and Serrano.
- 12 As Antonio Valdecantos notes, a more complicated case would be when indignation takes as its object not the actions of a person, but rather a more elusive object such as the absence of indignation itself (82).
- 13 Maeztu approvingly alludes to Costa's dictum in *Hacia otra España*: "Dejemos al Cid en su sepulcro, bajo la custodia de tan celoso carcelero como debe serlo el señor Costa" [Let us leave the Cid in his sepulcher, under the custody of such a diligent warden as Mr. Costa must be] (184).
- 14 Unamuno responded to Maeztu's call for the conquest of the Castilian *meseta* in a two-part article titled "La conquista de las mesetas" and published in *La Estafeta* on June 5, 1899 and November 11, 1899 – both of which are collected in *Obras completas*, Vol. 4 (1051–65). In these articles, Unamuno argues that if capital has not colonized the unproductive lands of Castile yet, it is because it is against its self-interest to do so. He also labels Maeztu "[un escritor de una] inteligencia brillante e impetuosa, envuelta en un yanquismo tan generoso como poco maduro aún" [a writer with a] brilliant and impetuous intelligence, one that is enveloped by a yankeeism that is as generous as it is immature] (1057). Perhaps as a result of Unamuno's criticism, Maeztu softened his acerbic characterization of Castile, going so far as to affirm that "Por la admiración que sus hombres inspiran acaba uno enamorándose de la misma tierra castellana" [As a result of the admiration that [Castile's] men inspire, one ends up loving the Castilian land itself]. See "La meseta castellana: retractación" in *La Correspondencia de España*, December 29, 1901. For a lucid analysis of the polemic, see Fox's *La crisis intelectual del 98* (93–111) and Villacañas's *Ramiro de Maeztu* (75–83).
- 15 Carlos Blanco set out a Marxist interpretation of *Hacia otra España* in *Juventud del 98*. Needless to say, my characterization of Maeztu as an "organic intellectual" of the industrial bourgeoisie and the proletariat is at odds with this Marxist interpretation of the text. See Villacañas Berlanga, *Ramiro de Maeztu* (83–89) for a more nuanced interpretation of Maeztu's early thought as it evolved from socialist to more modernizing positions. Villacañas Berlanga's interpretation is more congenial to my own characterization of Maeztu's early thought.
- 16 For the importance of bourgeois ideals for Maeztu's thought, see José Luis Villacañas Berlanga's excellent study *Ramiro de Maeztu*.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Politics of Imperial Pride and Shame: Enric Prat de la Riba's *La nacionalitat catalana*

Catalanist Mood circa 1906

In addition to the appearance of *La nacionalitat catalana*, arguably the foundational text of Catalan nationalism, the year 1906 saw a series of remarkable events that consolidated the aspirations of the Catalan people to have a national culture of their own: two major collections of verses were published (Joan Maragall's *Enllà* and Josep Carner's *Els fruits saborosos*) that assured the continuity and dynamism of Catalan poetry; the First International Congress on the Catalan Language was held in Barcelona; and the Lliga Regionalista, the Catalan nationalist political party, won its second electoral victory and landed the presidency of the Diputació de Barcelona, a key institution of local government. With the publication of *La nacionalitat catalana*, Enric Prat de la Riba (1870–1917) made a notable contribution to what has come to be known as Catalan culture's *annus mirabilis*.¹

The climate of cultural and political exhilaration that existed in 1906 certainly made its way into the uncompromising pages of *La nacionalitat catalana*, an essay that conveys a serene yet firm optimism about the current state and future prospects of the Catalan nation. Although Prat's book stands in sharp contrast to the elegiac pessimism of *fin-de-siècle* Spanish letters, it is hard to find overt displays of joyous emotion in it. Rather than seeking to take advantage of the emotional dispositions of his audience, Prat seeks to instill a tranquil optimism in his readers by showing the strength and truth of his arguments. For the most part, Prat relies on an impersonal exposition of his historical and theoretical arguments about Catalan nationhood, as if he trusted that his thesis about the existence of Catalonia as a nation would impose itself by its own weight. In Aristotelian terms, one would say that Prat attempts to persuade his readers through *logos* rather than *pathos*.

This approach holds true for most of the essay. Toward its end, however, we find that Prat deviates from his usual composure when he considers the

issue of imperialism. For instance, on the last page of the essay, he shows soaring enthusiasm when he entertains the utopian vision of an imperial Iberian Federation led by Catalonia. This Iberian Federation, Prat de la Riba proclaims,

podrà [...] enlairar-se al grau suprem d'imperialisme: podrà intervenir activament en el govern del món amb les altres potències mundials, podrà altra vegada expansionar-se sobre les terres bàrbares, i servir els alts interessos d'humanitat guiant cap a la civilització els pobles endarrerits i incultes.

[will rise {...} to the supreme stage of imperialism: it will be able to actively intervene in the governance of the world together with the other world powers, it will be able to expand itself upon barbaric lands, and it will be able to serve humanity's lofty interests by guiding backward and uncivilized peoples toward civilization]. (3: 170)

These are impetuous words, indeed. They are all the more shocking when one considers that they were written in 1906, a mere eight years after Spain's resounding defeat at the hands of the United States at Cavite and Santiago. While most *fin-de-siècle* Spanish intellectuals were struggling to integrate past imperial glory within their somber national narratives, Catalan intellectuals joyously linked the future of their nation to the fortunes of imperialism. This difference between Spanish and Catalan intellectuals acquires a contentious dimension when one realizes that when Prat de la Riba explored the prospects for a Catalan empire, he took inspiration from the ideas of Theodore Roosevelt. It seems as if Prat were trying to disparage the Spanish Empire by aligning himself with Roosevelt, who was one of the great propagandists for U.S. expansion and a reviled figure in Spain after his service in the Spanish-Cuban-American War, where he led the regiment popularly known as the "Rough Riders." Is there a connection, then, between Prat's formulation of Catalonia's pride in its potential imperialist achievements and Spain's humiliation in the Spanish-Cuban-American War, as his endorsement of Roosevelt's ideas seems to suggest? Is Catalonia's pride in its imperial prospects somehow connected to the characterization of Spain's American empire as a shameful enterprise? And, what is the relationship between pride and shame and the national ideals of early twentieth-century Europe, a period of intense competition between nations for status and power?

Complementing the previous three chapters on the ambivalent emotions aroused by Spain's empire in America, this chapter continues the project of reconstituting *fin-de-siècle* imperial emotions by examining the roots and

nature of Prat de la Riba's pride in Catalan imperialism. Methodologically, I am interested in the rhetorical strategies that allow Prat de la Riba's essay to become a vehicle for, and an index of, imperialist pride. In contrast to the previous chapters, where Spain's imperial past in America was the focus of powerful emotions, *La nacionalitat catalana* hardly makes any reference to this glorious history. In fact, one would be hard pressed to find evocations of the Spanish Empire's cultural achievements, religious justifications, or military figures in the essay. My argument suggests that Prat's silencing of Spain's American empire depends upon a previous characterization of that empire as a source of shame, and that such a characterization is a condition for the expression of collective pride in Catalonia's imperial prospects. Before investigating this collective form of pride, however, I will analyze the mild affective force of the essay's literary conventions. Without a clear picture of the subdued emotions enacted by the cognitive and polemical dimensions of Prat's essay, it is hard to gauge the significance of the intensely emotional pages that Prat devotes to Catalan imperialism.

The Subdued Emotions of Cognition and Controversy

As is often the case with doctrinal texts, *La nacionalitat catalana* has mostly attracted the interest of historians, while literary critics briefly reference it as a text that provided the ideological justification for the cultural practices of *Noucentisme*, the cultural movement named by Eugeni d'Ors that sought to establish a modern Catalan public sphere at the outset of the twentieth century.² By contrast, I seek to analyze Prat's essay as more than just ideological fodder and read it against essays by Unamuno, Ganivet, and Maeztu, in order to focus on its rhetorical and emotional fabric.

The first thing to note about *La nacionalitat catalana* is the long and tortuous process that led to its printing. Of the ten chapters into which the essay is divided, six were written at an earlier time and four – the introduction (Chapter I), the polemical chapter on political nationalism (Chapter VIII), the chapter on imperialism (Chapter IX), and the conclusion (Chapter X) – were written for the publication of the essay as a book in 1906. Chapters II through VII, which explore the formation of the Catalan nation and make up the bulk of what I will call the cognitive dimension of the essay, were written in large part in 1897 (for a series of talks Prat delivered at the Ateneu) and in 1905 (for the preface of Lluís Duran i Ventosa's *Regionalisme i Federalisme* [1905]).³ Thus, while chapters II through VII were not oriented toward the enthusiastic mood that existed in 1906 for obvious chronological reasons, the chapter on imperialism certainly was. In doing so, Prat sought to reach a very specific audience: the young intellectuals like Gabriel Alomar

and Eugeni d'Ors who were also conceiving of an imperialist nationalism for Catalonia at that time.

In the opening chapter of *La nacionalitat catalana*, Prat looks back at the early eighteenth century and paradoxically concludes that this dark period of Catalan history, when Philip V abolished the constitutions and institutions of Catalonia in the aftermath of the War of the Spanish Succession (1701–1714), was also a time of hope. This was so, according to Prat, because “l’hivern dels pobles no és la mort sinó la gestació d’una nova vida” [for a people, winter is not death but rather the gestation of new life] (3: 118). The biological metaphor is certainly not original, but it manages to convey Prat’s point: like other living organisms, nations have a foreordained cycle of growth already inscribed in the early stages of their development, no matter how difficult or insignificant such early development might appear. Following a strictly chronological order patterned on “el procés de les evolucions vitals” [the process of the evolutions of life] (3: 123), Prat traces the different stages of Catalonia’s march toward the affirmation of its authentic national personality, stages that he sees as “superposant-se a tall de capes geològiques sobre el granit inconmovible de la terra” [superimposing themselves like geological layers upon the earth’s hardened granite] (3: 123). The following passage gives a clear sense of the linear nature of Prat’s argument:

de primer, el període industrial, l’activitat econòmica, la riquesa; després, la renovació històrica, la literària, l’artística; més enllà, el despertament de la consciència reflexiva de l’ésser nacional: darrerament, la fase política, la creació de l’organisme polític de la nacionalitat, que és l’obra d’ara, la flor de voluntat del nostre renaixement integral.

[first, the industrial period, economic activity, wealth; thereafter, the historical, literary, and artistic renaissance; later, the awakening of the national being’s reflexive conscience: finally, the political phase, the creation of the political organism that belongs to our nation, which is today’s task, the blossoming will of our full-fledged renaissance].
(3: 123)

Like all nationalist intellectuals, Prat employs a teleological method of explanation, by which I mean that he characterizes past events (e.g., Catalonia’s industrialization, or the resurgence of the Catalan language) as legitimating the national achievements of the present, thereby configuring the present as the culmination of the past.⁴ In its simplest form, the argument goes like this: “Catalonia had always been a nation, she just did not know it until recently.” This is the reason why the history of Catalan nationalism is figured in the essay as the culmination of a labor

of self-awareness. This process started timidly with the questioning of the provincial system of government in the eighteenth century, was consolidated with the regional demands of the mid to late nineteenth century, and finally attained its apogee with the nationalist vindications of the early twentieth century, the time during which Prat writes.

