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Transatlantic Circuits of Power: A Comparative Study of Late 19th Century Caribbean
and Spanish Novels

by

Ana Mateos

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Romance Languages and Literatures

in the

Graduate Division

of the

University of California, Berkeley

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Abstract

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Doctor of Philosophy in Romance Languages and Literatures

University of California, Berkeley

Professor Dru Dougherty and Professor Michael Iarocci, Co-chairs

This dissertation brings together Spanish, Cuban, and Puerto Rican novels written in the late 19th century, a period covering the 1868 Revolution and the Restoration, up to independence. These novels expose the conflictive political and economic integration of both peninsular and overseas territories, which configures social relations in a web of mutual influence. I focus in particular on the representation of imperial discourses as articulated by, and informing, discourses of gender, class, sexuality, race and geopolitical situation.

A fundamental claim of my work is that these novels cannot be understood apart from the transatlantic economic, political, social and cultural ties between peninsular Spain and the Caribbean. Thus, my dissertation attempts to question the concept of the ‘national’ as it has been applied to Spanish and Spanish-Caribbean cultural traditions of the 19th century. This approach requires detailed engagement with the historiography of the period, both because of Spain’s troubled relationship with its imperial past throughout much of the 20th century, mirrored in the historical record until recently, and because of a predominance of post-independence interpretations of Caribbean novels.

I begin with Hostos’ *La Peregrinación de Bayoán* (1863) and Alas’ *La Regenta* (1884-5), focusing on the representation of imperialism before and after the Six Year Revolution, from the point of view of the Puerto Rican white Creole class and the Spanish provincial bourgeoisie respectively. I show how these two perspectives present different and opposed political models, which are illuminated and enacted by different gender discourses. Chapter Three offers a comparative reading of Pardo Bazán’s *La Tribuna* (1884) and Morúa Delgado’s *Sofía* (1894) focusing on the representation of exploited parties within the realist/naturalist genre. In both novels women are depicted through discourses of race and slavery, but in different ways and to different ends. Chapter Four, on Galdós’ *La Desheredada* (1881) and Villaverde’s *Cecilia Valdés* (1882), addresses the failure of modern society to live up to its liberal ideals, such as social equality and

mobility, especially because of self-reinforcing social structures of exploitation and consumerism. These exploitative structures, based on gender and class distinctions, are connected figuratively and materially with colonial exploitation, especially the slave trade.

Table of Contents

I - Introduction	1
II - Land and Sea	25
III - Commodification and Constructivism: Race and Gender	60
IV - The Crisis of Liberal Ideals	95
Conclusion	125
Works Cited	132

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Chapter One

Introduction

This dissertation brings together Spanish, Cuban, and Puerto Rican novels written in the late 19th century, a period covering the 1868 Revolution and the Restoration, up to independence. These novels expose the conflictive political and economic integration of peninsular and overseas territories, which configures social relations in a web of mutual influence. This work is concerned in particular with the representation of imperial discourses as articulated by, and informing, myriad social relations and discourses of gender, class, sexuality, race and geopolitical situation.

1. A historically grounded, transatlantic approach

A fundamental claim of this work is that the transatlantic economic, political, social and cultural ties between peninsular Spain and the Spanish Caribbean provide the framework for novels of the late 19th century written on both sides of the Atlantic. Many of the novels I will be focusing on have been canonized as ‘national’ by literary scholars. These nationalist interpretations of the novels may seem to be supported and even required by the novels themselves, whose direct focus of attention is confined to one or another geopolitical space. I will attempt to show that the novels’ representations of social relations need to be understood within a transatlantic context. Furthermore, my dissertation attempts to question the concept of the ‘national’ as it has been applied to Spanish and Spanish-Caribbean cultural traditions in the 19th century, as limited to the Peninsula on the one side, or to Cuba or Puerto Rico on the other.

It is only recently that literary scholars have begun to adequately take into account the importance of Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines in the development of peninsular Spain’s political, economic, and social history during the late 19th century.¹ They have been constrained by a longstanding gap in the historiography of this period, which has only seriously begun to diminish in the last two decades. As Alda Blanco puts it, historical studies have relegated the colonies to the margins of Spanish historic memory (221). Originally, this might have been due in part to the diminished size of the Spanish empire after 1824, in comparison to that of other European powers, which made the few remaining colonial territories a kind of imperial embarrassment (Blanco 222). Also,

¹ Here I have in mind scholars such as Alda Blanco, Mary Coffey, Julio Rodríguez Puértolas, John Sinnigen, and Lisa Surwillo.

starting at the end of Spain's imperialism in 1898, the Spanish cultural tradition associated that year with a subsequent sense of loss. This sense of loss (captured crudely in the still current phrase, 'el desastre del '98') came to be the dominant image in Spain's narrative and construction of its own identity, and obscured any interpretation of the active presence and influence of Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines. In the past decades, however, historians increasingly agree that 19th-century Spain cannot be studied without taking into account the influence and repercussions of the overseas territories. In particular, this research has shown the depth of the political, economic and social connections between Spain and the erstwhile provinces of overseas.

With regard to the Spanish novels I will be discussing, there is yet another reason why detailed engagement with historical research is necessary: colonial elements are not generally emphasized. Rather, the colonies are often alluded to in an oblique way, with little if any direct reference to slavery or the slave trade. A superficial reading could easily conclude that the colonial world was of minor relevance in the novels. One might begin to correct such a reading by appealing to Said's interpretation of a similarly minimal presence of servants in British and French novels: just as the marginal contribution of servants expresses their subordinated position with respect to the middle class, so too, with the colonial in relation to metropolitan Spain. However, while Said's approach is relevant to Spanish novels, it cannot adequately account for the complexity of Spain's relations to the colonies and the colonies' presence in the novels.

One reason, no doubt, that references to the colonial and to the most exploitative practices of Spain's imperialism are not emphasized, if present at all, is a kind of self-silencing, even among intellectuals, regarding slavery and slave traders (which surely helps explain the historiographical gap as well).² Slavery was allowed in Cuba until 1886—though it was gratuitously banned within the peninsular territory and its nearby islands in 1837.³ Similarly, though the slave trade was still an important source of economic revenues in Cuba until the 1880s, its existence could not be publicly discussed, for it was made illegal by a treaty signed by Fernando VII in 1817 and re-enacted by his widow in 1835. These practices, in which political leaders at all levels (for example, Queen Isabel II and O'Donnell) were complicit, were as much an embarrassment as a sign of power (Piqueras 284). In Spanish society, the moral unacceptability of slavery and the slave trade was rarely discussed. This kind of explanation can be complemented

² See E. Vila Vilar, "Intelectuales Españoles ante el Problema Esclavista," E. Vila Vilar, and L. Vila Vilar, *Los Abolicionistas Españoles del Siglo XIX* 12, and Maluquer de Motes, "Abolicionismo y Resistencia a la Abolición en la España del siglo XIX" 321-4.

³ The text of the abolition bill from March 5th, 1837: "Guiada la comisión por estos principios y deseos quisiera que de hoy mismo para siempre quedara abolida la esclavitud, no sólo en el continente español sino también en sus posesiones ultramarinas que la condición de siervo no tuviese valor ni existencia al lado de españoles libres. Pero la comisión cree que esta reforma, exigida por la razón, la humanidad y por la religión misma, si es de fácil y expedita ejecución en la Península e islas adyacentes, no así en las provincias de Ultramar" (Vila Vilar and Vila Vilar 18).

by another, more mundane observation: one reason why something is not emphatically underscored is that it does not need to be. It is true that the novels' lack of explicitness in referring to exploitative practices is striking. However, based on historical research, I have come to the conclusion, and hope to show, that even indirect allusions would have been understood as obvious references to a reader living in the political and economic climate of the time.

