The Remapping of Spain

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La Leyenda Negra

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ABSTRACT

Since the circulation of the *Brevìsima Relación de la Destrucción de las Indias* by the Dominican friar Bartolomé de Las Casas, the Black Legend (Leyenda Negra), the recurrent image of the Spanish Empire as an absolutist political entity, staunchly opposed to the enlightened aspect of the British Empire due to its atrocious operations against the populations of the New World, came to underpin all projections of Spain to the outside world. In the light of the imperial rivalry between Spain and Britain, there was limited space of mutual sympathy and an abundance of texts that sought to denigrate Spain as a despotic, brutal imperial power that tyrannised its subjects both in Europe and overseas. Constantly alluding to the Inquisition and the predominant role of Catholicism in Spain, Anglo-Saxon travellers from America and Britain reflected upon the social injustice and the corruption that resulted from the despotic Spanish central government in collaboration with the Catholic Church.

In their endeavour to differentiate themselves from the darkness of Catholic Spain, British and American travel writers formed a travel canon that reproduced images of Otherness, deconstructing every cultural aspect, when confronted with the Spanish landscape and society, reinforcing the idea of Spain as the European Orient, where bigotry, injustice, brigandage and moral degradation were the dominant features of the new travel destination.

In response to this vast anti-Hispanic travel literature, Spanish Nationalists were steeped in their medieval status as a Christian nation, constantly alluding to the chivalric tradition of El Cid to project their whiteness and claim to European civilisation, in response to their frequent portrayal as a non-European periphery. In their struggle to shape a new identity, they also grappled with a series of conflicts that put into question the forging of nationhood: from the Napoleonic Wars and the influx of French cultural elements to the outbreak of the Peninsular War and the subsequent Carlist Wars, Spain held the peculiar position of the coloniser and the colonised, posing a challenge to Victorian imperial experience.

This volume pertains to the depictions of Spanish society and the Spaniards in ten Western travelogues which follow the country's steps of transformation from a European superpower into a fallen kingdom struggling

to reconstruct its identity after the Disaster of 1898 and the subsequent loss of its leading colonising status.

INTRODUCTION

The present volume pertains to the representations of the Spanish identity from the late eighteenth- until the late nineteenth- century in the light of the Black Legend (la Leyenda Negra) that came to epitomise all the dystopian depictions of Spain since the discovery of the New World. In particular, the principal aim of the present text is to shed light on the instances in which English, Irish and American travel writers utilised this anti-Hispanic imagery to address issues attached to the country's transition from a colonial power to a continental European state, gradually stripped of its colonies and transformed into the hotbed of racial and cultural theories that either challenged or corroborated the Anglo-Saxon outlook on the Iberian populations.

Before the actual analysis of the travelogues that form part of this volume, it is of paramount importance to define the Black Legend and trace its origins in the European mapping of Iberia. As argued by Charles Gibson, the Black Legend might be regarded as "the accumulated tradition of propaganda and Hispanophobia according to which Spanish imperialism is regarded as cruel, bigoted, exploitative, and self-righteous in excess of reality." (403).

Also it is worth noting that the Black Legend was not solely confined to the British nationalist discourse agenda to demonise Spain at the time when the Spanish Empire had reached its peak but was rather brought to the foreground by Dutch and Italian travellers who lived under the threat of a potential violent absorption of their states into the ascending Spanish realm. As Benjamin Keen contends

> If the essence of the Black Legend is defamatory criticism of Spain and the Spaniards, then the Legend has a history much older than the term itself […]from the fourteenth century an unfavorable opinion of Spaniards prevailed among Italians as a result of the personal, economic, political, and cultural relations between the two peoples; and that the nationalist and religious struggles of the sixteenth century provoked similar attitudes toward Spain in Germany and the Netherlands. (703)

With reference to the initial emergence of this Hispanophobic imagery in British and transatlantic texts, it goes back to the publication of the

Brevìsima Relación de la Destrucción de las Ìndias[1] (1552) by the Dominican friar Bartolomé de Las Casas "widely celebrated as a cornerstone of the Black Legend" (William S. Maltby 12). The circulation of this document reinforced the idea of Spain as a moral wasteland, and the Spanish Empire was tinged with nuances of despotism, cruelty and a challenge to the humanist ideals. Regarding the impact of these anti-Hispanic allegations of cruelty and genocidal expeditions in the New World, René Carrasco maintains that, notwithstanding the purposeful dissemination of the anti-Hispanic legend by the Britons in order to attack the predominant role of the Spanish Empire in the colonisation of the American continent, it gained ground due to the actual commitment of atrocities by the Spanish conquerors against the Indians:

> This legend claimed that 'unenlightened' Spain was the cruelest of the European nations to conquer the Americas, and argued the Spanish never produced nor participated in the sciences. However, while general consensus existed over the issue, and although the legend is understood in large part as propaganda from other European nations towards Spain, it was widely regarded that, in fact, the indigenous populations of the American continent had suffered greatly under the rule of the Spanish Crown. (1)

Given the above sociopolitical framework, the Anglo-Spanish rivalry gave rise to political tensions between the two empires that did not allow the cultivation of feelings of convergence or sympathy. As a result, upon embarking on a Grand Tour, British travellers persistently excluded the Iberian Peninsula from the countries that formed an indispensable part of their educational voyages, a fact that further deteriorated the conceptualisation of Spain as a terra incognita, divided between Africa and the corrupt European South. This systematic exclusion of Spain from the Grand Tourist itineraries is highlighted by Maltby, arguing that