In addition to making Prat's locus of enunciation a privileged vantage point that allows him to register the shortcomings of previous attempts to express Catalan identity, this type of reasoning reifies Catalan ethnicity into a natural fact. In Prat's scheme, the continuity of the Catalan nation seems comparable only to the persistence displayed by the phenomena of the physical world (recall the above geological analogy). Thus, the Catalan nation is "un fet natural com l'existència d'un home, independent dels drets que li fossin reconeguts" [a natural fact comparable to the existence of a man, independent of the rights that belong to him] (3: 134). Prat, like most early twentieth-century nationalist thinkers, and surely like Unamuno and Ganivet, who famously rooted Spanish national character in geography (see Chapters 2 and 3), clearly viewed nationhood as a natural fact. In contrast to this, today we tend rather to see ethnicity as a set of effects produced by institutions such as schooling and the family because, as Étienne Balibar observes, "No nation possesses an ethnic base naturally, but as social formations are nationalized, the populations included within them [...] are ethnicized" (96). This process of ethnicization, Balibar continues, implies that such populations "are represented in the past or in the future *as if* they formed a natural community, possessing of itself an identity of origins, culture and interests which transcends individuals and social conditions" (96; emphasis in orig.).

On the level of the history of ideas, this naturalization of Catalan cultural unity can be seen as a function of nineteenth-century organicism, which was absorbed by Prat through a number of different channels: the German Historical School of Law and its consideration of law as an expression of the people, Auguste Comte's vindication of medieval corporatism, Herbert Spencer's extension of evolution into sociology, and the social doctrines of Spanish Krausism (Balcells, "Evolució" 44). Like these other organicists, Prat believed that there was an analogy between the organization of living beings and that of human societies. On a practical level, however, one should point out that Prat's conception of the nation as a natural fact allowed him to concentrate his energies on his ultimate goal: the creation of quasi-state institutions that would ensure the reproduction of Catalan ethnicity in Catalonia's urban and industrial society. This trait sharply distinguishes Prat's project from the Romantic-Positivist projects of Unamuno and Ganivet, which reflected abundantly on the nation, but

not on the state. Prat, like them, might have conceived of the *existence* of Catalan nationhood as a natural fact but, in contrast to both Unamuno and Ganivet, he knew all too well that its *reproduction* could only take place through sustained institutional activity. This is why Prat's nationalism has been called a "functional nationalism," that is, a nationalism understood as an instrument of technical and cultural modernization backed up by quasi-state institutions (Bilbeny, *Política* 139–53).

But if, as Prat claims, Catalan nationhood is a self-evident, natural creation, why devote a whole essay to the demonstration of its existence? Answering this question requires one to understand the literary conventions followed by Prat in *La nacionalitat catalana*, a text that can best be described as a blend of cognitive and polemical essays. The cognitive dimension of Prat's essay is most evident in those passages that offer a reflection on the past and present of Catalonia as a nation, passages where "nation" has the status of a (natural) fact to be described. As Marc Angenot observes, cognitive essays function like a closed system in which the essayist brings together a series of phenomena and derives from them the laws of their operation (47). As texts that are above all descriptive and demonstrative, cognitive essays do not seek to question the object of their reflection. They simply take it as given and infer a set of general principles from it. This is precisely what Prat sets out to do in many pages of *La nacionalitat catalana*, where he takes the existence of Catalonia as a fact and then traces its evolution in a linear fashion. In a distanced, objective manner he writes about Catalonia's early modern decadence: "Catalunya, sense direcció política autònoma, va quedar també sense cultura pròpia" [Catalonia, deprived of its own political direction, was also left without its own culture] (3: 119). He also revisits the efforts of mid nineteenth-century poets, historians, and archeologists who made clear that "Catalunya tenia llengua, Dret, art propis; que tenia un esperit nacional, un caràcter nacional, un pensament nacional; Catalunya era, doncs, una nació" [Catalonia had her own language, Law, and art; it had a national spirit, a national character, a national thought; Catalonia was, then, a nation] (3: 134). And finally, he writes about the emergence of early twentieth-century political nationalism, the key principle of which he describes thus: "Cada nacionalitat ha de tenir el seu Estat" [Every nation should have its own State] (3: 159).

What is striking about these statements is that they are enunciated from a neutral, universal perspective. In contrast to the essays by Unamuno, Ganivet, or Maeztu, where the essayist's self was clearly inscribed in the text, it is hard to say with a degree of certainty who is speaking here. It is as if Prat's self were erased.⁵ Indeed, these statements come from everywhere and nowhere. As such, they can be described as a type of speech that Marc Angenot has designated as "institutional speech" (49). Prat will only abandon

this institutional stance (and its universalizing, neutral implications) in a few passages: when he engages in a controversy with those who deny the existence of Catalonia as a nation (3: 154–58) and, most notably, when he discusses the possibility of Catalan imperialism toward the end of the essay (3: 164–70). In both instances, Prat's self is clearly inscribed in the text and his prose acquires a more intimate, emotionally charged tone.

The first example of a clear inscription of Prat's self emerges where the essay takes a polemical turn. If every polemic presupposes the demonstration of a thesis and the refutation of an opposing thesis (Angenot 34), then *La nacionalitat catalana* is clearly a polemical essay in that it strives to demonstrate the existence of Catalonia as a nation while attacking those who consider Catalonia a mere province or region of Spain without a culture of her own. Prat enunciates his thesis thus:

si existeix un esperit col·lectiu, una ànima social catalana que ha sabut crear una llengua, un Dret, un art catalans, he dit el que volia dir, he demostrat el que volia demostrar: això és, que *existeix una nacionalitat catalana*.

[if there exists a collective spirit, a Catalan social soul that has been able to create a Catalan language, Law, and art, then I have said what I wanted to say, I have demonstrated what I set out to demonstrate: that is, that *there is a Catalan nationhood*]. (3: 158; emphasis in orig.)⁶

The implications of this thesis are incalculable because they lead to a proposition that was as controversial in Prat's time as it is today:

Conseqüència de tota la doctrina aquí exposada és la reivindicació d'un Estat català, en unió federativa amb els Estats de les altres nacionalitats d'Espanya.

[The consequence of the doctrine here exposed is the vindication of a Catalan State that would be united in a federation with the States of the other Spanish nations]. (3: 164)

In keeping with the structure of polemical discourse, Prat is well aware that this federal solution is directed against a clearly identified set of adversaries. First and foremost, those who uphold a centralizing view of Spain and are identified in the text as Castilians. According to Prat, Castilians are responsible for a number of historical injustices: Catalonia's loss of its political freedoms (3: 118–19), of her own culture (3: 119), and, in part, of her economic decline (3: 118, 123). Against the centralizing "Castilians" who consider Catalonia a constitutive component of the Spanish nation,

Prat introduces what is arguably one of the essay's key distinctions: the differentiation between the Nation as a primary social and cultural unit and the State as a sovereign, exclusively political organization. Catalonia's tragedy, according to Prat, is that it has been subjected to a State "organitzat, inspirat, dirigit per una altra nació" [organized, inspired, and directed by another nation] (3: 135). In short, Prat is directing his polemical thoughts against those who have dominated Catalonia, impeding the fulfillment of her political, cultural, and economic potential. But Prat's adversaries are also, more generally, the defenders of the national status quo, those who fear the partition of already-constituted nation-states into ever smaller nationalities. Prat reacts with indignation against those who present nationalist movements as regressive phenomena bent on disrupting the stability of great (i.e. multinational) states: "Acusar, doncs, el nacionalisme d'ésser tendència regressiva és no entendre'l [...] és [...] viure en l'edat de pedra de la ciència política" [To accuse nationalism of being a regressive tendency is to fail to understand it {...} it is {...} to live in the stone age of political science] (3: 162). Here, the contrast with the cognitive passages could not be greater: Prat's words are passionate, highly subjective and, rather than effacing Prat's self, bring it forward.

This fundamentally ambiguous status of the Catalan nation, which in the text figures as both a fact and a hypothesis in need of demonstration, sheds considerable light on some of the most singular aspects of *La nacionalitat catalana*, an essay that is certainly part of the turn-of-the-century regenerationist atmosphere, but that cannot be conflated with the essays of the Generation of 1898. For one thing, in Prat's attitude toward the past there is no trace of the iconoclastic impetus characteristic of the early work of the '98ers. Aware as he was of the cultural and political fragility of the Catalan nation, Prat did not have the luxury of seeking to break with past advocates of Catalan identity, but was rather looking to create continuity with them. In *La nacionalitat catalana*, for instance, he praises a number of earlier works that are the antipodes to his own conservative yet secularizing brand of Catalanism, from the federal republican regionalism of Valentí Almirall's *Lo catalanisme* (3: 127–28) to the deeply Catholic regionalism of Josep Torras i Bages's *La tradició catalana* (3: 134). Elsewhere he remarks that "recordar-se dels morts, honrar els morts, és una gran virtut de les famílies, les nacions i les races fortes" [to remember and to honor the dead is a great virtue displayed by strong families, nations, and races] (3: 171). Santos Juliá is right to observe, then, that Prat de la Riba and his then young nationalist friends Josep Puig i Cadafalch and Lluís Duran i Ventosa saw themselves as the culmination of an evolution, as those who brought the process of regaining Catalonia's political freedom to its pinnacle (106).

Santos Juliá also notes that there is a second element that distinguishes Prat from the intellectuals of the so-called Generation of 1898: namely that he conceived of his writings as a means to intervene in public affairs in solidarity with a number of other political, economic, and cultural agents (106–07). Rather than the lone prophet preaching in the desert and proud of his solitude – a figure epitomized by Unamuno – Prat not only managed to rally a number of prestigious figures from Catalan civil society behind his nationalist project, but he was also instrumental in the creation of key political and cultural institutions.⁷ Prat's triple condition as an intellectual, political figure, and "statesman" helps explain the prestige that has come to surround him. Prat was not only an intellectual like Unamuno, Ganivet, or Maeztu; he was also one of the leaders of Spain's first modern political party (the *Lliga Regionalista*) and a shrewd politician who used his executive powers at the helm of the *Diputació de Barcelona* [The Provincial Council of Barcelona] (1907–1914) and the *Mancomunitat de Catalunya* [The Commonwealth of Catalonia] (1914–1917) to extend Catalan autonomy. The disagreements that Prat's conservative brand of nationalism raised (and continue to raise) in Catalonia are thus tempered by his accomplishments as an inclusive political leader who managed to wrestle important parcels of power from the central Spanish government and as a founder of a number of cultural institutions that are still central to Catalan cultural life.⁸

The third and last element that singles out *La nacionalitat catalana* from turn-of-the-century essays on Spanish national identity has to do with the text's emotional investments in empire. In contrast to the economies of imperial mourning and melancholia that we have seen at work in the essays by Unamuno and Ganivet, and also in contrast to the indignation present in Maeztu's writings, Prat's emotional investment in empire is not linked to an exterior cause (the loss of the Spanish Empire), but rather to an interior one, namely Catalonia's self-image. To understand how imperial pride is constitutive of the national subjectivity articulated by *La nacionalitat catalana*, we must now move beyond the essay's generic features to a consideration of how the mild emotional intensity evident in the polemical passages reaches its highest point in the next-to-last chapter, which is appropriately titled "L'imperialisme."