My work offers more than a post-colonial reading of the Spanish novels. Scholars such as Blanco, Coffey, Rodríguez Puértolas, Sinnigen, and Surwillo have already begun to do this. My dissertation also aims to bring together novels from both sides of the Atlantic in order to portray the actual circuits of mutual influence and dependence in cultural, social, economic and political terms, ties that remained intense even in the years leading to independence. By putting Caribbean and Spanish novels together I propose to exhibit them as elements of a transatlantic circuit that surpassed the insular or peninsular territories taken alone.

The predominant interpretations of the Caribbean novels discussed in my work have been made through the lens of a post-independence perspective and see the novels as part of the project of national construction.⁴ This perspective tends to oversimplify complex political, social and cultural situations in 19th-century Cuba and Puerto Rico. Moreover, it tends to downplay the pro-Spanish attitudes—albeit conflictive ones—on the part of the population of the overseas territories. It should be recalled that even after the Ten Year War, reformists in Cuba and Puerto Rico continued to support Spanish rule on the basis of the promise, going back to the Cádiz Constitution of 1812, that the islands would one day enjoy equal rights. The continuous political changes in Spain, first between absolutism and liberalism, and then between moderate and progressive liberalism, made it seem as if the expansion of constitutional rights to the overseas territories was just a matter of time.

Throughout the 19th century many of the most important Caribbean intellectuals spent time in Spain and participated in its public life, among them Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda, Domingo Del Monte, Eugenio María Hostos, and the clearly pro-independence Cuban writers, Juan Gualberto Gómez (who, while in exile in Madrid, collaborated with Rafael María Labra and was a member of the Spanish Abolitionist Society) and José Martí (whose father was originally from Valencia). Gómez de Avellaneda's *Sab* (1841) was published first in Spain (due to the censorship existing in Cuba) as was Hostos' novel *La Peregrinación de Bayoán* (1863). The latter was actually an attempt to speak to the most progressive sectors of Spain's political spectrum. In fact, as Schmidt-Nowara has pointed out, Puerto Rican reformists played an essential role in the development of civic movements in Spain during the 1860s (7, 13).

⁴ See Rosa, *Los Fantasmas de la Razón* 17, for a critique of strict nationalist readings of late 19th-century Puerto Rican novels. Sommer's *Foundational Fictions*, is devoted to foundational readings of several Latin American novels, including *Sab* and *Cecilia Valdés*, which I discuss in the following Chapters.

Sab and *La Peregrinación* exemplify the symbiotic relationship between the two sides of the Atlantic, something that is easily obscured in their portrayal as part of the Latin American foundational tradition. Indeed, many authors have understood the romance, in *Cecilia Valdés* (1882), between the white Creole Leonardo and the mulatta Cecilia as forging the basis for an independent Cuban nation. However, even if these novels might have served a foundational function by broaching questions of independence and national unity, this does not imply that the context in which the novels need to be understood is anything but transatlantic. And indeed, Villaverde's novel is at pains to point out the intricate social and familial bonds existing between Spain and its remaining colonies. Leonardo's father, Cándido Gamboa, is a Spaniard who immigrated to Cuba and made his fortune in the slave trade. While Leonardo identifies with his mother's Cuban roots and shows great animosity towards the Spaniards on the island, he is linked to Spain through his progenitor and identifies himself culturally with Europe. In *Sofía* (1894), by the pro-independence Cuban writer Morúa Delgado, the father of the Cuban Unzuazu family is from Bilbao and the son, Federico, is sent to Madrid to study law. *La Peregrinación* closes with the narrative voice divided between the main character Bayoán, who returns to Latin America, and Hostos, who remains in Spain, as a way of exemplifying the schizophrenic split experienced by the Creole population, especially when Spain was tightening political and economic control over the remaining colonies. After the Ten Year War, independence movements became increasingly strong in Cuba. But even then, in the decade between 1882 and 1892, "almost one hundred thousand Spaniards travelled to and remained in Cuba," (Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba* 96)—a number that increased in the years before the final war. The transatlantic familial, social and cultural ties portrayed or exhibited in these novels not only gave the independence wars the character of fratricide and civil confrontation, but often set the backdrop against which these novels might serve foundational functions.

This brings up the problematic issue of how to refer to Puerto Rico, Cuba and the Philippines before independence. On the one hand, their official legal status was that of overseas 'provinces' and they figured as part of the Spanish territory, in principle like any peninsular province or nearby island. However, in practice, these territories were treated as colonies and their inhabitants, independently of where they had been born, enjoyed fewer rights than those living in Spain. The overseas territories, during most of the 19th century, had no representation in the Spanish Parliament, nor did they enjoy the constitutional legality approved for the Peninsula and nearby islands. Finally, they were ruled by a military figure, a Capitán General, appointed from Madrid, who was invested with almost unrestricted power. I have, for the most part, chosen to refer to the overseas territories as 'colonies', thought at the same time, I try to point out the limits of and the tensions in the use of this concept.

This dissertation leaves aside the Philippines. This narrower approach has to do with the economic and social differences between the Caribbean and the Philippines. Of course, the political status of these islands was comparable to that of the Antillean islands. They were ruled by a Capitán General with unrestricted power, they were excluded from the

constitutional political system of the Peninsula, and their political representatives were called (to no avail) to attend the Spanish Parliament together with those of Cuba and Puerto Rico. However, the Catholic Church and especially its orders of friars had an extraordinary presence and influence in the Philippines, unlike in the Caribbean. This needs to be explained by reference to the history of the Spanish presence in Asia, the conquest of which was originally undertaken by religious organizations without Spanish political or military support. These religious organizations remained powerful in the Philippines throughout the 19th century. From an economic point of view the Philippines followed a pre-19th-century Bourbon system, based on tax collections on tobacco. This economic scheme had been characteristic of Spain's colonialism in continental America. The Philippines did not participate in the kind of economy characteristic of Cuba and Puerto Rico, which, as I explain in the historical section, was based much more on import-export and the development of monocultures of sugar and tobacco.

2. Theoretical approach

In discussing the relationship between colonies and metropolis I do not wish to give priority to the geopolitical situation and the dichotomy, center versus periphery, as what McClintock calls the "organizing trope" (8). Rather, I hope to explore the transatlantic world through the investigation of imperial discourses articulated around several social categories. My work is in line with McClintock's rejection, in *Imperial Leather*, of the idea that "imperialism was organized around a single issue." Consequently, I will, as she suggests, "avoid privileging one category over the others" (8). She structures her work around class, gender, sexuality and race within the national borders of Britain. My discussion is wider in scope. It hinges on the transatlantic dimension and circulation of the categories she discusses, by putting novels from both sides of the Atlantic in dialogue. I intend to portray these novels as elements on a larger canvas and thus counteract the sense of spatial and national closure normally associated with realist and naturalist novels. I hope to show that the representation of economic, social, political and cultural movements of peninsular Spain on the one hand, and Cuba and Puerto Rico on the other, are constituted in relation to, and in contact with, what lay outside their boundaries.

Unlike Said, who defines imperialism as "the practice, the theory and the attitudes of a dominating metropolitan center ruling a distant territory" (*Culture and Imperialism* 9), McClintock sees imperial discourses as ideological formations that apply not only to peripheral territories, but are also active within the metropolitan realm. Her work focuses on elucidating different aspects of the imperial project within the metropolis of London. She shows that discourses of race, the unknown territory, the primitive, the natural versus the historical, and anachronistic time, which are normally associated with colonial spaces, operate there as well. Spanish novels similarly display imperial discourses applied within the metropolitan realm. In *La Regenta*, for example, Ana Ozores is depicted as an unknown territory that needs to be controlled and tamed; in *La Tribuna* class differences are depicted in terms of racial distinctions; in *Fortunata and Jacinta* we find a

description, from the perspective of the bourgeois gaze, of working class slums as a primitive and natural, as opposed to civilized, space.