> Quite simply, Englishmen rarely had an opportunity to discover that their notions of Spain and the Spaniards were erroneous. Many a young man set out on a Grand Tour, but such tours did not as a rule include a visit to Spain. It was thought to be a poor place, located far from the highroad of European culture, which, as everyone knew, extended in a direct line from London through Paris to Rome. As a result, while English gentlemen were able to form an intimate acquaintance with France and Italy, they remained dependent upon the information of others for their knowledge of Spain. (138-9)

[1] *A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies.*

Another reason for the rising tide of anti-Hispanism in Britain was the position of Spain as the cradle of hardcore Catholicism, posing a challenge to the parallel endeavour of Anglo-Saxon Britain to project itself as a nation predominantly yoked to Protestantism. As claimed by Maltby,

> Spain's efforts as the champion of Catholicism during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries earned the country the undying hatred of Protestants in every corner of Europe—perhaps to a degree that even the Hispanists have not fully realized. The sheer quantity of anti-Spanish material that issued from the presses of Protestant Europe during this period is astonishing, and it was ably supplemented by the work of those who, while sympathetic to the Counter-Reformation, resented Spain's power and its tendency to interfere in the affairs of France and Italy. (4)

The image of Spain further deteriorated by the introduction of the institution of Inquisition in order to persecute all the religious minorities that allegedly posed a threat to Catholicism. The wide use of the Inquisition as a piece of evidence for the absolutist spirit of Catholic Europe was coupled with the close identification of the Britons with Protestantism both at a spiritual and a cultural level, inducing them to refer to the threat of the "decadent Celts and Latins" (Paul Langford 20-1), underlying the persistent denigration of Catholicism in British insular colonies. In other words, the pro-Protestant aspect of Britain was overwhelmingly interpreted as an indispensable element of Britishness that needed to be constantly highlighted in the British contact with Catholic countries. Based on Maite Ojeda Mata's thesis, the role of the Spanish Inquisition was both a racial and a religious one to safeguard the emerging national identity of the Spaniards in juxtaposition with the Protestants and the minority groups inhabiting the Iberian Peninsula:

> The process of separation between Christians and Jews and the following identification of Spanishness with Christianity was a complex and longue-durée phenomenon. It was fed by the permanent suspicion, stirred up by the Spanish Inquisition, of the Jewish converts who remained in Spain after the expulsion and of their descendants who were relentlessly persecuted, because it was believed they were Christians only in appearance, until it was made sure that they were good Christians. The doctrine of "purity of blood" legitimated the resulting social hierarchy between "old" and "new" Christians. (4)

With the advent of the pseudo-sciences that came to formulate ideas on diverse ethnic groups based on supposed biological criteria in the 1850s, an equal interest in racial discourse emerged in Spanish nationalist texts

which sought to defend the Spanish nation against British allegations on the status of the Spaniards as a mongrel nation owing to their subjugation to different conquerors (Greek, Roman, Moorish, Gothic) in the course of their history. According to Erin Kathleen Rowe,

> The debate over Spanish national identity encapsulated competing visions for Spanish nationhood - either vibrant and multicultural or ancient and resolutely Christian - in which the particular history of Spain required its historians to grapple with its past during a time (the nineteenth and twentieth centuries) in which European national historians insisted on whiteness and purity as the foundation of civilization, and in which Spanish scholars were all too aware of the inferiority by which they were judged by their northern European peers who viewed them as a 'mongrel' nation. Race and purity were omnipresent in modern Spanish historiography. (177)

Owing to its strong affiliation with the Catholic Church and the widespread use of the Inquisition as a means of ethnic cleansing and religious persecution, the Spanish nation did not fare well in the British and American travel canons. Represented as a mongrel nation, far removed from the European Continent both spiritually and culturally, Spain came to signify the opposite of civilised Europe as well as an empire diametrically opposed to the free-loving Anglo-Saxon Empire.

Parallel to the demonisation of Spain by the European travellers that sought to depict the kingdom as a dangerous zone, perilous to the average traveller, the Spaniards strove to forge a collective identity in an epoch where regional identities retained a lingering effect on the self-image of the Iberian peripheral groups. It was, therefore, a challenging enterprise to incorporate different languages and cultures into a single national identity.

In juxtaposition with Britain, historically Spain had assumed the roles of the conqueror and the conquered. This peculiar position of the Spaniard as the coloniser and the colonised dated back to the Moorish rule over Spain that lasted nearly eight centuries:

> From 711 until 1492 Spain was under the rule of the Moors and under their rule Christians, Jews, and Muslims coexisted together in peace. After the Spanish Reconquista and the expulsion of the Moors from Spain, the ethnic composition in Spain became primarily Spanish with low percentages of other ethnic groups. (Anna Sutherland 2)

After the Spanish Reconquista, Spain and Portugal undoubtedly became the major colonial powers and the Spanish expansion led to the incorporation of various colonies overseas. However, the Spanish Empire came to a halt during the French occupation of the Peninsula and the

establishment of the Bourbon dynasty:

> By the end of the eighteenth century, *ancien régime* Spain was marked by the strong presence of diverse traditions, political privileges and legal codes which were characteristic of the different historical territories that had integrated the unified Spanish monarchy at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The Habsburgs' Spain exhibited the traditional formula of 'aggregative monarchy', that is, the existence of different 'kingdoms' united by a common Crown and the principle of dynastic loyalty, with each of them retaining their diverse laws, taxes, mores and political traditions. Although the Bourbon dynasty which occupied the Spanish throne in 1714 after the Succession wars undertook a state-centralizing policy following the French pattern, its impact on Spain's territorial structure was less than expected. (Xosé-Manoel Núñez 487)