Imperialism and the Creation of National Pride

Without a doubt, "L'imperialisme" is the chapter that best captures the expansive mood of Catalan culture circa 1906 referred to at the beginning of this chapter. As the most optimistic part of the essay, Prat's musings on imperialism are rendered in a surprisingly passionate and personal

tone, as if the vision of Catalonia as an empire somehow energized Prat's own self-image. Prat's succinct, straightforward definition of imperialism, "L'imperialisme és el període triomfal d'un nacionalisme" [Imperialism is the triumphant stage of nationalism] (3: 165), hardly captures the chapter's jubilant mood. As Prat entertains the vision of an imperialist Catalonia, he abandons his objective, universalizing mode of argument and instead adopts a confessional tone.

It is in his discussion of imperialism that Prat clearly inscribes himself in the text. He tells us how Ralph Waldo Emerson's words on self-reliance, which were a major inspiration for his defense of imperialism, resonate with him: "Ell [Emerson] parla a l'home, però jo, aquestes paraules seves, les sento adreçades als pobles, a les races" [He {Emerson} talks to man, but I hear his words as if they were addressed to peoples, to races] (3: 165). He shares with the reader the enthusiasm and the emotional upheaval provoked by such words, which "Vibren dintre meu amb accents d'apostolat col·lectiu, d'apostolat de les nacions" [vibrate within me with a sense of collective preaching, of national preaching] (3: 165). And, more generally, he adopts a highly subjective, almost lyrical language that forcefully departs from the matter-of-factness that informs the bulk of his argument, alluding, for instance, to "el bell moment de la florida imperialista" [the beautiful moment of imperialist blossoming] (3: 167), and comparing the expansive nation with a river that bursts out of its banks and fertilizes the surrounding lands (3: 167).

By inscribing himself in the text and by couching his imperialist claims in a sentimental language exuding enthusiasm, Prat exhorts his readers to be proud of Catalonia's achievements. Despite all appearances to the contrary, despite Catalonia not having a state of her own, Prat writes, "ja el nacionalisme català ha començat la segona funció de tots els nacionalismes, la funció d'influència exterior, la funció imperialista" [Catalan nationalism has already begun to fulfill the second function of all nationalisms, the function of exterior influence, the imperialist function] (3: 169). How is such expansion possible when Prat himself admits that there is still much to do on the domestic front? If, as is well known, Catalonia had no colonial possessions at the time, what are the grounds for such imperial pride? How can Catalonia, a subordinated country with no cultural or political institutions of her own, be entitled to feel pride like Great Britain or the United States, the two imperial models that Prat seeks to emulate? The key to understanding Prat's position, and to unraveling this paradox, is to reflect on the essentially competitive and comparative nature of pride.

Robert Solomon defines pride as a self-evaluating emotion that involves "a celebration, however limited, of one's significance" (99). In contrast to

shame, which involves an attribution of fault or blame, pride brings about praise and provides a sense of achievement to the self. When one feels pride, one thinks well of oneself. In the Western philosophical and literary traditions, however, this thinking well of oneself has not been consistently valued. According to Jerome Neu, pride is a notoriously ambiguous emotion that has been characterized as having a dual, often contradictory, nature: on the one hand, the Christian tradition has cast pride as the deadliest of the seven deadly sins, a passion that promotes arrogance and egotism, and that ultimately leads to a rebellion against God; on the other hand, pride has been seen as a positive emotion that is crucial to one's self-satisfaction, confidence, and even dignity ("Pride").⁹

In the so-called Age of Empire (1875–1914), national pride in empire was an emotion deliberately articulated and managed by nation-states. To be more precise, European nation-states claimed pride in their military achievements, their expansion over the four corners of the globe, and their "racial" superiority over the colonial peoples. Three brief examples will serve to illustrate this point. First, in his famous polemic *Imperialism: A Study*, J.A. Hobson bitterly complained that British children were indoctrinated in the supposed benefits of imperialism by feeding "the always overweening pride of race at an age when self-confidence most commonly prevails" (217). Second, Spain's so-called War of Africa in 1859–1860, a series of modest military raids in northern Morocco, saw the press claiming pride in the superiority of the "Spanish race" (Álvarez Junco, *Mater dolorosa* 511). And third, the beginnings of the Spanish-Cuban-American War of 1898 were the occasion for displays of pride in traditional representations of Spanish national identity, such as the figure of the lion, "a symbol of valour and nobility, as opposed to the pig, representing American uncouthness and commercialism" (Balfour, *The End* 61).

Although it is easy in hindsight to think about these examples of Spanish pride in empire as textbook cases of false pride, insofar as they were based on what today would be considered an erroneous belief in Spanish racial and cultural superiority, they nonetheless point to a fundamental aspect of the emotion, namely that pride "must indeed depend on a suitably valuable object being suitably related to one" (Neu, "Pride" 229). This means that we can only be proud of an object that we regard as a precious part of our self (our cultural heritage, our territories, our exploits, our "race," etc.). Revising David Hume's treatment of pride in his *Treatise* (1740), Jerome Neu has identified two conceptual conditions of pride: one, that "the agreeable object must be closely related to ourselves [...] or at most to ourselves and a few others" ("Pride" 229), and two, that "the source of pride must be seen as an achievement or an advantage" ("Pride" 232). For

Neu, these two conditions are necessary features of both individual and collective pride.

In collective forms of pride such as national pride, the object of pride is an ideal. As Sara Ahmed points out:

The possession of an ideal in feelings of pride [...] involves a performance, which gives the subject or group “value” and “character.” We “show” ourselves to be this way or that, a showing which is always addressed to others. It is the relation of having as being – of having ideals as [a] sign of being an ideal subject – that allows the “I” and the “we” to be aligned. (109)

One is proud to belong to a nation if one sees oneself approximate the ideal the nation has set for itself, whatever its content may be (for instance, the nation as being democratic, as promoting liberty, as reinforcing cultural unity or, as in the case of Prat de la Riba, as being expansive). In *La nacionalitat catalana*, the content of the national ideal is shaped by Prat’s *sui generis* interpretation of selected passages of writings by Ralph Waldo Emerson and Theodore Roosevelt, two figures who had a decisive influence for early twentieth-century conservative Catalanism whom Prat hails as “masters of imperialism” (3: 165).¹⁰

This characterization of Emerson already suggests that his ideas, which are famous for their radical articulation of individualism, are thoroughly simplified by Prat. Their complexity and elusiveness flattened, they are reduced to a number of catchy slogans meant to evoke principles of nationalist action. Paraphrasing Emerson, Prat admonishes his readers:

Sigues tu mateix. No imitis, no cerquis en els altres, cerca dintre teu.
No t’emmotllits als altres, fes que el altres s’emmotllin a tu. Sigues llei i senyor de tu mateix.

[Be yourself. Do not imitate, do not look to others, but look within yourself. Do not emulate others, but make others emulate you. Be your own law and your own master]. (3: 165)

Although it is difficult to identify the precise source of these thoughts, for Prat does not cite a specific text by Emerson, it is reasonable to suggest that they come from “Self-Reliance” (*Essays: First Series*, 1841), one of Emerson’s most famous essays, which was translated into Catalan by Cebrià de Montoliu in 1904 (Ucelay-Da Cal, *El imperialismo* 359).

Emerson does in effect say things similar to the above-quoted thoughts: “Trust thyself” (206), “What I must do is all that concerns me, not what

the people think" (263), "I must be myself" (273), "Insist on yourself; never imitate" (278), etc. But both the intent and general meaning of Emerson's words are far removed from the nationalist rules of conduct that Prat is making them out to be. As George Kateb has recently shown, self-reliance, a notion central to Emerson's thought, is best understood as an intellectual method that seeks "to persuade us to a happy responsiveness to contrasting or antagonistic thoughts and phenomena" (8) by appealing to "the wish to be oneself, to live as one thinks best, to take chances deviantly" (32). In Prat de la Riba, however, it figures as a collectivized disposition that ensures the conformity and consolidation of national life, which in Prat's project was regulated by an idealized notion of civil society where (Emersonian) individualism paradoxically coexisted with a communitarian spirit (Ucelay-Da Cal, *El imperialismo* 356).

While Prat's invocation of Emerson as a "master of imperialism" seems rather strained, his appeal to Roosevelt's ideas as a way to shape Catalonia's expansive national ideal seems more plausible. For Roosevelt was not only a propagandist for U.S. expansion, but also a sharp critic of Spain's rule in the Americas and a decisive figure in putting an abrupt end to such rule. According to Prat, Roosevelt is worthy of shaping Catalonia's national ideal because he gave a moral meaning to Emerson's unconditional assertions (3: 165), he was an ardent patriot who loved the political and cultural unity of his people (3: 166), and he was a champion of his country's expansion who did not hesitate to employ violence in order to advance the values of civilization (3: 166). Much like Emerson, Roosevelt was a steady presence in early twentieth-century Catalan culture, and organic intellectuals of the Lliga Regionalista, specifically Eugeni d'Ors, often championed the masculinist aggressiveness manifest in some of his writings, such as in *The Strenuous Life* (see Ucelay-Da Cal, *El imperialismo* 592-98). As with Emerson, Prat does not quote any specific text by Roosevelt, but his contention that "Patriotisme i expansió han de menester en la societat internacional d'avui l'ajuda de la guerra" [Patriotism and expansion require the help of war in today's international society] resonates with the call with which Roosevelt closes his speech on the strenuous life: "let us shrink from no strife, moral or physical, within or without the nation [...] for it is only through strife, through hard and dangerous endeavor, that we shall ultimately win the goal of true national greatness" (172).

According to Prat, there are two distinct historical experiences that make Catalonia approximate the imperial ideal supposedly exemplified by the thought of Emerson's and Roosevelt's writings: one, the recent progress made in advancing Catalonia's political, economic, and cultural autonomy, and two, the resulting growing hegemony of Catalonia over

the rest of the Spanish state in political, economic, and cultural matters. As Prat writes, to attain the imperial ideal a nation needs above all to be a self-reliant, internally coherent community: “Nacionalisme és vida nacional d’un ideal, és desig de vida pròpia, i això ja és un començament d’imperi” [Nationalism is the national embodiment of an ideal, it is the desire to live an independent life, and this is already the beginning of empire] (3: 168). Once this nationalization of social life has been achieved, Prat goes on to argue, the national ideal is ready to project itself over other peoples and territories, thereby attaining the status of an imperial nation. For Prat, and for many other *fin-de-siècle* intellectuals, Catalonia had made great advances in its quest for autonomy and was already undertaking her expansion within Spain. With evident self-satisfaction and pride, Prat closes his essay by proclaiming Catalonia’s “imperial” achievements:

L’art, la literatura, les concepcions jurídiques, l’ideal polític i econòmic de Catalunya han iniciat l’obra exterior, la penetració pacífica d’Espanya, la transfusió a les altres nacionalitats espanyoles i a l’organisme de l’Estat que les governa. El criteri econòmic dels catalans en les qüestions aranzelàries fa anys que ha triomfat. L’art català comença, com la literatura, a irradiar per tot Espanya. El nostre pensament polític ha emprès la seva lluita amb les concepcions dominants, i els primers combats fan augurar ben propera la victòria.