I add to McClintock's *Imperial Leather* the study of colonial spaces as part of the study of the imperial. I bring in the colonial spaces in two ways: the first is to study the references to colonial elements within novels originating in the metropolis. A case in point is the comparison between Amparo and a Cuban cigar in Pardo Bazán's *La Tribuna*. The cigar is not just projecting an imperial gaze over a working class woman but is also alluding to colonial exploitation and the existence of slavery in Cuba. The question then becomes how these two levels of imperial practices are interacting with one another. Second, by studying imperialism in the colonial novels alongside imperialism in metropolitan ones, my work exhibits social categories and discourses in circulation. Moreover, I see imperialism in the colonies as often producing quite different phenomena, which, from the point of view of novelistic representation, required different and original solutions. In particular, I explore the determinant role and effects of different political and social structures, such as the lack of political sovereignty, the existence of slavery and racial discrimination, and the relevance of the geopolitical distance when Europe—not necessarily Spain—is taken to be the economic and cultural center.

In the metropolitan novels the female and the colonial appear intertwined on many occasions. However, this confluence does not merely function as a way of representing the colonial (as a feminized territory), as Said suggests. McClintock has shown that Said, in bringing to light the colonial discourse of 19th-century novels, considers the feminine merely as a metaphor and thereby elides gender “as a constitutive dynamic of imperial and anti-imperial power” (14). By leaving unaddressed the specific social condition of the woman, Said leaves aside the possibility of a dialogue between social formations across geopolitical boundaries.

I view women on both sides of the Atlantic as sharing certain exploitative conditions with the colonies on the one hand, while participating in the imperial project on the other. It is important to see that 19th-century women were permanently under-age citizens without the possibility of acquiring the rights enjoyed by their male counterparts, a feature that assimilated them to those inhabiting the overseas territories. “Marital laws, property laws, land laws and the intractable violence of male decree bound them in gendered patterns of disadvantage and frustration” (McClintock 6). This underage situation of women also, however, required them to participate in the imperial project in different ways than men. Unlike men, they could not take part in military decisions, and they did not hold any administrative or political positions. Even in Cuba, during the nationalist movement, women were represented as mothers, wives and daughters of those male revolutionaries, and thereby “excluded ... from the symbolic birth of the nation” (Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba* 127).⁵ At the same time, metropolitan and white Creole women enjoyed the benefits of colonial exploitation and actively reinforced it.

⁵ See Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba* 126-127, for further discussion and additional references.

Going beyond Said's emphasis on the female as metaphor for the colonial also allows for a more variegated account of women's subjugation. Indeed, discourses of female subjugation and therefore their comparison to the colonial differ enormously depending on class and race. Thus the identification of the bourgeois Ana Ozores from *La Regenta* with a cigar has a different meaning than the comparison of the working class Amparo from *La Tribuna* to the same commodity. These differences make clear that the wide range of social variation within gender and sexual categories has been washed away in Said's analysis. The approach to gender I propose has the effect of de-essentializing it.

My work on gender and colonial discourses is part of a more general framework for studying relations of exploitation. In general, I do not work with a fixed system in which certain forms and discourses of exploitation are treated as primary while others are taken to be derivative. Rather, imperial and colonial discourses as well as those of class, race, gender and sexuality are treated on a par; they interact in dynamic and unstable ways, informing one another. This approach makes possible a more nuanced interpretation of social groups on both sides of the Atlantic by breaking up binary power relations between exploited and exploiter, something that also corresponds more closely to the social reality of 19th century Caribbean and Spain.

3. Summary of the remaining Chapters

Each chapter of my work offers a comparative study of novels from both sides of the Atlantic on different themes. I begin with Hostos' *La Peregrinación de Bayoán* and Alas' *La Regenta* and focus on the representation of different ends of the metropolitan-colonial axis from the point of view of the Spanish provincial bourgeoisie and the Puerto Rican white Creole class. I am particularly interested in how these two novels present different and opposed political projects, and how different kinds of gender discourses both illuminate and participate in these two models. In Alas' novel imperialism is critically represented as a constitutive element of the Restoration imaginary, one that informs the social organization of metropolitan Spain. Here we see some of the topics brought up by Said a century later, but described from a mocking distance. The relationship between the female and the colonial, for example, is depicted as re-enacting anxieties and frustrating attempts at domination. Even the so-called metropolitan center, which according to Said is reinforced in 19th-century British novels, is mocked in the novel, illustrating Spain's peripheral status within Europe.

Hostos' *La Peregrinación de Bayoán* takes the form of a diary narrating the vicissitudes of a young Puerto Rican Creole's pilgrimage to Spain to petition for greater autonomy; despite Hostos' criticism of the colonial situation he did not at this stage long for the construction of an independent nation of Puerto Rico. I read this novel as building on the sociopolitical situation of the 1860s in Spain, where the increasing strength of the more liberal sectors appeared to offer some possibility of securing more freedom and equality for the colonies. *La Peregrinación* illustrates the material and discursive circumstances involved in living in an assigned geopolitical periphery with respect to the metropolis,

using the ship and the ocean as its most representative images, which I contrast with the image of the tower of the first chapter of *La Regenta*. Bayoán's geopolitical situation and his political ideal are reflected in a masculine discourse different from the 'conquering' model depicted in *La Regenta* and in a 'de-centered' way of thinking, which contrasts with *La Regenta's* ideologically stable and non-fluctuating narrative voice.

Chapter Three offers a comparative reading of Pardo Bazán's *La Tribuna* and Morúa Delgado's *Sofía*, focusing on the representation of exploited parties within the realist/naturalist novel. In both novels the representation of women of different social groups is put into dialogue with discourses of race and slavery, albeit in different ways and to different ends. *La Tribuna* revolves around the representation of female sexuality through the use of discourses of race, class, and colonial exploitation. It represents working class and bourgeois female sexuality as relating differently to the above discourses. Class distinction is represented in Pardo Bazán's novel in terms of racial difference, which was very common in 19th century Europe, as McClintock points out. By describing Amparo as 'morena,' and through inter-textual references to Mérimée's *Carmen* (1845) and Bizet's opera of the same title (1875), the novel suggests that she is of a non-white racial 'type' and draws on a transatlantic racial discourse connecting Africa, Europe and the Caribbean.

In the second part of this chapter I explore the ways in which Morúa Delgado's *Sofía* (1894) confronts the question of the portrayal of slavery and the black race in 19th century Cuba. As I read it, *Sofía* depicts race and slavery as constructed through a series of discursive and material practices and, in this way, attempts to respond to views like Pardo Bazán's, which link behavioral traits to race. *Sofía* should be understood in the context of pre-revolutionary Cuba as an attempt to help erase racial prejudices against the Afro-Cubans. In particular, I address the novel's use of the category of the 'submissive slave,' so preponderant in anti-slavery novels. My discussion will shed some light on the 'hybrid' style of Morúa Delgado's naturalism. While on the one hand the novel adopts a distancing perspective in the description of the white Creoles, it opts to sentimentalize the slave Sofía as a way of counteracting the ideological portrayal of slaves as commodities, as things devoid of a soul. While recognizing the usefulness of the figure of the submissive slave, *Sofía* addresses the shortcomings and negative consequences of the sentimentalization of marginalized subjects. The main claim of my discussion of *Sofía* is that Morúa Delgado fights the ideological misrepresentation of the black, but not by attempting to disprove it. He is rather preoccupied with pointing out that this figure is constructed independently of empirical grounds, and is based on the class interests of the dominant group.