A sudden change in the image of Spain as a potential ally of the British Empire against the French occurred during the early nineteenth century, with the outbreak of the Napoleonic Wars that brought the British and Spanish nations together for the first time in their turbulent history. At the same time, this period marks the beginning of Spanish nationalism as a reaction against the French invasion and occupation of Iberia:

> the Spanish nation began its historical journey when Spaniards revolted against Napoleon and the representatives to the Courts of Cadiz embraced popular sovereignty as the fundamental principle of the Constitution of 1812. (Jesús Torrecilla 6)

With the Revolution against the French, two nationalist myths emerged in Spain, foregrounding different representations of Spanish nationhood. On the one hand, the traditionalist concept revolved around the idea of a

> common religious culture as the *Volkgeist* of the nation leaving virtually no space for 'civic' political rights. Needless to say, this theocratic and romantic conception of the nation was adopted by all those traditionalist groups opposed to the liberal state, such as the Carlists, the Catholic integrists, and significant sectors of the Catholic hierarchy. (Diego Muro and Alejandro Quiroga 14)

As for the liberal concept of nationhood, it was initially manifest as a reaction against the foreign absolutism of the Hapsburgs, propagating, at the same time, the view that Spain should return to its former tolerant medieval state, during which society had not been scathed by Christian religious fanaticism, focusing on Andalusia as the land of the harmonious coexistence of Christians and Muslims in the myth of Al-Andalus. As

argued by Torrecilla, "the traditional myths of the loss of Spain, the Reconquest, and the Empire have been opposed by the liberal myths of al-Andalus, the Castilian *comuneros*[2], and the alleged ancestral Spanish democracy destroyed by foreign dynasties (8)

Considering the rediscovery of the Old Norse literature in the late eighteenth century and the subsequent infatuation of the Britons and other Northern nations with the Old Norse literary tradition as a means of consolidating their racial and cultural presence, the stress on *El Cid* was made in the same light. Being incorporated into the nationalist agenda of the traditionalist party in Spanish society, the myth of *El Cid* legitimised the function of Spain as a cradle of Christianity against Muslim expansion, highlighting the heroic position of medieval Spaniards as protectors of Christianity in the Middle Ages. According to Alejandro García-Sanjuán

> The notion of *Reconquista* is the product of 19th-century Spanish Nationalist thinking. Although developed as an academic concept, it played, at the same time, a crucial political and ideological role, thus holding a very powerful and potentially toxic ideological burden, chiefly consisting of the idea that Spain is a nation shaped against Islam. Its dual academic and ideological nature makes it a highly problematic concept that greatly contributed to produce a largely biased and distorted vision of the Iberian medieval past, aimed at delegitimizing the Islamic presence (Al-Andalus) and therefore at legitimizing the Christian conquest of the Muslim territory. (133)

In their struggle to forge a new identity, Spaniards needed to grapple with two major events that shattered their imperial status and forced them to renegotiate their self-image. The first event is nothing other than the Peninsular War (1797-1814) that broke out in the wake of the nineteenth century and resulted in the loss of the American colonies, the destruction of the agricultural production and the effacement of the Ancient Regime values:

> The Napoleonic Wars had dramatic consequences for Spain's economy. The Peninsular War had higher demographic impact than any other military conflict, including civil wars, in the modern era. Farmers suffered confiscation of their crops and destruction of their main capital asset, livestock. The shrinking demand, the disruption of international and domestic trade, and the shortage of inputs hampered industry and services. The loss of the American colonies, a by-product of the French invasion, seriously harmed absolutism. In the long run, however, the Napoleonic

[2] The Revolt of the Comuneros was an uprising that occurred from the citizens of Castile between 1520 and 1521.

> Wars triggered the dismantling of Ancien Régime institutions and interest groups. Freed from their constraints, the country started a long and painful transition towards the liberal society. The Napoleonic Wars may be deemed, then, a watershed in Spanish history. (Leandro Prados de la Escosura and Carlos Santiago-Caballero 1)

Aside from the Peninsular War during which the Spanish kingdom turned into a subordinate European nation in juxtaposition with its prior powerful status as the main colonising power, one could also stress the Disaster of 98 as the second key historical circumstance that marred Spanish political life and delated the course of Spanish Nationalism through the resurgence of regional cultures on the Iberian Peninsula. As regards this traumatic event for the national image of Spain, J. K. Storm claims that

> In 1898 Spain lost the last major remnants of its once huge colonial empire. In a short war Spain suffered a humiliating defeat at the hands of the United States of America. Cuba, which had been the cause of the war, was declared independent, and Spain also lost Puerto Rico and the Philippines. In general, 'el Desastre', as the defeat was simply called, was seen as a turning point in Spanish history, but in the last few years most historians are inclined to assert that 1898 was grossly overvalued. (3)

From that point onwards, Spain ceased to be regarded as a noteworthy colonial power, being replaced by the expansionist British Empire and the ascending American state in terms of military prowess. Most importantly, the Disaster of 98 was conducive to the flourishing of regional nationalisms in Spain that posed a threat to the territorial and cultural stability on the Peninsula owing to the increase of the separatist movements. As argued by Storm,

> Only in respect to the national question did the defeat and the loss of the last major colonies have a substantial impact, particularly because these events formed an important stimulus for the regional movements in Catalonia and the Basque Country. As the Catalan bourgeoisie lost its colonial markets and became disillusioned with a weak central state that wasn't even capable of suffocating a colonial rebellion in Cuba and defend its possessions against a North-American attack, the upper classes in Catalonia *en masse* joined the already existing regional movement. (4)

Given the above sociocultural context, the first chapter of this volume centres on Sir John Tallbot Dillon's narrative *Letters from an English Traveller in Spain in 1778*, a work that paved the way for the exploration

of Spain at the close of the eighteenth century, focusing on the study of the Christian myth of *El Cid*, the medieval literary production in Castilian language and the Celtic connection between the Basque and the Irish. Dillon's travel account also involves Othering practices, foregrounding the mongrel and Oriental-like dimension of the nation visited.