[Catalonia’s art, literature, juridical concepts, and political and economic ideals have begun their exterior projection, peacefully penetrating Spain, spreading throughout the other Spanish nationalities and the State organism that governs them. Catalonia’s economic criteria on trade tariffs have triumphed for a few years now. Both Catalan art and literature are beginning to shine throughout Spain. And as our political ideas struggle against dominant conceptions, the first combats herald the coming victory]. (3: 170)

The military language of this passage and the violence suggested by the allusions to Catalonia’s “triumph,” “struggle,” and “coming victory” are tempered by Prat’s view of Catalan expansion as a “peaceful” endeavor, suggesting that there is an irreducible ambiguity in the way in which Prat relates to the violence inherent in imperialism. On the one hand, like his admired Roosevelt, Prat thinks that imperial nations not only have the right, but also the obligation to use violence to impose their cultural, political, and economic values upon less-civilized peoples:

Els pobles bàrbars, o els que van en sentit contrari a la civilització,

han d'ésser sotmesos de grat o per força a la direcció i al poder de les nacions civilitzades.

[Barbarian peoples, or those who oppose civilization, have to be submitted, either by their own accord or by force, to the direction and power of civilized nations]. (3: 166)

On the other hand, he was fully aware of Catalonia's subordinate position with respect to the Spanish state and insisted, for strategic reasons, on the peaceful nature of Catalan imperialism – as he ironically remarked in one of his earlier articles on the Cuban conflict, Catalonia was “l'última de les Índies espanyoles” [the last of the Spanish Indies] (1: 314). Perhaps Prat's ambiguity with respect to imperial violence was an unavoidable effect of the ideas of contest, struggle, and competition evoked by the term imperialism at the time. As Fredric Jameson reminds us, during the early twentieth century the word “imperialism” primarily evokes the idea of rivalry between imperial nation-states (“Modernism” 47), and as Prat's recounting of Catalonia's imperial achievements makes clear, there is a very fine and often blurry line between competition and contest and squabble and struggle.

Lest one think of Prat as an extremist, rogue intellectual, it bears emphasizing that he was not alone in talking about Catalan imperial pride in the early 1900s. Perhaps the most enthusiastic, if unorthodox, intellectual supporting Prat de la Riba's imperialist vision was Eugeni d'Ors (1881–1954). Although short-lived and notoriously equivocal, Ors's use of imperialism began by echoing Prat. Ors, a philosopher and journalist, imagines what Prat's Catalan imperial pride would look like in July 1909 in one of the daily articles (his famous *gloses*) he wrote for the Catalanist newspaper *La Veu de Catalunya*. Within Catalonia, Ors writes, imperialism consists in “volar posseir a Catalunya els instruments de govern” [wanting Catalonia to possess the tools of government] so as to better solve her own cultural, moral, and social problems (*Glosari 1908–1909* 551); outside of Catalonia, he continues, imperialism names the will to intervene in “els afers generals espanyols” [general Spanish affairs] and even in “els afers mundials” [world affairs] (551).¹¹

This aspiration to the universality of Catalan values was also desired by a number of *fin-de-siècle* intellectuals who viewed their nation's (imperial) achievements with pride. Indeed, there was a wide movement that called for Catalan nationalism to transcend its local roots and go beyond national particularity. Consider, for instance, the interventions by two ideologically opposed intellectuals: conservative Miquel del Sants Oliver and leftist Gabriel Alomar. The former argued in 1906 that Catalan nationalism

should transform its fight for particularism into a fight for hegemony within the Spanish state (*Entre dos Españas* 271). Underlying Oliver's call for Catalan hegemony was a clearly imperialist vision in which the greatness of Catalan culture would impose itself "con tal fuerza de atracción, que el centro dinámico de los pueblos españoles [...] caiga, lentamente, lentamente hacia acá [Catalunya]" [with such force of attraction that Catalonia would slowly become the dynamic center of the Spanish peoples] (*Entre dos Españas* 270).

This desire for universalization is also evident in the writings of Alomar, a leftist nationalist intellectual who, in a lecture delivered at the Ateneu Barcelonès in 1904, spoke forcefully about the "futurism" of Catalonia. Alomar's emphasis on Catalonia's "futurism," a neologism that was later to be appropriated by Marinetti to name the first avant-garde movement, is quite similar to Oliver's call for Catalan hegemony and to Prat's pride in Catalan imperialism.¹² Like them, Alomar sees Catalan culture as having enough power and prestige to modernize the rest of Spain by imposing its own customs and values: "Catalunya [...] té millors condicions que el reste d'Espanya per a europeïtzar-se i recabar l'hegemonia del territori comú" [Catalonia is better prepared than the rest of Spain to Europeanize itself and claim for itself a hegemonic position in the common territory] (76). And also like Oliver and Prat, Alomar calls for the imperial transformation of Catalan culture: "és precis ésser extranacionals, encarnar un ideal de *difusió*, d'expansió universal de la pròpia substància, del propi ideal, del propi voler" [it is necessary to go beyond the nation, to embody an ideal of *diffusion*, of universal expansion of our own being, our own ideal, our own will] (108; emphasis in orig.). But unlike Oliver and Prat, Alomar advocates this expansion of Catalan culture from a leftist republican position concerned with the welfare and participation of the common people in society at large (58). Thus, in Alomar not much remains of the authoritarianism that informs the imperialist visions of Prat, Ors, and Oliver, even though his liberal, progressive national project was paradoxically expressed in a decidedly imperialist and elitist language – for Alomar intellectual elites were the ones chosen to create the national ideals of the future (67).

One of the few voices who consistently spoke against the rhetoric of imperial pride was Domènec Martí i Julià, a socialist Catalanist who viewed nationalism and imperialism as incompatible. Deploring the militaristic and authoritarian aspects of imperialism, Martí i Julià offered a demolishing – albeit simplistic – explanation of the phenomenon in "Nacionalisme y Imperialisme," an article published in 1905 in the Catalanist weekly *Juventut*: "l'imperialisme no fa més que satisfer el diletantisme dels nietzschianians que componen l'oligarquia dominadora" [imperialism is merely a way

of satisfying the Nietzschean dilettantism of those who make up the dominating oligarchy] (506).

With the benefit of hindsight, the above expressions of Catalan imperial pride can be seen as textbook cases of misguided optimism and excessive pride. If one can speak of "excessive pride" when one thinks too well of oneself "on grounds which are not sufficient to support this thought" (Taylor 47), then can one also read Prat's celebration of Catalonia's achievements as an expression of such hubris? Today, when none of the imperialist claims have come to fruition and Catalonia is still a subordinated nation, it is easy to claim that Prat's pride in empire was excessive. But I would argue that this was less the case in the early 1900s, when Spain's resounding defeat in 1898 and the dynamism of Catalan society led more than one commentator to view Catalonia's accomplishments as something extraordinary, especially when compared with the rest of Spain. Perhaps the most famous praise came from Nicaraguan poet Rubén Darío, hardly considered a Catalan nationalist. The chronicles that Darío wrote from Barcelona and Madrid on January 1 and 3, 1899 provide us with a good example of the way in which a modernist observer translated the social, political, and intellectual differences that existed between Barcelona and Madrid into an index of Catalonia's superiority over the rest of Spain.

Darío's description of the two cities, which clearly figure as synecdoche for Catalonia and Spain, offers a stark contrast. According to Darío, Barcelona is a confident city teeming with people, full of proud workers, diligent industrialists and cosmopolitan artists that easily surpassed Madrid, which is depicted as a somber, lifeless city full of self-interested politicians, irresponsible citizens, and provincial intellectuals. While Catalonia boasts of "esa existencia fabril que se desarrolla prodigiosa en focos como Reus, Mataró, Villanueva, y entre otros tantos, Sitges" [a manufacturing existence that prodigiously develops in places such as Reus, Mataró, Villanueva and, among so many others, Sitges] (24–25), the rest of Spain seems tied to a predominantly agricultural economy in which "las máquinas modernas son casi por completo desconocidas" [modern machines are almost completely unknown] (32). In an obvious reference to Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Madrid is seen as a city dominated by "una exhalación de organismo descompuesto" [an exhalation of rotting flesh] (29), whose intellectual life is clearly inferior to that of Barcelona. Its main intellectual figures are either dead, dying or ill. They are literally ruins that belong to a forsaken time: "Cánovas, muerto; Ruiz Zorrilla, muerto; Castelar, desilusionado y enfermo; Valera, ciego; Campoamor, mudo; Menéndez Pelayo [...]" [Cánovas, dead; Ruiz Zorrilla, dead; Castelar, sick and disillusioned; Valera, blind; Campoamor, silent; Menéndez Pelayo {...}] (29). New writers, such as Ángel Ganivet, Jacinto Benavente, or Ramón del Valle-Inclán, have great difficulty making a name

for themselves in Spain, “la tierra de la tradición indomable” [the land of indomitable tradition] (75). This situation contrasts sharply with that of Catalonia, where young, modernist writers such as Santiago Rusiñol not only rose to hegemony in the Catalan literary field but also acquired a wider, social representativeness:

Un Rusiñol es floración que significa el triunfo de la vida moderna y la promesa del futuro en un país en donde sociológica y mentalmente se ejerce y cultiva ese don que da siempre la victoria: la fuerza.

[Rusiñol is like a blossom that represents the triumph of modern life and the promise of the future for a country where people, both sociologically and mentally, practice and cultivate that gift that always grants victory: power]. (27).

The key point of Darío’s observations for our argument is that he connects Barcelona’s superiority over Madrid with Spain’s recent imperial defeat. In Barcelona, the city that concentrates Catalonia’s power, vitality, and expansion, the myths of the early modern Spanish Empire are seen as a source of degradation and shame. The opening sentences of Darío’s chronicle about Barcelona are telling in this respect. There he recounts how, at the Port of Barcelona, a Catalan worker sees the monument in honor of Columbus and exclaims: “Más valiera le hubiesen sacado los ojos a ese tal” [It would have been better if they had taken out the eyes of that scoundrel] (20). Now, how can one explain Columbus’s fall from favor? How can one account for the fact that in 1892 he was elevated as a central figure in the Spanish national imagination and that a mere seven years later, in 1899, he was seen in Catalonia, a confident and powerful land, as a degraded (and degrading) figure? Is there a more profound connection, then, between the expression of Catalan imperial pride and the defeat of Spain’s imperial aspirations?