Chapter Four is based on two characters: Isidora Rufete from Galdós' *La Desheredada* (1881) and Leonardo Gamboa from Villaverde's *Cecilia Valdés*. The former is a Madrilean bourgeois woman and the latter a wealthy white Creole son of a Spanish slave trader and plantation owner, Cándido Gamboa. The main topic of this chapter is the failure of modern society to live up to its liberal ideals, such as equality and mobility, especially because of self-reinforcing social structures of exploitation and consumerism.

Structures based on gender and class distinctions as well as consumerism, are connected with social structures of the colonial system, either figuratively, as in the comparison of Isidora with the tragic event of the ‘licenciados de Cuba,’ or more materially in relation to the wealth of her lover Botín. Moreover, in both novels, the attempt to move up socially even cements or worsens one’s own subjugation.

Both novels contrast an economy based on values of hard work and frugality with one based on financial speculation, colonial exploitation, and a desire for luxury. Both Leonardo and Isidora, averse to hard work, participate, or at least attempt to participate, in the latter model, considering themselves entitled to lives of leisure. While *La Desheredada* separates these two economic models and advocates the moral superiority of the former, *Cecilia Valdés* invites us to think of elements such as efficiency, control and standardization, which bring together a model of a modern European bourgeois economy and the plantation model, different as they may be. In this way, it suggests that imperial practices did not just emerge in the context of the colonies, but were fundamental aspects of European modernity.

4. Filling in the gaps: a case in point

Above I mentioned that because of a sparsity and indirectness of allusions to the colonies, especially to the slave trade, detailed engagement with recent historical research is necessary to properly understand metropolitan novels of the period and to place them in their transatlantic context. The standard by which a historically based and transatlantic approach to Spanish realist novels must be judged, however, is in the fruitfulness of this approach to particular cases. As an example, I would like to focus briefly on Galdós’ *La Familia de León Roch* (1878). Its portrayal of the Marquis of Fúcar not only exhibits how a historically informed approach enables one to decode colonial references, but also shows in a particularly stark manner the way that the transatlantic circuit is at once presupposed by, yet relegated to the background of, the novel.

La Familia de León Roch can be seen as transitional between his ‘novelas de tesis’ and the series of ‘novelas contemporáneas,’ which provide social analysis of the Madrilean middle class.⁶ It is also Galdós’ first novel that addresses the Restoration. It tells the story of the moral conflict between traditional and liberal values, embodied by María Tellería and her husband León Roch respectively. After an initial separation, they both end up staying at Suertebella, the Marquis’ palace, which becomes a neutral territory, in which

⁶ For this reason, among others, it enjoys a special significance in Galdós’ novelistic production. The former type of novel, such as *Doña Perfecta* (1876), engages with opposed and irreconcilable discourses, while the latter type, such as *Fortunata y Jacinta* (1887), focuses on the analysis and complexities of the Madrilean bourgeoisie. *La Familia de León Roch*, as a transitional novel between these two phases, includes both of these forms of representation and ultimately subsumes the conflicts of the ‘novelas de tesis’ into the complexities of the economic world of the ‘novelas contemporáneas.’

the moral and political drama plays out. Alongside the conflict between liberal and conservative values, the novel portrays the power of an economic and political oligarchy during the Restoration in the figure of the Marquis of Fúcar.⁷ The Marquis is represented as connected to the slave trade and to the concession of loans the Spanish government needed to finance the Ten Year War in Cuba (1868-1878), which places him squarely within the influential colonial lobby, a powerful economic and political force in Spain and the Colonies in the years leading up to and during the Restoration.⁸ Other characters we will encounter that can be associated with the colonial lobby are Sánchez Botín in *La Desheredada* and Cándido Gamboa in *Cecilia Valdés*.

It is tempting to relegate the Marquis of Fúcar to the background of *La Familia de León Roch*. Behind the dramatic conflict between the characters, and more subtle, though stretching through the entire novel, is the story of Fúcar's business of selling *empréstitos* (loans) to the Spanish government. While María lies moribund in Fúcar's palace, the narration is interrupted by a few scarce references to the Marquis' business deals. For example: "mientras esto ocurría junto a la enferma [María], el Marqués de Fúcar, dando de la mano por un momento al grandioso asunto del empréstito, ya casi ultimado se llegaba a su querida hija y le decía ..." (495). These interruptions involve sudden changes of tone; while the moral drama is enacted in highly emotional ways, the Marquis' business is always described in concise and austere terms.⁹ And while all the other

⁷ The literature has largely viewed *La Familia de León Roch* as enacting a social drama of the opposition between tradition and modernity. The former is represented by María, her brother Luis and the priest Paoletti. León, commonly interpreted as a follower of the Krausismo, a secular doctrine brought into Spain from Germany by Sanz del Río, embodies rationality, science and the new bourgeoisie, which are opposed both to rigid religious doctrine and to the old aristocracy (Sánchez Llama 22-23). Sinnigen, along the lines of Sánchez Llama, writes that "la ruptura de la unión León-María sugiere la incompatibilidad entre la vieja aristocracia terrateniente aliada con la religión (Tellería) y la nueva burguesía aliada con la ciencia, Roch" (49).

⁸ Eric Williams refers to a figure, similar to Fúcar, who was already very popular in Great Britain in the 18th century, the wealthy planter returning from the sugar islands: "The sugar planter ranked among the biggest capitalists of the mercantilist epoch" (85). He makes the further connection between the plantations and the development of the banking industry in Britain: "Typical of the 18th century banker is the transition from tradesman to merchant and then the further progression from merchant to banker" (99).

⁹ As a way of showing the 'victory' of the Marquis's businesses over the melodramatic conflict between conservative and liberal sectors as the defining characteristic of the Restoration, the novel ends with a telegram sent by Fúcar to his agents in Hamburg, whose tone contrasts sharply with María's emotional letter that opens the novel: "Madrid, 1.º de Diciembre. Antes de salir de Londres para Hamburgo a comprarme las veinte toneladas de tabaco, véndame usted todo lo de Ríotinto y el Consolidado Exterior. Comprar a escape Gas de París y Mobiliario Español. El empréstito, tercero que hace este año nuestro Tesoro, va a maravilla. Necesito fondos en esa plaza para proponer al Gobierno el pago de parte del cupón exterior a los tenedores ingleses, con lo cual la

characters are absorbed in this moral drama, the Marquis of Fúcar discretely continues to increase his wealth through his empréstitos. His economic interests appear immune to María's and León's ideological and political conflict, as if he could profit were either side to prevail. Fúcar's confinement to the dramatic background re-enacts the role of the colonial lobby in the Restoration, especially with respect to the 'turno pacífico,' which I discuss below. Beyond this innocuous image, the novel points to the immorality of Fúcar's business transactions, and to his incredible power to exert control over the different social classes and orders: church, aristocracy, and liberal bourgeoisie. He is reminiscent of extremely wealthy indianos, such as the Marquis of Manzanedo, the Marquis of Comillas (Antonio López), and Güell y Ferrer, who made their fortunes in the Caribbean and the Philippines and maintained their commercial connections with the colonies in various forms even after returning to the Peninsula.¹⁰

The narrative voice depicts the Marquis of Fúcar as an old galleon:¹¹ his slow walk, due to his obesity, metaphorically resembles the majestic and mellow movement of an old galleon returning from America loaded with wealth, alluding to the fact that the old empire is still a part of the current social imaginary and is being reenacted in new forms of colonialism in the last decades of the 19th century. At the same time, the old economy of galleons and bullion, slow and heavy, is contrasted by the narrative voice with Fúcar's new methods of creating wealth, characterized by their speed and enormous quantity, "inmensa fortuna, amasada en veinte años de esa prosperidad fulminante," revealing both the ineludible presence and the limitations of the old empire as a metaphor for the current colonial enterprise. I will show in Chapter Two that Alas' *La Regenta* (1884-5) also shows an awareness of the new 19th-century imperialism, represented especially by Cuba, in contrast with the old Empire of continental America, while at the same time depicting the new colonialism as satisfying Spain's self image as an imperial power.

operación se redondea aquí de un modo completo. Es incalculable el beneficio de este anticipo. En lo demás, confirmo la mía de 23 de Noviembre. No olvide usted mis instrucciones para sacar partido de los almacenistas de tabaco en Hamburgo. Nada de timidez. Como el negocio es bueno, no le importe a usted llegar a precios exagerados" (*La Familia de León Roch* 162).