Concerning the second chapter of the volume, it revolves around Francis Collins' *Voyages to Portugal, Spain, Sicily, Malta, Asia Minor, Egypt from 1796 to 1801*. In his travel account, Collins fosters the image of Spain as an empire in eclipse, changing the mapping of the nation from the dominant colonial power to a kingdom in rapid decline, promoting a British appropriation of the Spanish colonies to promote the civilising mission of the British colonial power over the indigenous nations of the New World.

Regarding the third chapter, John Bowring's *Observations on the State of Religion and Literature in Spain, made during a Journey through the Peninsula in 1819* underlines the negative effect of Spanish Catholicism that curtailed the country's path to progress, making constant reference to fundamental conventions of the Black Legend such as Inquisition, superstition, fanaticism, barbarism and absolutism. His text should be seen in the light of the Protestant expansion on the Peninsula as the only means to reach an advanced cultural state. Bowring's text should be explored in relation to the gradual conflict that broke out between the traditionalists and the liberalists in an attempt to forge a new Spanish identity at the threshold of the nineteenth century.

With respect to the fourth chapter, William Graham's *Travels through Portugal and Spain, during the Peninsular War* concentrates on the dystopian depiction of Spain during the Peninsular War, fostering the idea of the Spanish as a degenerate, Oriental Other that needs to be tamed and incorporated into the British imperialist agenda.

As regards the fifth chapter, Henry David Inglis' text *Spain in 1830* is concerned with a construction of a Spanish utopia on the advent of the Carlist War, drawing the reader's attention to the region-building processes that permeated Spanish Nationalism in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, endorsing the Spanish liberalist approach to Spanish nationhood through the Romancing of the Cervantes' sites and his frequent allusion to the Al-Andalus myth that propagated a cultural coexistence of the Moors and the Christians.

With reference to the sixth chapter, Thomas Roscoe's *the Tourist in Spain* documents the raging Carlist War, illustrating the political tensions that arose from the clash between the traditionalists and the liberalists. It also provides the reader with an image of the Basque as a pastoral nation,

substantiating the Celtic-Basque racial hypothesis. In his travel narrative Roscoe extensively ridicules every aspect of Spanish culture in his attempt to attack Spanish nationalism and shed light on the superiority of Victorian Britain, supposedly possessing the appropriate religious and political institutions to expand on the Peninsula.

With regard to the seventh chapter, John Overton Choules' *A Narrative of the Excursion of Mr. Vanderbilt's Party* draws on the writer's Americano-centric experience as an Anglo-Saxon, Protestant, anti-Catholic tourist.

As per the eighth chapter, William Cullen Bryant's *Letters from Spain and Other Countries* constitutes an analysis of the peripheral identities of the Iberian Peninsula, concentrating on the distinct racial, cultural and linguistic characteristics of the Basque population. He also intersperses his text with images of the Spanish Orient, perpetuating travel conventions that revolve around the Black Legend and introduce the reader to a dark and Oriental Other. In his capacity as an American in Spain, Bryant's text is extensively concerned with the concept of the Homo Americanus.

The ninth chapter of this volume focuses on H. A. Pemberton's *Winter Tour in Spain,* offering glimpses of womanhood within the Spanish context. By adopting an ambiguous stance towards her gender, Pemberton reproduces images of patriarchy while striving to forge a nonconforming narrative position for herself. The writer also seeks to analyse Spanish politics and society in the light of the climate theory increasing the polarity between the Northern and the Southern nations of the European continent.

The last chapter sets the focus on Charles Bogue Luffmann's *A Vagabond in Spain* which serves as a text indicative of the fin du siècle, a few years prior to the Disaster of 1898. For this reason, Luffmann's travelogue is beset with images of a Spanish dystopia, pertaining to every aspect of Spanish nationhood connected to race, literature and peasant life in accordance with the Black Legend.

CHAPTER ONE

SIR JOHN TALLBOT DILLON: *LETTERS FROM AN ENGLISH TRAVELLER IN SPAIN, IN 1778, ON THE ORIGIN AND PROGRESS IF POETRY IN THE KINGDOM*

Sir John Tallbot Dillon, First Baronet, was an Irish politician, born to Arthur Dillon and Elizabeth Lambert in 1739. He was the grandson of Sir John Dillon, a member of the Parliament. In 1767 he married Millicent Drake. Dillon was elected a Member of the Parliament of Ireland from 1771 to 1783. After his residence in Vienna, he received the title of the Baron of the Holy Roman Empire by the Emperor Joseph II in 1783 as a form of recognition for his services in favour of the Catholics. He died in Dublin in 1805.