Witnessing the Spanish Empire’s Shame

What is really at issue here is the comparative and competitive nature of pride (Neu, “Pride” 229; Taylor 17–18). Translated into geopolitical terms, this means that pride in empire is only intelligible by reference to some sort of global hierarchical system in which some nations occupy a high position and others a lowly position. As many commentators have pointed out, the period immediately surrounding Spain’s disastrous defeat in the Spanish-Cuban-American War of 1898 saw the emergence of a new system of international relations characterized by the transfer of power from the nations of Southern Europe (Portugal, Spain, France, and Italy) to those of Northern Europe

(Britain and Germany). Following in the steps of France (defeated by Prussia in 1870) and Italy (defeated by Ethiopian armies in Adwa in 1896), Spain in 1898 was forced to face what contemporary Social-Darwinist narratives readily called its "racial inferiority." As a member of the Latin race, Spain was seen to occupy an inferior position with respect to its Anglo-Saxon counterparts (Jover Zamora, 1898; Jover Zamora, "Las relaciones").¹³ Spain, like other weaker powers such as Portugal and Italy, not only could not aspire to colonize new territories, but was forced to relinquish the ones that were in her possession (Balfour, "Spain").¹⁴ Catalonia, by contrast, and despite all appearances, saw herself as occupying, or rather as wanting to occupy, a high position in this system of international relations – hence Prat's vindication of the U.S. imperial ideal and hence, too, the rather surprising claim by Pompeu Gener (1846–1920), a Catalan essayist who gained some intellectual currency at the beginning of the twentieth century but has since sunk into oblivion, that Catalonia is the result of the fusion of Aryan races (708).

Lord Salisbury's famous address to The Primrose League on May 4, 1898 provides us with a clear outline of how such a system of international relations worked at the end of the nineteenth century.¹⁵ The world, he proclaimed, was divided into living and dying nations. The former are great nations "growing in power every year, growing in wealth, growing in dominion, growing in the perfection of their organization" ("The Primrose League"). The latter, to which Spain was implicitly compared, "decade after decade [...] are weaker, poorer, and less provided with leading men or institutions in which they can trust, apparently drawing nearer and nearer to their fate and yet clinging with strange tenacity to the life which they have got" ("The Primrose League"). The living nations were the only ones entitled to feel imperial pride; the dying nations, in contrast, especially those who had lost or were about to lose their colonial possessions, only had recourse to the imperial emotion of shame.

This division of the world into living and dying nations posed a difficult problem for expressions of Catalan pride in empire. For despite the best efforts of nationalist intellectuals to characterize Catalonia as a "living nation," it remained, *de facto* as well as *de jure*, part of Spain, a "dying nation." Furthermore, Catalonia was directly involved in the failed colonial history that, according to Lord Salisbury and most Anglo-Saxon commentators, made Spain an increasingly irrelevant power, one that was not entitled to pride, but rather only to shame.

Although Catalonia did not participate in the early colonial trade with the Americas, it gradually did so throughout the eighteenth century, gaining a considerable share of the colonial markets. By the nineteenth century, Cuba,

Puerto Rico, and the Philippines were a considerable source of wealth for Catalonia – for its merchant fleet, for its farmers and wine producers who exported their goods to captive colonial markets, and for its industrialists, who received cheap cotton from overseas (see Fradera, *Catalunya i Ultramar*). This economic involvement also left its cultural mark. Consider, for instance, the imperial subtext of the great epic poem by Jacint Verdaguer (1845–1902) *L'Atlàntida* (1877). Written on board one of the Compañía Trasatlántica's ships (the transoceanic shipping company owned by the López family, a pillar of late nineteenth-century colonial trade) as it was crossing the Atlantic ocean en route to the Antilles (Ucelay-Da Cal, *El imperialismo* 227), *L'Atlàntida* is regarded by many as the towering achievement of the *Renaixença* and the most popular poem of nineteenth-century Catalan literature.¹⁶ This great Catalan poem not only glorified Isabella of Castile's role in the “discovery” of the New World, but also offered a vision of (Spanish) national grandeur in which the Catholic virtues of empire figured prominently:¹⁷

[Lo savi ancià] Veu murgonar amb l'espanyol imperi
 l'arbre sant de la creu a altre hemisferi,
 i el món a la seva ombra reflorir;
 encarnar-s'hi del cel la sabiesa;
 i diu a qui s'enlaira a sa escomesa:
 --Vola, Colon [...] ara jo puc morir!

[{The old wise man} sees sprouting the Cross's holy branch in another hemisphere, as part of the Spanish Empire; the world blossoms in the Cross's shadow and wisdom incarnates in heaven. He says to whom marches upon the New World: “Go on, Columbus [...] I can now rest in peace!"]. (170)

The point here is that the most famous Catalan poem from the nineteenth century celebrates a number of symbols (Queen Isabella, Columbus, the Spanish Empire) that by the late nineteenth century were an integral part of Spanish liberal identity (see Chapter 1; Álvarez Junco, *Mater dolorosa* 220–21; Schmidt-Nowara, *The Conquest* 53–95). In a similar gesture, a few years later the Catalan bourgeoisie would again pay homage to Columbus by building a monument in his honor to inaugurate the 1888 Universal Exhibition in Barcelona. According to a recent commentator, this monument projected a “liberal-provincialist memory” that sought to vindicate the values of the Catalan bourgeoisie (industrialism, capitalism, secularization) as part of the construction of a strong Spanish national identity (Michonneau).

What these examples suggest is that, until the late 1880s, the imperial projects produced in Catalonia were seen not as part of a competing,

exclusively Catalan, more modern imperialism, but rather as a proud contribution to a wider Spanish colonial endeavor that was associated with both progress and power. In short, they attempted to reconcile a Catalan sense of (imperial) progress with the construction of the Spanish liberal state through the language of what Josep Maria Fradera has called “dual patriotism.” Within the framework of dual patriotism, the emerging Catalan national culture of the mid-nineteenth century “no era una arma dirigida contra els fonaments del patriotisme espanyol, que constituïa un dels factors claus de legitimació de la pròpia revolució liberal també a Catalunya” [was not a weapon directed against the foundations of Spanish patriotism, which constituted one of the crucial legitimating factors of the liberal revolution in Catalonia] (*Cultura nacional* 124), but rather a distinctive component of such Spanish patriotism.

One of the clearest expressions of this attitude can be found in the works and career of Víctor Balaguer (1824–1901), a crucial figure in the *Renaixença* and a prominent Liberal politician in Madrid who was directly involved in Spain's colonial enterprises in the Caribbean and the Pacific. In his book on the history of Barcelona, the three-volume *Las calles de Barcelona* (1865), he characterized the Catalan Mediterranean empire as a golden age of commercial and industrial expansion (10–12), but elsewhere he advocated “miscegenation between Spaniards and *indios* as a method of perfecting colonization in the Philippines” (Schmidt-Nowara, *The Conquest* 39). In sum, what the interventions by Verdaguer and Balaguer suggest is that the dual patriotism characteristic of the liberal era, when applied to imperial issues, resulted in an ideology that both reflected and reinforced the interests and investments of the Catalan bourgeoisie in the Caribbean and the Philippines, which represented a substantial source of wealth for the Catalan economy during the nineteenth century.

Whether one adopts a political, economic, or cultural perspective, there is no denying that Catalonia was part of the Spanish Empire that was defeated in 1898. As such, she was also subject, at least in principle, to the denigrating status forced upon Spain in the late nineteenth century. The demise of the Spanish Empire was seen as a symptom of Spain's lowly status and generalized decadence, a phenomenon that some commentators saw as an inevitable consequence of the vices of Spanish national character. For instance, Henry Charles Lea, the great U.S. scholar of the Spanish Inquisition, established in an article in *Atlantic Monthly* a causal link between defects of national character – which for him could be summed up by Spanish pride, conservatism, and clericalism – and the fact that “Spanish colonial policy ha[d] been a failure” (42). If Catalonia had been an integral part of such colonial policy, how could she claim pride in its imperial prospects a mere

eight years after the so-called Disaster of 1898?

In *La nacionalitat catalana* Prat made three rhetorical moves that cleared the way for him to claim pride in Catalan imperial achievements. First and foremost, he carefully established that Catalan national character was not only different from Spanish national character, but was often the product of a struggle against the Spanish state (this is what he set out to do in what I have called the cognitive and polemical sections of the essay). This ontological differentiation between Catalonia and Spain made the former largely immune to the accusations of colonial incapacity leveled against the latter. In fact, the emergence of Catalan nationalism as a political and thoroughly modern ideology is key to understanding the way in which Catalan nationalist aspirations progressively shed their ties to Spanish colonialism. Growing more critical of the Spanish government throughout the course of the Cuban conflict, Catalan nationalists saw the 1898 defeat as a confirmation of Spain's irreversible decadence and its inability to compete in the modern, capitalist world – a position much in line with the Social-Darwinist narratives coming from Anglo-Saxon countries. More generally, in the wake of the loss of the empire, Catalans increasingly distanced themselves from the official Spanish national identity promoted by the Restoration regime and thereby deepened its crisis of legitimacy (Riquer i Permanyer; Balfour, *The End* 132–63). Whereas in Catalonia traditional Spanish national values were increasingly seen as obsolete, anachronistic remnants of a pre-modern ideology where the Spanish Empire figured centrally, the supposed Catalan values of industrialism, modernity, and hard work were progressively pitched as part of the future regeneration of Spain.

Second, Prat established a clear difference between Catalonia's imperial aspirations and the Spanish colonial project by omitting any reference to the Spanish Empire in the essay. In Prat's expression of imperial pride we find references to many historical and contemporary empires, but we would be hard pressed to find a single mention of the early modern Spanish Empire, the nineteenth-century Spanish colonies in the Pacific and the Caribbean or, much less, the Spanish imperial defeat of 1898. Prat opens the chapter on imperialism by exalting the heroism of the Roman Empire (3: 164); he then moves on to reject the type of imperialism exemplified by the Eastern empires – because they based their domination exclusively on material force – and the Greek Empire – because it grounded its supremacy solely on cultural force (3: 167); and he closes by exalting contemporary imperialism, of which both Great Britain and the United States are paramount examples, for creating a political system in which cultural hegemony is sustained by material power (3: 167). The early modern Spanish empire in the Americas is completely disregarded by Prat (a move that contrasts sharply with the

central place of the Spanish myths of empire in late nineteenth-century Catalan culture), not even appearing as an example of negative or incomplete imperialism.

The third rhetorical move that allows Prat to claim pride in Catalonia's imperial achievements is a combination of the first two. If Catalonia and Spain are two markedly different national communities, and if Catalan imperialism sees itself as a mirror image of U.S. imperialism thereby silencing Spanish myths of empire, then it can be argued that Catalonia occupies a position in which she becomes a witness to Spanish imperial shame. This status of Catalonia as witness is only implicit in the essay (which, as I said, silences the Spanish Empire) and thus deserves an extended explanation, one that begins with a brief discussion of the nature of shame.