¹⁰ Bahamonde and Cayuela have shown that the wealth of the Marquis of Manzanedo was diversified into different kinds of economic ventures, both in the colonies and elsewhere, like that of the Marquis of Fúcar. Due to their immense fortune and power and to the fact that they still depended economically on the colonies, these colonial entrepreneurs were able and willing to exert political pressure on both Spain and the overseas colonial governments ("Trasvase de Capitales Antillanos y Estrategias Inversoras: La Fortuna del Marqués de Manzanedo (1823-1882)" 142-4).

¹¹ "El marqués de Fúcar andaba lentamente a causa de su obesidad. Había en su paso algo de la marcha majestuosa de un navío o galeón antiguo, cargado de pingue esquilmo de las Indias. También él parecía llevar encima el peso de la inmensa fortuna, amasada en veinte años de esa prosperidad fulminante que la sociedad contemplaba pasmada y temerosa" (*La Familia de León Roch* 154).

Though *La Familia de León Roch* portrays the power of this type of character in the aftermath of the Six Year Revolution, focusing in particular on the concession of the empréstitos to the State and the foundation of the Banco Hispano Colonial, it offers few details about the political maneuvers of wealthy indianos during the Restoration. Nothing is said, for example, about the Centros Hispano-Ultramarinos, decisive instruments of political pressure, or about the return of Alfonso XII and the new political landscape of the Restoration, which I will discuss next. The scarcity of detail can be explained partly by the self-censorship of the period, and partly by the fact that the ideal reader would have had more information at his or her disposal.

5. A historical overview

The history of the period from the initial stirrings of the 1868 Revolution up to independence is crucial for my interpretation of the novels in the Chapters to follow. I draw on the work of historians who have attempted, in the last two decades, to fill the historiographical gap I mentioned earlier. I rely especially on the work of Bahamonde, Cayuela, Espadas Burgos, Ferrer, Fontana, Fradera, Maluquer de Motes, Piqueras, Roldán de Montaud, and Schmidt-Nowara. Their work shows that the course of Spain's politics was shaped in decisive ways by the economic dependence of Spain on the colonies. In short, what we find, to use Schmidt-Nowara's phrase, are "intimate links between the colonial and metropolitan political and economic orders" (56).

Before going into more detail, I will mention the main features of the history of the period. First, the economic expansion in the late 1850s and early 1860s was followed by a sudden global financial recession, in 1866, of unprecedented intensity, one which affected all sectors. It was felt not only in the Peninsula but also in the overseas territories, especially in Cuba.¹² In 1867, Cuban and Puerto Rican reformists were summoned to Madrid to propose economic reforms for the colonies. But these never came, and a new tax was imposed on Cuba, which mainly affected the Eastern part of the island, where the Ten Year War would soon break out. The 1868 Revolution was finally triggered by a general social discontent with this strong recession, which required changes that Queen Isabel II and her government were unable to implement.¹³

¹² Cuba suffered the 1866 crisis particularly acutely, since it had not yet recovered from the 1857 sugar crisis, during which the export of sugar reached the levels of 1837 (Le Riverend 419)

¹³ As Costas Comesaña has argued, Queen Isabel's regime had to deal in 1866 with an economic breakdown on all fronts: currency, credit, budget, commercial and industrial (10). The global textile industry showed the first symptoms of recession as a result of the shortage of cotton due to the civil war in the United States. These problems led to monetary crisis: economic contraction made money more expensive, which caused deficits in major markets. These deficits were addressed by issuing credit, which ultimately created a financial bubble that burst (Costas Comesaña 7). In the years before the revolution, the Narváez administration had implemented a series of small economic

Second, the 1860s were a promising time for Spain's more progressive sectors, those advocating social, economic and colonial reforms, as well as for Cuban and Puerto Rican reformists; for it seemed possible to achieve real reform. Many of the more progressive elements of the Spanish political spectrum supported and collaborated in the 1868 Revolution, alongside the more mainstream and moderate liberal sectors of the Unión Liberal, primarily the bourgeoisie. Indeed, the 1868 Revolution unveiled the power of these progressive elements in working class, feminist and federalist movements, as well as in the colonial revolts. The participation of the more radical republican factions dressed up the bourgeois uprising with the appearance of a revolutionary moment, as Fontana has pointed out. However, from the start of the revolution these republican forces were perceived by the more moderate liberal sectors as a danger to be neutralized. The liberals attempted to implement necessary economic changes without falling into a 'real' revolution, which would have undermined the liberal/bourgeois foundations of society. The possibility of more progressive reforms was seen as especially threatening to economic interests in the overseas territories. At certain moments, such as during the proclamation of the 1873 Constitution and the First Republic, it seemed that the more progressive wing was taking over. During that brief period—the First Republic lasted less than two years—the Republican Party attempted to implement a federal state, with the inclusion of the colonies as provinces, and to abolish slavery. In the struggle for power between progressive, moderate and conservative sectors we find a tension that will come up repeatedly in the Spanish novels, especially *La Tribuna* and *La Regenta*: situations of subjugation and exploitation are represented in the context of certain social changes and political changes of a transatlantic character, which were seen as a threat to the bourgeoisie establishment.

Third, the end of the 1868 Revolution, which made way for the Restoration of 1874, had a counter-revolutionary effect. It weakened the most progressive factions, such as the Republican Party, and strengthened the pro-slavery interests behind the Unión Liberal.¹⁴ The Restoration brought the Bourbons back to Spain and implemented a corrupt system of peaceful alternation of the two major political parties (Partido Liberal and Partido Conservador). In Cuba and Puerto Rico elections were permitted and two main parties arose, one liberal and pro-autonomy, the other conservative and favoring Spanish

adjustments, tending towards a liberalization of the market in Spain, but they were not sufficient to resolve the crisis. Sánchez Albornoz emphasizes the crisis in flour production, which he calls a "crisis de subsistencia" (66). Gabriel Tortella mentions the crisis in railroad construction (133) and Sales de Bohigas the crisis originated by the quintas, the military draft, from which one could be released by paying a fixed sum to the state (121).

¹⁴ Piqueras argues that the Unión Liberal took responsibility for the protection of the pro-slavery sector, a role traditionally played by the Liberales Moderados. "La función desempeñada por María Cristina en los círculos próximos al poder peninsular pasa a ser quien personalice la autoridad en la nueva situación; Leopoldo O'Donnell viejo colaborador de los traficantes cubanos (Piqueras 284).

interests. In the Caribbean the appearance of more freedom at first appeased insurgents, though, in the long run, it became a way of postponing yet again the needed reforms.¹⁵ The Restoration also favored the strengthening of a powerful business group with interests in the colonies and the maintenance of slavery in Cuba. It also put an end to, and even rolled back, some of the significant, progressive changes that had been implemented in the 1860s, when the abolitionist movement was gaining strength and working class movements were becoming more visible. The strengthening of the colonial entrepreneurs and financiers during the Restoration, to the detriment of more progressive social changes, is essential not only to *La Familia de León Roch*, as I suggested above, but also to the social canvas of *La Desheredada*, which I discuss in Chapter Four.