This chapter focuses on Dillon's travel narrative *Letters from an English Traveller in Spain in 1778, on the Origin and Progress of Poetry in that Kingdom: with Occasional Reflections on Manners and Customs; and Illustrations of the Romance of Don Quixote*. The opening of this volume with Dillon's text should be attributed to the fact that his travelogue set the pace for future British and American writers when they ventured into the Iberian Peninsula. What is more, his travel account contains valuable information on past and contemporary developments pertaining to Spanish poetry, with a strong focus on Miguel de Cervantes' picaresque novel *Don Quixote* (1605). Regarding this typically Spanish genre of prose fiction, it rendered Spanish literature famous worldwide and paved the way for the production of a series of prose narrative of the aforementioned genre, depicting the adventures of a roguish hero within a corrupt Spanish society and blending elements of comedy and satire (Juan A. Garrido Ardila 8).

Regarding the romancing of Spain detected in Dillon's text, one might assert that his nostalgic glance at the past literary and political exploits of the country visited coincides with the change in the interpretation of the country's identity by Western travellers, focusing extensively on the image

of the exotic Spain—"that emerged in the eighteenth century and reached international popularity in the Romantic period" (Torrecilla 10).

Acknowledging the fact that he is not the first to explore Spain, as prior to his journey other English travellers undertook visits to the Iberian Peninsula, Dillon outlines the main reasons for which his predecessors chose Spain as a travel destination. In particular, Dillon purports that

> So many English travellers have of late published their remarks in their respective tours through Spain, that is not without the utmost deference that the present Letters are offered to the public; as not only the most remarkable objects in that kingdom have been fully described, but we have moreover had catalogues of Greek, and Latin books in libraries, lists of pictures, and circumstantial accounts of buildings, both Roman, Gothic and Saracenic, annexed to the various incidents of travelling. Another writer has had recourse to the very rocks and mountains, has dug into the bowels of the earth, and visited the mines, describing the subterraneous kingdom of nature, as well as the various trees, and plants that cover the surface of that extensive country. What then remains to the present writer? Or how can he flatter himself with presenting any new matter worthy the attention of his readers, that will stand the test, before the piercing eye of criticism. (iii)

Based on this excerpt, Dillon argues that Spain as a travel destination had already been explored by other British travellers from various angles, mainly by operating as adventure heroes, impregnating their texts with instances that accentuate their own masculinity in the unknown land (Carl Thompson 11) or by stressing the different antiquities from the Roman, Gothic and Moorish past of the Peninsula combined with geophysical attractions that gave rise to the exaltation and/or mystification of Spanish nature. Anxious to differentiate himself from previous or contemporary British travellers who voyaged across Spain, Dillon keenly mentions that the originality of his travel text lies in his extensive focus on the literary exploits of the Spaniards, with a parallel attempt to dispel some of the stereotypes attached to Spanish nationhood by British and foreign writers, stating that

> It has been said by a great and learned French writer 'that the Spaniards have but one book, and that one, shews the ridicule of all the others.' How far such a general reflection appears strained and tinctured with national prejudice, I shall leave to others to consider: wishing to reverse so severe a sentence, I now stand before the court of Apollo, and petition for a hearing. Can we avoid doing that justice to the surprising genius of Lope de Vega, the contemporary, and in a manner rival, of our immortal Shakespeare; or

> can we refuse encomiums to the learned and unfortunate Quevedo? (v)

Drawing upon this fragment, what is worth mentioning is that Dillon refers to the scathing comments of other authors regarding Spain, alluding to the systematic demonisation of the country as early as the sixteenth century, when the Black Legend permeated the writings of the British and other Northern intellectuals. Concerning the position of Spain during the Enlightenment, Maltby alleges that

> The writers of the Enlightenment, in their battle against superstition and bigotry, saw Spain as an ideal target for their barbs. People like Raynal, Marmontel, Roucher, and DePauw seized eagerly on the testimony of the Protestants and revived the tales of Bartolome de Las Casas to prove that Spain and barbarism were very nearly synonymous. Their rediscovery of Las Casas, who had written a passionate sixteenth-century indictment of Spanish cruelties in the New World, is particularly interesting as it added an element to the Black Legend which has been heavily emphasized by later Hispanists. (4)[3][4][5]

Well aware of the rumours on Spanish cruelty and bigotry in British imagination, Dillon attempts to depart from the patronising outlook on Spanish culture, mentioning that his travel account will revolve around the important literary developments in Spain with reference to internationally acclaimed Spanish writers such as Lope de Vega and Francisco de Quevedo that evidence the existence of a refined literary production in the country visited.

Considering his attempt to defy the national prejudice against the Spaniards, Dillon moves on to address some key factors of Spanish nationhood that acquaint his readership with the true spirit of the nation under research: the issues of language, political history and regional identities that predominated in the Iberian Peninsula at the moment of his visit.

As regards the issue of language, there are several instances that suggest that one of Dillon's principal aims to journey across Spain is his endeavour to shed light on the origins of the Spanish language. Touching upon the current state of linguistic matters in the Spanish kingdom, Dillon

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[3] Guillaume Thomas François Raynal (1713-1796) was a Catholic priest and a French writer during the Age of the Enlightenment.

[4] Jean-François Marmontel (1723-1799) was a French historian and an illustrious member of the Encyclopedists Movement.