As the emotional opposite of pride, shame is also a self-evaluating emotion, but it is one that involves "the sense of seriously failing those around you, violating their norms, falling short of their expectations, letting them down" (Solomon 95). While pride implies (self-)praise, shame entails (self-)blame. One is ashamed of something one has done, said, or thought, or even of something one is: "What I am ashamed of I regard as in some respect undesirable and as connected to me" (Taylor 53). In this sense Prat, as a Catalan, would never feel shame with regards to the imperial defeat of 1898 because, for him, while this episode was certainly disgraceful, ultimately it was unconnected to Catalonia. To be sure, Prat's claim may be historically doubtful – it is a well-established fact that the colonial defeat had disastrous consequences for many in Catalonia, including the industrial sector – but it is rhetorically effective. For Prat, it was the Spanish state, not Catalonia, that had fallen short of the expectations of other imperial nations and was thus subject to shame. In *La nacionalitat catalana*, the silencing of the Spanish Empire is implicitly constructed as an omission intended to impose shame on Spanish imperial traditions; if Catalans ignore the Spanish myths of empire and align themselves with U.S. myths of empire, then they are in a position to judge the Spanish imperial myths adversely.

Another way to think about Catalonia's position *vis-à-vis* Spanish myths of empire in *La nacionalitat catalana* is to reflect on the metaphor of the observer as a structural element of shame. Cases of individual shame certainly require the presence of a witness "who 'catches out' the failure of the individual to live up to an ego ideal" (Ahmed 108). When we are ashamed, we feel exposed: we become aware of our own failures and shortcomings by adopting, as it were, the perspective of an observer external to our actions. Shame "is plainly a state of self-consciousness which centrally relies on the concept of another, for the thought of being seen as one might be seen by another is the catalyst for the emotion" (Taylor 67). But what obtains for

individual shame is also valid for cases of collective shame: “individual shame is bound up with community precisely because the ideals that have been failed are ones that ‘stick’ others together” (Ahmed 108). In silencing Spanish myths of empire, Prat is not only departing from the late nineteenth-century tendency of Catalan culture to glorify the early modern Spanish Empire, but he is also (and most importantly) witnessing what is shameful about those myths: namely, that they fail the modern ideals – the ideals of industrialism, modernity, and hard work – that are supposed to cement national communities. The imposition of imperial shame is implicit in *La nacionalitat catalana* because of the position that Catalonia occupies in Prat’s narrative as a modern imperial nation that looks up to both U.S. and British imperialisms and that witnesses Spain from the outside. But, regardless of how implicit such an imposition of shame is, it is a condition for the expression of Catalan imperial pride.

Prat’s implicit exposure of the shame of the Spanish Empire in *La nacionalitat catalana* is brought to the fore in a number of articles he wrote during the Cuban War of 1895–1898. In these articles, he condemns the Spanish Empire with a passion that makes the emotional restraint characteristic of most of the chapters of *La nacionalitat catalana* difficult to anticipate. Writing in the daily *La Renaixensa* about the consequences of the Cuban conflict, Prat asserted that the war was the product of the hatred inflicted by Spaniards upon indigenous populations since 1492. He reduced the myths of the Spanish Empire to the most degrading aspects of Spanish domination: “incendis, assassinats en massa, traïcions alevoses, tots los actes que pot arribar a concebir la més extremada barbàrie, delmaren aquelles desgraciades generacions humanes” [fires, mass killings, premeditated treasons, all of the acts that the most extreme barbarism may conceive decimated those unfortunate human generations] (1: 313). In another article, Prat compared Spain to a wealthy heir who squandered his inheritance (his imperial possessions). He claimed that Spain “va arrastrant [...] una decrepitud sobtada i la vergonya d’haver enfonsat una gran casa [l’imperi]” [has been dragging {...} a sudden decrepitude and the shame of having brought down a great house {the Spanish Empire}] (1: 412). He went on to contrast the shame of the Spanish Empire, which sought to impose a uniform system of rule over all of its territories, with the heroism and glory of the British Empire, a multinational political unit that conceded autonomy to its colonies (1: 412). This exaltation of the British Empire is further developed in yet another article in which the colonization of the Americas by the Spanish is seen as the necessary product of “un pueblo aventurero” [an adventurous people] (1: 668), one that undertook the colonization of vast territories guided by impulse and chance (which he contrasts with

the careful planning and rational calculation supposedly characteristic of British colonization).

What the above adverse judgments about the Spanish Empire help us understand is that its silencing in *La nacionalitat catalana* is the way in which a more temperate Prat, one who exercised emotional restraint and moderation throughout most of the pages of his essay, subtly brought shame onto the Spanish nation by exposing her as failing the imperial ideal exemplified by Britain and the U.S., two powers that presented and understood imperial expansion as a great modernizing force. This witnessing of Spanish imperial shame was instrumental for Prat's argument in two distinct – yet complementary – ways. First, it allowed Prat to distinguish between Catalan imperial aspirations and the Spanish imperial tradition, a tradition in which Catalonia had been directly involved since at least the 1750s. Second, it posited Catalan imperial pride as overcoming Spanish imperial shame: bearing witness to the shame of an anachronistic, pre-modern imperial tradition was another way of approximating the thoroughly modern imperial ideal of the U.S. and the British Empire.

To be sure, such Catalan imperial pride was a contingent, short-lived phenomenon. It was made possible by Spain's imperial defeat in 1898 and was to be profoundly transformed by the events of the Tragic Week, the workers' uprising that shook the foundations of the social order at the end of July in 1909 (Casassas 176). Although today we may view such imperial pride as misplaced, exaggerated, and foolish, we are forced to recognize that it was a particularly suitable emotion for a political movement (Catalan nationalism) that sought to redress the subordinate position of the Catalan nation. As Jerome Neu points out, pride is an emotion connected to both self-respect and self-esteem and, as such, it is "peculiarly appropriate as the banner for political movements that seek to change the station of those in them – that seek a transvaluation of values" ("Pride" 246). Prat and the other nationalist intellectuals of the time were busy transvaluating the traditional Castilian values that, in their view, had transformed Catalonia into a stateless, peripheral, subordinate nationality. Their strategy to accomplish this transformation was to claim pride in Catalonia's imperial achievements and to witness the shame of the Spanish Empire.

Notes

- 1 For an engaging description of the major cultural and political events that took place in 1906, see Panyella 33–37. Panyella's book is also a useful introduction to *Noucentisme*.
- 2 Emblematic of this attitude is the canonical *Història de la literatura catalana* edited by Joaquim Molas, where Prat de la Riba figures above all as the creator of a

series of cultural institutions that made possible the thriving Catalan culture of the 1920s and 1930s. For more details, see *Història de la literatura catalana*, Vol. 8 (17–19, 40–46). Within historical studies, Prat’s *La nacionalitat catalana* has been seen as the founding text of political Catalanism. For some important historical commentaries about the text and its author, see Balcells, “Evolució;” Bilbeny, *Política noucentista* (139–53); Cacho Viu, *El nacionalismo catalán* (81–103); Casassas; Juliá 103–37; Ucelay-Da Cal, *El imperialismo* (126–215).

- 3 I take this information from the edition of *La nacionalitat catalana* prepared by Albert Balcells and Josep Maria Ainaud de Lasarte for Prat de la Riba’s complete works (3: 117). The reader interested in examining the process that led to the printed version of *La nacionalitat catalana* will find the 1897 lectures in volume 1 of Prat’s complete works (“Lo fet de la nacionalitat catalana” 413–28) and the prologue to Lluís Duran i Ventosa’s book in volume 3 (594–614). For a description of the delicate political context in which Prat’s essay was published, see Casassas 174–76.
- 4 For a description of the uses of the teleological method in Spain during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, see Pérez Garzón 63–110.
- 5 If in the last statement we have implied a parallel between Woodrow Wilson’s ideas about self-determination and Prat’s, this is obviously possible only for early twenty-first-century readers, but not for Prat’s audience. As is well-known, Woodrow Wilson’s “Fourteen points” were devised in 1914 as a way to guarantee the stability of European nation-states in the wake of World War I. Prat’s words were written in 1906.
- 6 Consequently, Prat casts his own discourse as a set of proofs directed to his readership: “Voleu més proves, encara? Us en donaré, per acabar, una que val per moltes” [Would you like further proof? I will give you one, in closing, that is worth many] (3: 157).
- 7 The list includes famous politicians such as Francesc Cambó, industrialists (Albert Rusiñol i Prats), architects (Puig i Cadafalch), doctors (Bartomeu Robert i Yarzabal), writers (Eugeni d’Ors), and philologists (Pompeu Fabra). Here I have offered just some of the most famous names; for the relationship between Catalanism and civil society, see Juliá 106–7 and Ucelay-Da-Cal, *El imperialismo* (335–71). Prat’s tenure as President of the Diputació de Barcelona [The Provincial Council of Barcelona] (1907–1914) and of the Mancomunitat de Catalunya [The Commonwealth of Catalonia] (1914–1917) saw the creation of scientific (the Institut d’Estudis Catalans [Institute for Catalan Studies]), cultural (the Biblioteca de Catalunya [Catalan Library]), and administrative institutions (the Escola de l’Administració Local [School of Local Administration]) designed to remedy the historical shortcomings of the Catalan nation.
- 8 While Marxist critic Josep Murgades, for instance, characterizes *Noucentisme* as a bourgeois ideology, he also acknowledges its many accomplishments in the cultural field (53).
- 9 In fact Neu distinguishes between “pride the sin” and “pride the emotion” in “Pride and Identity,” an excellent philosophical description of pride from a cognitive perspective.
- 10 For an exhaustive and fascinating account of the reception of Emerson, Roosevelt, and Carlyle by early twentieth-century Catalanist thought, see Ucelay Da-Cal, *El imperialismo* (350–72).