I turn now to a more detailed account of the period. The 19th century saw the development of a kind of economy that was new in the history of Spanish colonialism, though it had already been practiced for some time by other European countries, such as Great Britain and France (E. Williams 51 and 56). In the old vice-royalties of continental America, the levels of production of raw materials, and the need for imported, especially manufactured, products, were low enough that these vice-royalties were content to limit their economic transactions (in both directions) to the greater territory of Spain. However, by the late 18th century, Cuba's export economy was now devoted predominantly to sugar, having taken over Haiti's previous role, and so its economy depended more than ever on the export of sugar and a few other raw materials, so that almost everything else had to be imported.¹⁶ The contrast between old and new forms of Imperialism, which we have encountered in the depiction of the Marquis of Fúcar as an old galleon, is crucial also to *La Regenta's* depiction of the metropolitan imaginary during the Restoration.

The 'Gloriosa revolución,' the 'revolución de Septiembre' or simply the 'revolución de 1868' was brought about in the classic way by a military pronunciamiento or coup d'état, carried out by brigadier Topete in Cádiz, a member of the Unión Liberal party. It was, however, General Prim, a member of the Partido Progresista, who was the chief organizer of the insurrection. This revolt had been prepared in advance by the political opposition, which had been unable to bring down the Liberales Moderados in power before 1868 (Narvárez, González Bravo). The Partido Progresista, Partido Democrático (which after the coup became the Partido Republicano Democrático Federal, also known as the Partido Federal) and the Unión Liberal under Serrano (O'Donnell had died in 1867) joined together in a pact (Pacto de Ostende), which represented the union between the more moderate and more progressive factions of the Spanish political spectrum.

¹⁵ For a history of the effects of the Restoration on Cuba's politics, see Roldán de Montaud, "La Política Española en Cuba: una Década de Cambios (1876-1886)."

¹⁶ "Efectivamente el papel de la producción para la exportación en Cuba es mucho mayor, dentro de las condiciones de tiempo, en las demás colonias. Ni el cacao de Venezuela, ni las cares y cueros de Río de la Plata, tenía respectivamente pareja importancia; y en cuanto a los metales preciosos procedentes de los grandes Virreinos constituían precisamente, el elemento que los vinculaba estrechamente a la metrópoli desde hacía dos siglos" (Le Riverend 277).

Almost immediately, different cities started to support the insurrection. Juntas Provinciales or Revolucionarias were created, calling citizens into rebellion. Queen Isabel II, unable to gather enough support among the military, had to leave Spain and seek refuge in France. Prim went to Madrid and met Serrano of the Unión Liberal, and they put together a temporary government to serve until the 1869 elections.

In Cuba and in Puerto Rico, the Spanish coup was followed by independentist uprisings, the gritos of Yara (October 10, 1868) and Lares (September 23, 1868), which declared full sovereignty for Cuba and Puerto Rico respectively. These uprisings were led in the beginning by white Creoles, though in the case of Cuba the participation of the Afro-Cuban population, both free and enslaved, proved instrumental for the rebellion. Though the Puerto Rican uprising occurred first, the Cuban one, led by Céspedes on the eastern part of Island, was more consequential, eventually turning into the so called Ten Year War, the strongest independence movement in Cuba up to that point. The question of slavery was important for, and was addressed by, all the Juntas Revolucionarias, both in peninsular Spain and in the Caribbean. For example, on October the 10th the Junta Revolucionaria lead by Carlos Manuel Céspedes conveyed the ‘desire’ to achieve the gradual emancipation of slaves (Piqueras 317; Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba* 21).¹⁷ In Spain the Junta Superior Revolucionaria declared on October 15, 1868, as an urgent measure, freedom for those born to slave mothers. And on December 25, 1870, the Junta Revolucionaria in Cuba declared the abolition of slavery, with the provision, however, added by Céspedes, that “under no circumstances would freed slaves be allowed to remain idle” (Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba* 28).

It is generally acknowledged among historians that the initial pronunciamiento by Topete and Prim was bourgeois in its origins and goals. It sought to implement less restrictive economic laws that allowed for more freedom in the business sector (Sánchez Albornoz 66; Piqueras 19). At the same time, it is agreed that, in the beginning, Prim sought popular support and the adherence of the Republican Party. For several years Prim realized that military support would not be sufficient to make the revolution last, and thus saw the need to join in an alliance with the more progressive sectors and organize something that looked like a revolution but that could, at the same time, be easily controlled (Fontana 126). However, the Juntas Revolucionarias were quickly dissolved by Prim once he had organized a provisional government. He found that his liberal government could not coexist with them. For these reasons, historians such as Fontana

¹⁷ Ada Ferrer has explored in more detail the contradictions of the White Creole reformist elite with regard to the abolition of slavery. “leaders had to reconcile their need to attract slaves , so as to have the support necessary to wage war, with their need to attract slaveholders so as to have the resources required to finance that war. They had to portray their movement as in the best interest of two groups whose objectives were apparently irreconcilable. The early leaders of the movements believed that the solution to this quandary lay in the exercise of restraint” (*Insurgent Cuba* 23).

question the real motivation behind the 1868 pronunciamiento.¹⁸ He argues for the bourgeois nature of the revolution pointing to the fact that the day the Spanish pronunciamiento was announced, prices of the Spanish treasury bonds and of the domestic and foreign debt went up in the Paris Stock market (134). He goes further, saying that the revolution constituted the beginning of a system of coordination between the government and the business world that would be further consolidated during the Restauración. From 1874 on, all major public constructions or business franchises were in the power of a small and politically powerful oligarchy with tight connections to the Antilles (Fontana 134 and 137). It is fair to say that the development of the Six Year Revolution towards the Restauración of Alfonso XII would not have occurred without the intervention of this powerful group with strong economic interests in the colonies.

Prim¹⁹ apparently wanted to seek some kind of ‘reformista’ solution to the ‘cuestión cubana,’ which meant that he had to face unprecedented pressure from the colonial lobby (Roldán de Montaud, *La Restauración en Cuba: el Fracaso de un Proceso Reformista* 24). From the very beginning he found himself situated between two poles. On the one hand, the Unión Liberal had always favored maintaining connections with the Antillean interests of the reactionary Partido Español of Cuba, which was closely linked to the slave trade and against any kind of reform. On the other hand, the republicans wanted to implement a federal constitution in which Cuba and Puerto Rico would have the same rights as the provinces on the Peninsula, and to abolish slavery. In a gesture meant to appease the leaders of the Cuban revolt, Prim appointed Dulce, who was in favor of introducing reforms, as Capitán General in 1868, so that he could implement, among

¹⁸ “La Junta provisional de la capital de la provincia toma rápidamente las riendas del poder, dicta las primeras medidas revolucionarias entre las que suelen figurar la ‘extinción’ de la dinastía de Borbón y la expulsión de los jesuitas. ... aquí la euforia revolucionaria ha durado dos días, justos. Ha sido como una brevísima fiesta al término de la cual se recuerda a todos que las cosas no han cambiado sustancialmente y que el orden social existente será defendido con la misma firmeza que antes. Una cosa es ‘extinguir’ a los borbones y expulsar a los jesuitas y otra muy distinta pensar que se pueda bromear con la propiedad privada ... curioso destino el de esta revolución que desde sus primeros pasos, parece tener enemigos a la izquierda” (Fontana 127-31).