[5] Cornelis Franciscus de Pauw (1739-1799) was a Dutch philosopher and a diplomat.

stresses the significant role of the Spanish/Castilian language as the main language in most fields and areas of expertise across the kingdom:

> The common language of Spain is called Castilian, or Romance. This is what is printed in books, and spoken at court, and in the universities. The city of Toledo was considered the standard, when the residence of the monarchs; but now Madrid undoubtedly bears the palm. (6)

Dillon's above comment on the existence of a national language in Spain is of paramount importance, if one considers that the universality of the Castilian language as the official language of state occurred a few years prior to his arrival in Spain. According to Clare Mar Molinero,

> this move towards a unified culture had already started in the late eighteenth century with the 'Castilianisation' process marked by royal ordinances such as Charles III's 1768 decree stating that 'throughout the kingdom the Castilian language [should] be used in the administration and education.' (22)

As can be seen in Dillon's comment, the writer is well acquainted with the complex linguistic reality in Spain and the attempts of the Spanish kingdom to forge a common national identity across the Peninsula in order to shape a new nation-building agenda and form a solid Spanish nationhood. His interest in introducing the reader to the evolution of the linguistic situation in Spain should be seen in intimate connection with the Herderian concept of the *Volksgeist* that treated nationalism as a "cultural, ethnic, linguistic, or historical space that transcended the boundaries of the state and articulated a horizon of 'natural' geostrategic relations" (César Rina Simón 2). In view of the significance of national language or Volkssprache as a core nation-building component, Dillon attaches significant attention to the issue of language as a nation-building strategy of late eighteenth-century Spanish nationhood. It is far from a mere coincidence that he also refers to the parallel development of regional identities in Spain, manifest in the preservation of regional languages. Wishing to dwell upon the complex linguistic condition in the Spanish kingdom, in which the Castilian language was only spoken by a certain number of subjects or used in education and administration, whereas regional languages still dominated the peripheral regions of the Spanish kingdom, Dillon purports that

> It is not so in Asturias, Galicia, Valencia and Catalonia, where they have a provincial dialect, insomuch that the Castilian language is not universal, though generally well understood, and written in all parts, except in the

> mountains of Navarre and Biscay, where it is neither spoken, written, nor understood by the common people who have a different language of their own, unconnected with the Castilian. (6)

At a time when the Herderian notion of the national language permeated national discourses, it is worth observing that Dillon's remark questions, to a significant extent, Spanish national identity as a construct, presenting the kingdom as a patchwork of different nations that share limited bonds. Concerning the strenuous efforts of the Spaniards to forge Spanishness based on common linguistic and cultural traits, Andreas Bonnet affirms that

> Whilst French elites successfully managed to unify their country around a common culture and language in the nineteenth century, Spain has remained a culturally and linguistically fragmented country throughout its history as a nation, despite elites' desire to achieve a similar linguistic unification in both countries. (11)

In juxtaposition with French nationalism which succeeded in consolidating French nationhood by unifying the different ethnic groups of its empire, eighteenth-century Spain struggled to reconcile the antithetical elements that posed a challenge to the Herderian notion of nationhood. As argued by Dillon, the existence of a multilingual situation in Spain results from the admixture of diverse cultural and racial elements, owing to the succession of different rulers on the Iberian Peninsula:

> From such a diversity of dialects, it is natural to suppose that no modern language abounds more than the Spanish with foreign expressions, owing to the variety of nations that have visited that kingdom, conquered it, or become subject to its dominion; which makes it difficult to trace the origin of its words, and has swelled the dictionary of the Spanish academy to six volumes in folio, which is yet thought so deficient. (7)

Reflecting upon the complicated linguistic condition in Spain, treating peripheral languages as a major obstacle to the country's amalgamation of nationhood in line with the Herderian standards, Dillon alludes to the British concern on the issue of race, especially with the rise of Anglo-Saxonism, where the intimate relationship of race, language and nation was frequently explored to help the British Empire tackle both insular and peripheral nationalisms (Horsman 410).

With regard to the evolution of the Romance languages of the Peninsula as forms of corrupt Latin, Dillon throws light on the distinct languages that either perished or emerged from the year 1300 onwards.

Referring to the book *On the Origins of the Castilian Language*, Dillon maintains that the Castilian language neither possessed a universal status nor was the only language spoken across Iberia:

> In the year 1300 there were five national languages spoken in Spain, viz, the Castilian, Lemosin, Portuguese, Galician, and Biscayan, in their respective provinces; while the following dead languages were equally common, viz, the Hebrew amongst the Jews, the Arabic amongst the Mahometans, and the Latin and Greek amongst the Christians. Aldrete has fairly proved in his book 'on the Origin of the Castilian Language,' that it never existed as a distinct language prior to the invasion of the Goths, and that it owed its origin to a corruption from the Latin, though the exact time could not be fixed. (10)

In order to further shed light on the introduction of Castilian as the vernacular in the Iberian Peninsula and the phases through which it came to function as the official language of the Spanish Empire, Dillon moves on to explore the role of Alfonso the Wise[6], stressing his cultural contribution to the development of Spanish literature and the consolidation of Castilian:

> I am desirous, whilst in this city, of saying something more to you of the royal poet Alfonso, the 10th king of Castile, who held his court here, and was sirnamed the Wise, on account of his great learning and knowledge of astronomy. It was here that he caused those famous astronomical tables to be drawn up, called Alfonsine, after his name, which are carefully preserved in the cathedral of Seville. He perfected the Spanish code, named *Las Siete Partidas*, from their being divided into seven parts, corresponding with the seven letters of his name. He moreover introduced the national language into all public writings; an example which was soon after followed with us, by our Edward the 3d, who gave orders for the abolishing of the Norman tongue in all public acts and judicial proceedings. (122-23)

Dillon's above argument is corroborated by Carlos A. Sanz Mingo, who points to the emphasis that King Alfonso placed on the use of vernacular Castilian over Latin in his literary texts, leaving a major cultural footprint (22). Having addressed the instrumental part of King Alfonso in the unification of the different ethnic groups under a common language, Dillon emphasises the subordinate role of Castilian as opposed to other regional languages of the Peninsula in which a bulk of literary works had been written, as suggested in his mention of Galician, Catalan (Provenzal) and Arabic dialects:

[6] Alfonso el Sabio (Spanish)

> But is now high time to proceed on my favourite subject- when the Latin tongue, which had been universal in Spain, became totally corrupted by such different invasions, and variety of nations, and dispositions, the Castilian language is supposed to have insensibly arose about the 11th century- The oriental poetry had flourished near five hundred years, and the Provenzal and Galician dialects about one hundred, to that when the genius of Castilian poetry first began to expand and acquire a national form, it must have borrowed of course from the spirit of its predecessors, and hid its origin, like all antient languages, in singing the exploits of heroes, sounding forth the praise of the Deity, and tuning their lyre to the cause of religion: such were their Cantares, of which the Cancioneros have preserved ample collections. (101-2)[7]

On the basis of the above fragment, one can notice that, for one thing, Dillon presents Castilian an artificial and inferior language that was manifest to unify the different cultural traits that lay scattered across the Peninsula in order to consolidate Spanish imperial identity. For another thing, the writer foregrounds the idea of two conflicting processes that characterised Spanish nationhood from its very beginning, that is, the nation-building process at the expense of the region-building strategies. By successfully identifying the coexistence of regional and national languages as a major problem in the formation of Spanish nationhood, Dillon also bestows attention on the problematic relationship between the Castilian centre and the peripheries that underlay the Spanish political agenda. If national language is associated with the forging of a collective national identity, it is precisely this complexity that poses a challenge to the emergence of Spanish nationalism:

> Recent historical research has toned down the classical assertion of region-building as an opposite process to nation-building, or has even held the contrary thesis: nation-building may also imply region-building, to the point that the former may be heavily dependent on the latter, and vice versa. Collective identities may be regarded as a series of overlapping concentric spheres, complementing each other; and, as all forms of collective identity, they are the result of dynamic historical processes. (Núñez 485)

However, being well versed in the Castilian chivalric literary tradition, Dillon yearns to touch upon these regional cultures that incorporated all elements of the eighteenth-century collective Spanish identity. For this reason, he dedicates a significant part of his travel account to the Arabic,

[7] Cancioneros: books or manuscripts serving as songbooks by trobadours in the medieval music. (Israel J. Katz 30)

Galician and Castilian cultural vestiges. Treating his travel text as a form of pilgrimage to the land of Don Quixote, Dillon first mentions Cervantes' period during which the Castilian literature reached its apex. As the writer states:

> The poet who had gained the prizes were crowned with laurel, amidst the acclamations of the spectators, added to the joyful sound of musical instruments, succeeded by an elegant repast: they were then conveyed home with courtly attendance, and presented with an exclusive privilege to sing and read their verses in public at pleasure: a noble institution, the continuance of which was so ardently wished for, by that immoral genius, Michael de Cervantes, the contemporary of Shakespear, and I will almost venture to add, in every respect his equal. (60)

What is worth noticing in this fragment is Dillon's attempt to attribute to Cervantes an equal status to that of Shakespeare as a worldwide literary personality. Given that British travellers often tended to assume the role of the imperial beholder in the countries visited, formulating racial-exceptionalist arguments that sought to depict themselves as members of a superior culture as opposed to the Other (Paul A. Kramer 1318), Dillon goes as far as to equalise Cervantes with Shakespeare in cultural value, alluding to the Golden Age of Spanish Literature. Dillon's infatuation with the Quixotic context could be attributed to two causes: first, he desires to touch upon this major work of early seventeenth century in order to familiarise his readership with a more refined aspect of Spanish civilisation. Second, his constant allusion to the Quixotic imagery is in tune with the interpretation of Don Quixote as a political agent within British ideological and literary wars: according to Miriam Borham Puyal, during the eighteenth century, Cervantes' work was systematically politicised and appropriated by British national discourse to such an extent that "this reading of Don Quixote as political agent, is therefore one of the most surprising and original turns in the history of the reception of Cervantes' masterpiece in the British long eighteenth century" (23), mainly when it comes to the attack on the Jacobine values of the French revolution. Interestingly enough, Dillon also draws a parallel between scenes of the Quixotic narrative and eighteenth-century Spanish society in his peregrination across Castile La Mancha:

> I was musing on this subject, and had bewildered myself in political reflections till I entered the plains of *La Mancha*. There I recovered my good humour; saw many a fat laughing Sancho, drank good wine at Cuidad Real [sic], spent a night at the village del Toboso; saw the windmills which the distracted Quixote mistook for giants. (78-79)

Considering the writer's tendency to lay stress on the literary achievements of the Spanish nation, he moves on to explore the peripheral literary and cultural vestiges on the Iberian Peninsula, possessing a lingering effect on Spanish nationhood of the late eighteenth century. In another episode of his travel narrative, he draws the antiquarians' attention to the contribution of Galician poetry to Iberian culture, underlining the significance of the oral tradition of that Spanish periphery often quoted in the works of Greeks and Roman authors of the antiquity:

> We read that the natives were fond of poetry time immemorial, and cultivated it with singular delight. Silius Italicus relates, that the people of Galicia composed and sung verses in their original tongue. Strabo extols the ingenuity of the *Turdetani*, and says that they had histories and poems, as well as laws written in verse, when it was first applied, as Horace says, to soften the manners. (19)

The writer's reference to the rich Galician literary production is of major significance, if one considers that Spanish Nationalism of the late eighteenth century tended to prioritise the Castilian aspect of the Spanish civilisation over the regional national identities, adopting the centre-periphery strategy. What is more, Dillon's focus on the regional cultures of Spain evidences the failure of the imperial system to merge "all sectors of society into the national ideal" (Muro and Quiroga 15-16).