- 11 This brief reference to Ors's use of the concept of imperialism does not seek to provide a complete examination of this important aspect of his thought, which is expressed in a rather neutral, dispassionate language and which will progressively lose its national dimension. As Joan Ramon Resina writes: "Although d'Ors equivocated with the term *imperialism*, the political implications could not remain oblique for long. Prat defined imperialism as the nation's plenitude, the moment when it radiates its culture and exerts influence. Taking an oppositional view, d'Ors made 'empire' antithetical to the nation" (*Barcelona's Vocation* 75). Furthermore, as Ors's political ideas developed, he transformed his notion of imperial pride, coming close to the political positions of Spanish reactionary thought. These are the three main reasons why I do not think that Ors merits a more exhaustive treatment in the context of my argument. Readers interested in Ors's view of imperialism can read, among others, the following *gloses*: "Catalunya'... 'Orient'," October 3, 1906 (*Glosari 1906-1907* 273-74), "Glosa imperial," January 16, 1907 (*Glosari 1906-1907* 380-81), "The Empire Day," May 28, 1908 (*Glosari 1908-1909* 146-47), "Altre cop, Anastàsia," July 9, 1909 (*Glosari 1908-1909* 543-45), "Imperialisme i Lliberalisme," July 10, 1909 (*Glosari 1908-1909* 546-47), "Del Lliberalisme a l'Imperialisme," July 12, 1909 (*Glosari 1908-1909* 547-49), "L'imperialisme català," July 12, 1909 (*Glosari 1908-1909* 549-52), which is the article quoted in the text, "Epíleg," July 17, 1909 (*Glosari 1908-1909* 552-53), and "Unes paraules encara sobre l'imperialisme anglès," January 31, 1911 (*Glosari 1910-1911* 463-65). For insightful (and divergent) critical commentaries about Ors's use of imperialism, see Bilbeny, *Eugeni d'Ors* (149-62); Rigobon; and Ucelay Da-Cal, *El imperialismo* (544-617).
- 12 According to Jordi Castellanos, Marinetti came to be acquainted with the term futurism upon reading Marcel Robin's review of Alomar's lecture in the pages of *Mercure de France* in 1908 (38).
- 13 As Litvak points out, the polemics between Latin and Anglo-Saxon nations were central to the *fin-de-siècle* Spanish intellectual field. As she notes, texts such as Edmond Demolins's *En quoi consiste la supériorité des anglo-saxons?* or G. Sergi's *La decadencia de las razas latinas* were passionately debated in Spain and led to two, sometimes overlapping, sometimes contradictory beliefs: faith in a Pan-Latin, European regeneration (defended by Valera, Clarín, and Cansinos Assens) and faith in an exclusively national regeneration more or less sheltered from foreign influences (defended by Altamira, Unamuno, and Menéndez Pelayo, among others).
- 14 This explains why for Edmond Demolins, a widely popular and oft-translated French social scientist, there was no doubt that the Anglo-Saxon "race" was destined to succeed the Roman Empire in governing the world at the expense of the Latin races (xix).
- 15 Torre del Río studies the reception of Lord Salisbury's speech in the Spanish press. The main Spanish intellectuals felt interpellated by this speech and sought to contradict Lord Salisbury's consideration of Spain as a "dying nation." See, among others, Unamuno and Ganivet's *El porvenir de España* (183), Maeztu's *Hacia otra España* (125-27), and Maragall's "El discurso de Lord Salisbury." Of course, today it is easy to see that the real significance of Salisbury's characterizations lay in their desire to legitimize British and, by extension, U.S. imperialism. For the symbolic importance of Spanish culture in the construction of Anglo-American

identity and empire from colonial times to the present, see DeGuzmán.

- 16 Verdaguer worked as an alms chaplain for the López family (the family of the Marquis of Comillas), the owners of a conglomerate of businesses with colonial interests (the Compañía Trasatlántica, the Banco Hispano-Colonial, the Compañía de Tabacos de Filipinas, and the Compañía de Minas del Rif). For an account of the relationship between Verdaguer, the López family, and Antoni Gaudí, see Lahuerta.
- 17 The *Renaixença* is a late Romantic movement that revived the Catalan language and literature and put an end to the period of Catalan cultural decline conventionally known as *Decadència*. The *Renaixença* started in the early 1830s and lasted until the 1880s. Josep M. Fradera's *Cultura nacional en una societat dividida* is a perceptive account of the ideological stakes of the movement.

Conclusion: Toward an Ethics of Imperial Emotions

In *Achieving our Country*, Richard Rorty writes “stories about what a nation has been and should try to be are not attempts at accurate representation, but rather attempts to forge a moral identity” (13). According to this, it does not really matter whether the emotional stories about Spain’s imperial past studied in the previous chapters are objective or not. For objectivity, as Rorty goes on to argue, “is of little relevance when one is trying to decide what sort of person or nation to be” (11). What does matter – and matters decisively – is the moral quality of the national identities constructed by our essayists. We can easily grant that these emotional stories told about the imperial past are not an accurate representation of that part of Spain’s history, but this still leaves us with the rather more difficult question of evaluating the moral dimension of such stories. What type of political community is envisioned when the passing of the imperial past is insufficiently mourned (Unamuno), when there is a melancholic identification with it (Ganivet), when there is an indignant reaction to some of its manifestations (Maeztu), or, finally, when the Spanish imperial past is viewed with shame simply to make possible Catalonia’s pride in its imperial prospects (Prat de la Riba)?

The answers offered in this conclusion suggest that the difficulties in displacing affection from the empire to a more properly national object burdened the Spanish political imagination for a good part of the twentieth century. This imperial burden can be approached from both a historical and a moral perspective. Historically, the presence of empire in the political imagination can be gauged by examining the emotional investment in imperial myths found in some of the major essays on national identity published between the 1910s and the 1940s, a period when these myths progressively lost their capacity to arouse ambivalent emotions and thus increasingly became the object of an excessive – and by any standard, false – pride (the best example being the Francoist discourses about *Hispanidad*, the purported Spanish-speaking community on both sides of the Atlantic).

Needless to say, the moral consequences of the national identities forged by imperial pride are nothing short of disastrous.

The Vanishing of Ambivalence

Although Spain remained neutral in World War I (1914–1918), this armed conflict is widely seen as a watershed in twentieth-century Spanish culture and politics. The critical transformations ushered in by the war signaled the end of the turn-of-the-century regenerationist movement. The decline of modernist ideals, which advocated a total break with the moral, political, and aesthetic values embodied by the Restoration regime, was accompanied by the rise of bourgeois reformist projects carried out by a younger, more competent generation of intellectuals led by José Ortega y Gasset (Johnson 121–32; Juliá 139–78; Mainer, *La Edad* 143–82). As these reformist projects took center stage, there was a radicalization of the political and cultural right in Spain that had momentous consequences for the imperial emotions we have been describing.

Here it is necessary to distinguish between Catalonia and the rest of Spain. In Catalonia, the pride in Catalan imperialism that was evident in *La nacionalitat catalana* proved to be a short-lived, circumstantial phenomenon (Casassas 174–76).¹ In the rest of Spain, the imperial pride that presided over the 1892 celebrations of Columbus's first voyage took on a new life, glossing over the contradictory imperial emotions characteristic of the turn of the nineteenth century. The ambivalent reverberation of the Spanish Empire is still seen in José Ortega y Gasset's *España invertebrada* (1921), where after his solemn declaration that the Spanish colonization of America was both “[un] maravilloso acontecimiento” [a wonderful event] (200) and “lo único verdadera, sustantivamente grande que ha hecho España” [the only truly, substantively great thing that Spain has achieved] (201), he proceeds to degrade its importance by considering that it was primarily an endeavor of the people that was carried out “sin propósitos conscientes, sin directores, sin táctica deliberada” [without conscious purposes, without directors, without a deliberate tactic] (201). By contrasting the supposedly popular character of Spanish colonization with the presumed aristocratic temperament of British colonization, Ortega was registering not only a historical difference but also a difference in the degree of modernization between both nations. On the one hand, and following the example of Rome (110), the Spanish Empire embodied both national unity and domination in its most perfect form:

la unión se hace para lanzar la energía española a los cuatro vientos,
para inundar el planeta, para crear un Imperio aún más amplio.

[unity is achieved in order to spread Spanish energy to the four corners of the world, to inundate the planet, to create an even more extensive empire]. (122)

On the other hand, the Spanish Empire was an irritating reminder that Spain was out of pace with the modern world, that even its highest accomplishments were somehow flawed, tainted, defective.

But in authors more firmly entrenched in conservative positions, the ambivalence with which Ortega still related to the early modern empire progressively vanished, making pride the dominant – and almost exclusive – emotion attached to the imperial past. This progressive vanishing of ambivalence is already evident in Julián Juderías's *La leyenda negra* (1914), an essay with heavy nationalist undertones addressed to those who “aman el pasado, creen en el presente y confían en el porvenir glorioso de la Madre España” [love the past, believe in the present, and trust in the glorious prospects of Mother Spain] (16). In addition to giving one of the first definitions of the Black Legend as the story of an inquisitorial, ignorant, and fanatical Spain prone to cruel outbursts and violent repressions (24), Juderías associates imperial expansion with national pride, claiming that for contemporaries of the early modern Spanish Empire “las tierras de América y las islas de Asia, inmensas, riquísimas, misteriosas, vírgenes, revestían los caracteres de un prodigioso ensueño de opulencia y de poderío” [the lands of America and the islands in Asia, vast, rich, mysterious, and virgin possessions, were like a prodigious dream of power and opulence] (92). Although sixteenth-century Spaniards took pride in the power they wielded over the New World and its riches, Juderías argues that present-day Spaniards should take pride in their “spiritual legacy” in the Americas, by which he means the cultural achievements of empire (143–52).

Equally proud of this cultural legacy is José María Salaverría in *La afirmación española* (1917), an essay explicitly written against the pessimism and cosmopolitanism that, according to him, were characteristic of *fin-de-siècle* intellectuals. Devoting a whole chapter to Spain's actions in America (123–32), Salaverría unsurprisingly concludes that the conquest and colonization of the Americas was the “suceso más grande que fuera realizado desde el Cristianismo” [the greatest event since the advent of Christianity] (123). Around the same time, the Spanish government designated the commemoration of the so-called “Discovery” of America by Christopher Columbus on October 12, 1492 as Spain's national holiday, effectively reviving the tradition inaugurated by Cánovas del Castillo's government in 1892. Officially instituted on June 16, 1918, this holiday was intended for Spaniards to honor and recognize themselves in Columbus's glorious

feat. In other words, the date of October 12 was meant to be the object of a civil religion, of a religion where “the political state [... is] the essence of belief and rite” (Nisbet 525). And with this new religion went a new set of rituals, creeds, and liturgies designed to elicit popular reverence for the monumental event of the “Discovery.”² Neither in the celebratory rituals nor in the above-cited essays is it possible to discern a trace of ambivalence or hesitation: in both cases, the Spanish empire in the New World is represented as the source of grandiose achievements. Indeed, as we move further away from the colonial crisis of the mid-1890s, the Spanish empire in the Americas seems capable of arousing only one emotion: pride. This powerful emotion dominates Ernesto Giménez Caballero’s *Genio de España* (1932), Ramiro de Maeztu’s *Defensa de la Hispanidad* (1934), and Ramón Menéndez Pidal’s “Idea imperial de Carlos V” (1937).

During the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939) and its aftermath, the moral identity forged by imperial pride sunk into abjection. These were times when, as writer Juan Benet notes,

se ponen de nuevo en circulación las ideas de Imperio, Hispanidad, Reconquista, etcétera, y suben a los altares los apóstoles de una pasada y delirante ambición de grandeza – Donoso Cortés, Vázquez de Mella, Maeztu, Salaverría – que cifran la regeneración del país en la doble práctica de la espada y el rosario.

[the ideas of Empire, *Hispanidad*, Reconquest, etc., are put back into circulation, and the apostles of a bygone and delirious ambition of greatness are placed on an altar – Donoso Cortés, Vázquez de Mella, Maeztu, Salaverría – identifying the country’s regeneration with both the sword and the rosary]. (188)

Dark times indeed, when the Franco regime compensated for the nation’s internal destruction and international isolation by unleashing a propaganda campaign about Spain’s empire in the New World. Spurred by Menéndez Pidal’s lecture “The Imperial Ideal of Charles V,” philologist Antonio Tovar published *El Imperio de España* (1941), where he argued that the Francoist state was the legitimate heir to and continuation of the sixteenth-century Spanish Empire.³ These grandiloquent ideas were institutionalized in official organizations such as the Consejo de la Hispanidad and propagated in journals such as *Cuadernos Hispanoamericanos* and *Alférez*. At the popular level, movies such as *La manigua sin Dios* (1949) and *Alba de América* (1951) ensured that “the spectators of a ruined country in which food stamps still existed could attend the spectacle of their own greatness” (qtd. in Kamen, *Imagining* 106; on this topic, see also Labanyi, “Internalisations of Empire”).