¹⁹ Prim, like many of the military leaders involved in Spanish politics, had made part of his career in the Antilles. And as was the case with most of the army, he was a liberal. We should note that the definition of a ‘liberal’ in 19th -century Spain was very different from what we would think of today. Many of the Spanish liberals were involved in harsh repressions against members of different political views, as in the case of Espartero with the Carlistas. O’Donnell, the founder of the Unión Liberal, and great supporter of the Regent Queen María Cristina and later of Isabel II, commanded, as Capitán General, the cruel and bloody ‘conspiración de la Escalera’ (1843-4), in which hundreds of people of color were tortured, imprisoned, and/or killed. Prim in particular, when he was governor of Puerto Rico in 1847 (he was there only a few months), led one of the harshest repressions known until then on the island, to the point that he was impeached by the Spanish government for abuse of power.

other changes, freedom of association, freedom of the press and the right to hold elections (Roldán de Montaud, *La Restauración en Cuba* 10 and 13). Also, Prim's two Ministers of Finance, Figuerola and, from 1870, Moret, were members of both the Free Trade Association and the Abolitionist Society.

In fact, in 1869 a number of abolitionists took part for the first time in the Spanish Parliament. At the same time, elections took place in Puerto Rico, where reformists beat the conservatives. The new minister of Ultramar, Becerra y Bermúdez, belonged to the progressive wing. He tried to pass an abolition bill called 'coartación obligatoria,' by which slaves would be considered workers and had to 'buy' their freedom with their work in six years or less. As Maluquer de Motes claims, this project, despite its moderate approach to abolitionism, elicited virulent opposition from the conservative sectors and could not be approved ("El Problema de la Esclavitud y la Revolución de 1868" 60). So, even though it seems that some reforms were attempted, both in Spain and in the Caribbean, the conservative wing succeeded in blocking them. Another example of an unsuccessful attempt at reform is the so-called Moret Law.

In July of 1870 the Parliament approved the Moret Law or *La Ley de los Vientres Libres*, declaring that children born to slave mothers were now to be free. This law elicited the opposition of abolitionists and reformists, and pleased the conservative pro-slavery circles (Maluquer de Motes, "El Problema de la Esclavitud y la Revolución de 1868" 60) since it basically left the question of slavery unresolved and could be easily manipulated. In fact, a telegram from Calvo, representing the pro-slavery interests in Spain, to Zulueta, a powerful plantation owner, reads: "proyecto sobre vientre. Nada más. Estar tranquilos" (Piqueras 326). Piqueras observes that "Moret, veterano miembro de la Sociedad Abolicionistas Española, librecambista contrario a la esclavitud debe reconocer la impotencia del Gobierno para alcanzar una forma más audaz y definitiva" (331). De Rodas, Capitán General of Cuba during that time and a strong supporter of Alfonso XII, succeeded in delaying the implementation of the Moret law until August 1872, two years after it was passed (Piqueras 376). But even then, the implementation of the Moret law was undermined by several practices, such as the forcible separation of children from their slave mothers in order to conceal their entitlement to freedom (Maluquer de Motes, "El Problema de la Esclavitud y la Revolución de 1868" 64).

During the Six Year Revolution a problem of increasing difficulty in Cuba arose: the 'voluntarios,' a para-military group made up of civilians, most of them of peninsular origin, had been created in 1855 to deal with the invasion allegedly being prepared by Governor Quitman of Mississippi. By the late 1860s, the voluntarios were controlled by the most reactionary and conservative groups on the island. In principle they had the mission of keeping the ingenios under control and of safeguarding the smuggling of slaves onto the island. At the time of the grito of Yara (1868), the conservative and reactionary Capitán General Lersundi called civilians to join the voluntarios in order to fight the insurgency. The Banco de La Habana underwrote the creation of a battalion of 'Voluntarios del Orden.' In Barcelona, the Diputación enlisted enough voluntarios to fill up a ship bound for Cuba (Piqueras 300-3). The same occurred in Andalucía, Santander

and other parts of Cataluña. As Piqueras has pointed out, the popularity of enlisting with the voluntarios contrasted with the increasing unpopularity of the quintas (304).

From this point on, the voluntarios became a strong power in Cuba at the service of the reactionary conservative interests, those linked to the sugar plantations and to slavery. They became difficult to contain, even by Spanish authorities. For example, General Arango, sent by Céspedes to start a dialogue with Prim's representatives towards the resolution of the Ten Year War, was captured and killed by the voluntarios. When it was announced that eighteen Cuban deputies would be sent to the Spanish Parliament, the voluntarios, in a famous incident, indiscriminately killed those in attendance at the Villanueva Theater, which made many reformists flee into exile. Their property, such as that of Miguel Aldama, was seized by the authorities, after being looted by the voluntarios. After this serious incident with the Aldama property in January 1869, Capitán General Dulce complained that he had to combat two insurgencies: one on the side of Cuban independence, and the other on the side of the voluntarios. Dulce had to leave the island later that year due to his inability to control the situation of the voluntarios and his adherence to a more reformist project (Fernández Muñiz, "El Colonialismo ..." 121).

The response to the voluntarios in Spain varied depending on political party. The same complaint lodged by Dulce was also voiced in Madrid in several newspapers, such as *La Constitución*, which was engaged in a strong controversy with the reactionary journal, *La Integridad de la Patria*. On the other side, López de Ayala, a member of the Unión Liberal who became Secretary of the Provincias de Ultramar after Prim's death, was a strong supporter of reactionary forces in Spain, to the point that the voluntarios named him 'coronel honorario' and his brother Ramón was Capitán of one of the battalions. Later, López de Ayala would become a member of Cánovas' Partido Alfonsino and minister of Ultramar during the Restoration period. Cánovas also sought to justify the actions of the voluntarios. On the other hand, several republican deputies, especially Díaz Quintero complained bitterly in Parliament about the voluntarios' lawless actions (Piqueras 309; Roldán de Montaud, *La Restauración en Cuba* 19).

To complicate matters, Prim was killed at the height of the fight for abolition and reforms.²⁰ This occurred in 1871, just when the liberal King, Amadeo I, whom he had chosen to succeed the Borbons, arrived in Spain, and when he was apparently in negotiations with the United States and Cuban reformists to reach an agreement about

²⁰ It is not completely clear year who killed Prim or which group was responsible for his death. Initially the republican Paul y Angulo was blamed for Prim's killing based on an article he wrote in *El Combate*, where he urged the republicans to rebel against the government. Piqueras instead asks us to consider who benefited from Prim's death, which "pondrá en manos de los desahuciados unionistas la presidencia del consejo y las llaves de las futuras elecciones. Algo inaccesible por simples mecanismos parlamentarios, Por eso la osadía de Serrano era mayor: la muerte de Prim le permite entregar el Gobierno a su grupo" (Piqueras 386).

Cuba.²¹ At that point the conservative and anti-abolitionist Unión Liberal recovered the ministry of Ultramar, appointing Ayala, who severed the contacts Prim had established with Cuban exiles in New York and endorsed military confrontation with the Cuban rebels (Piqueras 399). As a reaction against both Amadeo I and the administration of Prim's progressive successor Zorrilla, also an abolitionist,²² the Centros Hispano-Ultramarinos emerged.²³ In principle, the Centros were open to anyone who shared their political agenda. However they were dominated by Antillean business interests and served as a platform for influencing Spain's political agenda.