With regard to the conflictive relationship of the Galician and Basque identities with the more global Castilian national identity that Spanish nationalists aspired to attribute to the Spanish kingdom, Núñez purports that

> in the Catalan and Galician cases — as well as in the Basque Country, where regional historiography already had deep roots in the eighteenth century thanks to the *fuerista* tradition — the development of regional histories introduced a potentially conflictive element with Spanish nationalism. Their products principally depicted the history of their regions as one of ancient kingdoms and cultures that flourished in the middle ages, or even earlier, applying to their regions the postulates of nineteenth-century nationalist historiography. (491)[8]

In the same light, Dillon devotes an extensive part of his travel narrative to the equally vital role of the Catalan troubadours in the enrichment and embellishment of Spanish medieval culture, stating that:

[8] Fuerista: legal expert

> It was in this city that a college was first founded for the Trobadours who were settled here towards the end of the fourteenth century, by John the 1st King of Aragon, who sent a solemn embassy to France for the purpose, desiring assistance from the society of Trobadours at Thoulouse[…] and two principal persons were sent to Barcelona, where they formed an establishment.(6-7)

Based on Dillon's persistent view of Spain as an amalgam of different ethnicities and cultures, one can notice that, on the one hand, the writer is well acquainted with the sociocultural developments pertaining to late eighteenth-century Spanish nationalism and, on the other hand, the regional identities of the Iberian Peninsula still occupying a major position within the Iberian cultural framework, impeding the formation of a collective Spanish identity. It is also worth mentioning that the writer's journey in Spain precedes the Napoleonic Wars where Spanish Nationalism vehemently emerged as a reaction against the French on a larger scale.

The writer's interest in the regional cultures of Spain becomes apparent once again, when he touches upon the Basque culture, which further stimulates his antiquarian and linguistic pursuits. Upon crossing the Spanish-French border, he immediately refers to the distinct identity of the Basque population whose language and culture have existed in the Peninsula long before the construction of the modern Castilian-oriented kingdom:

> After travelling over a great many mountains, I at last arrived at this pleasant town, which closes my expedition through the Spanish dominions. As for the antient language of this country called the Vascuense, we are the more perplexed and in the dark, as all the books extant in that language are modern; so that, it is a very difficult matter to give any precise ideas or fix any standard of their tongue, and much less of their poetry, as the natives seem to have reserved a particular corner of Parnassus to themselves, in which they have neither rivals nor competitors. (296-7)

At a time when European racial discourses tended to formulate definitions of the European nations in conjunction with the Herderian paradigm that treated national language and literature as a core component of forging national identities (Dimitrios Kassis 2), Dillon also bestows attention on the possible Basque-Irish connection, making reference to the parallel national awakening of the Celtic fringe, that is, the Irish attempt to claim a distinct nationhood from the English through the Ossianic movement:

> As for my part, I have in vain studied the language in the grammar of Laramendi, and am willing to take the people on their words, who assure me it is very harmonious; nor can I give you any satisfactory account of the antiquity of the inhabitants who are supposed to have peopled in Ireland. The Irish antiquaries agree that the colonies of Milesians came from Brigantia to Ireland, and O'Flaherty and Keating assert, that Florian de Ocampo an old Spanish writer, proves in his chronicle, that the Brigantines of Ireland owe their origin to Spain, and so passed into Wales; but for my part, as I am as little versed in the Irish tongue as I am in the Biscayan, it is not in my power to give you an lights on this subject. Who knows? If I had had the good fortune to read the poems of Ossian in the original, perhaps it might have afforded some assistance, and I might have recovered from obscurity some Biscay warrior, like Fingal, who lorded it over these mountains, and perhaps did feats which the most harmonious verses have done justice to, that now lie buried beyond the reach of our most profound antiquaries. (298-99)

Based on the premise that the Basque and Irish cultures are connected under a common Celtic identity, the writer dwells on a potential racial connection of this peripheral culture in Spain with Ireland as an insular periphery, thus foregrounding the idea of a Basque-Irish racial hypothesis that increases peripheral identities both in Spain and within the British cultural space. In that respect, his genuine concern with the position of Ireland as a British insular periphery coincides with his infatuation with the regional cultures of the Iberian Peninsula. As for his reference to Ossian, it is also intimately connected to his overall tendency to read Spain from an Irish perspective, at a time when Celticism was primarily manifest through the circulation of Ossianic poetry. Concerning the significance of Ossianism as a literary movement that empowered the cultural role of the peripheral Celtic groups of Great Britain, Elizabeth Hagglund maintains that

> the publication of Macpherson's books led to new ways of seeing and representing the Scottish landscape […] Firstly, the poems of Ossian 'provided a new way of looking at wild and desolate scenery'. ' Hugh Blair, author of Critical Dissertation on the Poems of Ossian in 1765, wrote on the subject of sublimity, using quotations from the Ossianic poems as illustrations. It has been suggested that Blair's work on sublimity was a direct influence on Gilpin's later writings on Scottish landscape. Secondly, travellers began to associate the scenery directly with Ossian, peopling the landscape with blind bards and heroes created by their own imaginations. Thirdly, the poems, feeding into Enlightenment ideas about the 'nobility' of 'primitive' societies, caused a re-evaluation of present-day Highlanders, making them acceptable and even admired. (29)