This is not to say that Unamuno, in failing to fully mourn imperial glory, or Ganivet, by melancholically identifying with it, foreshadowed or prepared Francoist imperial propaganda in any way. Recent interventions have suggested just that, casting these authors as creators of a “proto-fascist” conscience (Barriuso 163) and as developing a series of myths “that helped lay the cultural, ideological, and imaginative groundwork for Spanish National-Catholic fascism” (Britt Arredondo 3). As congenial as these revisionist efforts are, I believe they are profoundly anachronistic for at least two reasons. First, they impose on the works of Unamuno and Ganivet an ideology (Fascism) that was simply not available at the turn of the century. And second, they ignore that those who revived the myths of empire in the 1910s, 1920s, and 1930s (the likes of Salaverría, Giménez Caballero, and Maeztu) did so by fiercely criticizing both the spirit and the works of the 1898 Generation (in the case of Maeztu, this criticism took the form of self-criticism, of a disavowal of his earlier works). At best one can argue that the moral identity forged by Unamuno and Ganivet was unable to displace affection from empire to a more properly national object, and that the lingering imperial emotions were subsequently appropriated by other, more conservative intellectuals and institutions who instrumentalized them for other, more reactionary projects. In the end, the main drawback of the emotional register employed by Unamuno, Ganivet, and Maeztu is that, by focusing on the emotional dimension of national identification, they left the role that institutions were to play in the nation unconsidered – surely a less exciting, but perhaps more productive intellectual endeavor (Villacañas Berlanga, “El carisma”). Rather than anticipating Fascism, the *fin de siècle* appears as a missed opportunity to build a decent post-empire Spain.

The Moral Implications of Imperial Emotions

We have seen that the pride aroused by the imperial past sustained a vision of the Spanish community based on the identification of the nation with both unity and domination. As principles of collective conduct, unity and domination failed to forge a moral identity acceptable to a majority of the citizens of the Spanish state. When the best of Spain’s history is identified with imperial expansion, and when this endeavor offers no reasons for shame, then it is difficult to argue for the moral worth of the resulting national identity. If the political argument about which historical episodes we should take pride in is better described as “an argument about which hopes to allow ourselves and which to forgo” (Rorty 14), then the hopes allowed by the persistence of imperial pride in public discourse during the 1910s–1940s would have seemed unbearable to anyone committed to

a generous, non-exclusive love of country like the one Maurizio Viroli attributes to patriots (as opposed to nationalists). The nationalist's and the patriot's love of country, Viroli tells us, have a different nature and intensity. While the former "preaches the necessity of defending the country's culture and history as values to be retrieved and defended in their entirety, as goods to be cherished because of their distinctiveness and particularity" (165), the latter "allows us to keep both eyes fixed on our country's greatness and miseries" (165). Less ambivalent and less tolerant of heterogeneity than the patriot's love of country, the nationalist's love of country promotes unconditional loyalty and blind attachment, leaving no space for a generous and charitable love (2).

From a clearly moral perspective, the hopes allowed by pride in empire also fail to satisfy the set of criteria established by Catherine Frost to judge the moral worth of nationalist arguments. Frost ties the moral worth of nationalism to its ability to provide "a shared frame of reference that enables representation" (7) and that meets three conditions: "relevance (a frame of reference must reflect real circumstances), currency (it must be revisable), and equal moral worth (it must respect individual members of the population)" (6). That the nationalist expressions of imperial pride of the 1910s–1940s fail to meet all three of these conditions can be easily determined by briefly noting that the frame of reference provided by expressions of imperial pride was neither relevant – for it enshrined the cultural myths of empire when Spain was isolated and in ruins – nor current – for it argued that empire was the eternal essence of Spain – nor respectful of the individual members of the population – for it sought to eradicate all political and cultural diversity.

As democracy replaced authoritarianism in the late 1970s, the myths of empire waned but did not completely disappear. In fact, as Henry Kamen has suggested, "the imperial vision received a new facelift, and the emphasis on the sixteenth-century achievement was directed towards culture and language rather than at national chauvinism" (*Imagining* 125). This was clearly noted by the editorial published in *El País* on October 12, 1992, which recommended that during the 1992 celebrations of Columbus's first voyage Spaniards celebrate not "el modelo de conquista ni el de colonización" [the model of conquest or colonization] but rather "la significación histórica de unos episodios que supusieron el más importante esfuerzo de proyección exterior de los españoles" [the historical significance of a series of episodes that involved the Spaniards' greatest effort in their foreign projection]. Aware of the many dissenting voices that were casting the discovery as conquest in 1992, the editorial insists that "esa empresa forma parte de la historia y constituye, independientemente del juicio que merezcan las conductas, un hecho de civilización" [that endeavor is part of history and constitutes

a fact of civilization above and beyond the judgment that certain conducts might deserve]. And it closes by suggesting that Spaniards should relate to the events of 1492 “sin triunfalismos ni complejos” [without triumphalism or complexes] (“Octubre del 92”).

Despite *El País*'s injunction to fend off both pride and shame when commemorating the events of 1492, there is hope today for the establishment of an ethical relationship with respect to the emotions generated by the conquest and colonization of the Americas that goes beyond a declaration of emotional neutrality. In particular, two conditions obtain today that make it possible to imagine an ethics that will appropriately direct the emotions evoked by the Spanish Empire. First, the possession of an empire has ceased to be a criterion for evaluating the past, present, and future of nations. At the beginning of the twentieth century, a nation's status within the international community was dependent upon an ethico-political standard that required “[la capacidad] para la afirmación de la nación en un contexto europeo de competencia por el dominio del mundo” [the ability] of a nation to assert itself in a context where European nations competed for dominance over the world (Álvarez Junco, “La nación” 411–12). Today, after the different waves of decolonization and the rise of postcolonial studies, this is no longer the case. In this context, expressions of imperial pride are seen as being thoroughly inappropriate.

Second, the number of loud and passionate critiques coming from a variety of constituencies during the 1992 commemorations suggests that there is a plurality of emotional investments in the Spanish Empire that is striving to gain moral recognition.⁴ At the turn of the twentieth century, the fragmentation of the Spanish public was above all the result of the rise of Catalan and other sub-state nationalisms. Today, Catalans, Basques, and Galicians have different stakes in the collective memory of the conquest and colonization of the Americas as do the mass of immigrants coming from Ecuador, Colombia, or Argentina, to name just three former colonies with a significant immigrant population in Spain. With Spain's population composed of more than 1,100,000 immigrants coming from Central and South America, the narrative that portrays Spain's actions in the Americas as a series of glorious achievements (cultural or otherwise) shows all of its painful inadequacy. Aware of this inadequacy, some Spanish intellectuals, like Rafael Sánchez Ferlosio or Eduardo Subirats, joined the chorus of dissenting voices in 1992 by penning scathing indictments of the neo-imperial vision that had gained prominence by the early 1990s.

In the context of my own argument, what Sánchez Ferlosio's *Esas malditas y equivocadas Yndias* (1994) and Subirats's *América o la memoria histórica* (1994) show is that today it is no longer possible to consider, as our essayists did,

only the range of imperial emotions that were relevant to them and their immediate readers (the people of Spain and Catalonia). Lest one adopts a resolutely provincial and chauvinistic viewpoint, it is hard to ignore the many constituencies that have a different stake in the story of the conquest and colonization of the Americas. The very same existence and thriving of new collective identities such as those embodied by indigenous activists and social movements is testimony to the idea that Spain's imperial past has not one but many meanings, and that those multiple meanings originate in a variety of emotional investments. Rather than flattening out or glossing over those differences, the challenge seems to be to do them justice, or at least to provide a space for their proliferation.

To be sure, imagining new ways of feeling about a number of events as heterogeneous, complex, and contradictory as those that are grouped under the label "the conquest and colonization of the Americas" is a rather daunting task. It is also, however, a timely intellectual project in view of the ethical significance of emotions, a topic that has garnered a fair amount of critical attention in recent years.⁵ If, generally speaking, it seems hard to lead an ethical life without cultivating one's emotions, then it should seem equally hard to hope to establish an ethical relationship with Spain's imperial past without considering the variety of emotions it has evoked in its more than four hundred years of history. Bearing this in mind, my reflection on the imperial emotions offered by the *fin-de-siècle* essayistic tradition has sought to better understand the emotions of the past in order to better imagine the emotions of the future, a time that will hopefully bring new ways of feeling about Spain's expansion into the New World. This momentous event, which has had a decisive claim upon the history and the conscience of Spain, the Americas and, more largely, the West, certainly deserves it.

Notes

- 1 Enric Ucelay Da-Cal offers an alternative account, claiming that imperialism is an inextricable part of Catalanism, regardless of ideological persuasion (*El imperialismo* 810). In this regard, he depicts the republican, leftist economist Carles Pi i Sunyer as an imperialist (810–13), a characterization that flattens out the ideological differences between Prat's conservative nationalism and Pi i Sunyer's progressive nationalism. Casassas's thesis about Catalan imperialism being a circumstantial phenomenon seems more persuasive than Ucelay Da-Cal's.
- 2 Drawing on the experience of the Unión Ibero-Americana (1885–1939), a conservative organization that since 1912 had intensely lobbied for the designation of October 12 as a national holiday, political leaders gave speeches, presided over marches, and paid homage to Columbus's statue in Madrid. For a brief history of this state-funded, *hispanoamericanista* organization, see Sepúlveda Muñoz 164–70. The journal published by the UIA was *Unión Ibero-Americana* (1887–1926), which

in 1926 was replaced by *Revista de las Españas* (1926–1936).

- 3 Also paradigmatic of the post-Civil War conservative uses of the imperial past is Ricardo del Arco y Garay's *La idea de imperio en la política y la literatura españolas* (1944), a book that appropriately closes with dictator Francisco Franco's evocations of the idea of an imperial Spain (802–04). For a critical revision of Ramón Menéndez Pidal's notion of empire and that of his followers, see Villacañas Berlanga, *¿Qué imperio?*
- 4 As Trouillot writes: "For varying reasons and in various degrees, native and black Americans, Latino-Americans, African, Caribbean, and Asian leaders denounced the celebration of the conquest or tried to redirect the narrative of The Discovery" (138).
- 5 Already in the early 1970s philosopher Bernard Williams argued for the centrality of emotions in moral life in his "Morality and the Emotions." Since then, several philosophers have broached the same topic in different directions. Three recent books that make the case for the role of emotions in our moral development are Martha Nussbaum's *Upheavals of Thought* (2001), Robert Solomon's *True to Our Feelings* (2007), and Victoria Camps's *El gobierno de las emociones* (2011).

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