Al inaugurar la tercera legislatura de Cortes, en 1872 prometió el rey [Amadeo] que 'fenecida la contienda y puesto a salvo el honor de España, habrá llegado para cuba la hora apetecida de la libertad y de las reformas.' El programa reformista con un amplio eco en el Congreso y en los sectores más radicales del liberalismo encontró una inmediata y tenaz oposición. Su centro lo constituyeron los círculos hispano-ultramarios comenzando por el de Madrid, fundados en noviembre de 1872 ... presidido ... por el millonario Marqués de Manzanedo representante general en Madrid de los negreros de Cuba. (Espadas Burgos 286, quoting Amadeo I)

The Madrid branch of the Centros Hispano-Ultramarinos coordinated all of the other branches and was connected to the Casino Español de La Habana and the Centro Hispano-Ultramarino of Puerto Rico. Their members had as their main goal to "contribuir al mantenimiento de la integridad del territorio," especially by upholding protectionist measures in Spain and the colonies (Roldán de Montaud, *La Restauración en Cuba* 70).

Conservative and reactionary sectors connected working class revolts with the independence movements in the colonies and portrayed all of them as interrelated

²¹ Piqueras points to US documents showing that part of the agreement to free Cuba depended on previous economic compensation to Spain by the Cubans (371).

²² Ruiz Zorrilla belonged to the Partido Democrático Radical, which, "en su manifiesto de 15 de octubre de 1871 el grupo se había declarado partidario de la abolición, de la separación de mandos, de la constitución de 1869 de la ley de ayuntamientos y del sufragio universal" (Roldán de Montaud, *La Restauración en Cuba* 66).

²³ "Muchos de ellos conservaban todavía propiedades, fincas acciones y bancos y otras sociedades cubanas. Otros sin tener directamente propiedades, eran productores, industriales y navieros, y la expansión de sus negocios estaba vinculada a la potenciación de un mercado protegido que terminan en los centros hispano-ultramarios representantes de la burocracia colonial cuyos intereses se confundía con la de otros sectores. A la cabeza de los de Madrid y Barcelona se contaban dos de los indianos más conspicuos: el Marqués de Manzanedo, representante de los intereses esclavistas, y Juan Güell y Ferrer que entre 1818 y 1833 había logrado establecer en Cuba una gran casa de comercio dedicada a la importación y exportación" (Roldán de Montaud, *La Restauración en Cuba* 70).

elements of a single threat to Spanish unity. Thus Antillean business interests made Spanish unity appear to be dependent on the continuation of existing colonial policies, especially slavery. They claimed that any change in colonial policy, along the lines of the proposals of the Republican Party, was a threat to Spanish unity and political stability. In 1871, taking advantage of the fear created by the Paris Commune (March-May 1871) in the Spanish bourgeoisie, Antillean interests promoted the Liga Contra el Filibusterismo y la Internacional. Through their own periodicals and the most conservative presses they worked to establish connections in public opinion between colonial reforms and the events in Paris, which were characterized as violent episodes of public disorder and attacks on private property by the working class. In 1872 the Liga Nacional para la Integridad, which opposed the Saboya dynasty and abolitionism, was created by the Centros Hispano-Ultramarinos.²⁴ The Liga Nacional not only used the republican revolts to justify its anti-reform agenda, but also helped instigate revolts, as well as turn existing revolts into violent riots, as was the case with the 1872 public demonstrations (Espadas Burgos 290). In the face of opposition from these interests, Amadeo abdicated his throne at the beginning of 1873, leaving progressives in power during the short-lived First Republic, which quickly fell due to internal divisions and a harsh conservative opposition. Then, in the middle of the political chaos, another coup d'état was proclaimed, resulting in the Restoration. Once Amadeo I left the country, the Liga Nacional was dissolved and slavery was allowed to continue in Cuba, revealing the true purpose for which the Liga Nacional had been created. Maluquer de Motes compares this short-lived political creation to the Partido Conservador of Puerto Rico, which similarly dissolved as soon as reforms were rolled back with the implementation of the Restoration ("El Problema de la Esclavitud y la Revolución de 1868" 73).

Rodrigo y Alharilla shows that Antonio López, president of the Centro Hispano-Ultramarino branch of Barcelona, lobbied for the ouster of Amadeo and the return of Alfonso XII, so as to maintain the colonial status quo in Cuba under the rubric of 'integridad nacional.' López lent financial support to Cánovas del Castillo, the most powerful political force behind the Restauración, and the man who led the coup which would put Alfonso XII on the throne (Rodrigo y Alharilla 50). During the Restauración, the appearance of democracy concealed a planned alternation of power between the Partido Conservador, under Cánovas, and the Partido Liberal, under Sagasta. This system

²⁴ "A la Liga Nacional se le ha considerado como una maniobra de Serrano para preparar su regreso político (C.M. Hennessey) pero evidentemente era mucho más que esto. La liga se autodefine como organización extraña a los partidos políticos, creada con la única finalidad de velar por la defensa de la integridad del territorio nacional. Sin embargo es fácil observar que existían circunstancias disgregadoras (fundamentalmente la guerra de Cuba) desde cuatro años antes, sin haber producido tan formidables y patrióticas colaciones. Dos fueron sus motores fundamentales: de un lado la previsible aceleración del proceso abolicionista en las Antillas; del otro la lucha común contra la dinastía" (Maluquer de Motes, "El Problema de la Esclavitud y la Revolución de 1868" 73).

excluded the more progressive parties from having any influence and favored the economic interests of the Antillean lobby, which had helped to implement it.²⁵

By 1876 the Cuban war had been in progress for more than seven years. The tremendous vigor and strength of the Cuban resistance up to that point required a stronger reaction from Spanish forces than originally planned, and Spain decided that more troops were needed. In fact, it has been suggested that the peace of Zanjón was caused not by the military power of the Spanish forces, but by the internal divisions on the Cuban side.²⁶ In any case, the unexpected virulence of the Ten Year War forced the Spanish treasury to invest vast amounts of money in the war effort—ultimately more than it could afford.

The solution to Spain's financial woes came in 1876, in the form of a loan from the members of the colonial lobby, initially of seventy five million pesetas, more than one tenth of Spain's annual budget at a time. The approval of this empréstito was linked to the re-founding of the Banco Hispano Colonial, which, as Rodrigo y Alharilla points out, has received little attention from historians, despite the fact that it was Spain's second largest financial institution and its first international holding. The bank was formed out of an economic partnership represented by Antonio López, who, as I mentioned, was president of the Centro Hispano-Ultramarino of Barcelona and financed Cánovas del Castillo's rise to power. Members of the bank on the Cuban side, such as Zulueta, Pedro de Sotolongo, Mamerto Pulido and Manuel Calvo, represented some of the most reactionary political groups of Havana, and "curiosamente todos ellos vinculados a la empresa Sarni Sotolongo y Cía., consignataria en La Habana desde 1863 de la Empresa Trasatlántica de Vapores de Antonio López. Todos—junto a otros integristas como José Baró y Francisco F. Ibáñez" (Rodrigo y Alharilla 52). As an example of the global dimension of this loan, Rodrigo y Alharilla shows that the Bank of Paris was also involved.

The Banco Hispano Colonial, with funds provided by the colonial lobby, made the loan with the following conditions: the basic interest rate was established at 12%, more than twice the average at that time; moreover, payment of interest was guaranteed by the revenues from the customs tariffs from Cuba. The bank would collect customs tariffs at the current rate, as well as 50% of any increase in tariffs.²⁷ Cuba would thus be ultimately responsible for financing Spain's expenditures in the Ten Year War, through the already exploitative customs policy. Control over Cuban customs tariffs was conceded to the Bank, and so to the oligarchy. Any change in Cuba's customs tariffs would require their approval.²⁸ Roldán de Montaud has thus concluded that though the Cuban war was

²⁵ Fontana concludes that the 1868 Revolution and the Restoration were two stages of a single process, caused by an economic crisis and directed towards the implementation of an economic oligarchy (174).

²⁶ Jorge Ibarra Cuesta argues that racial division and a lack of clear direction among the rebel forces were the main causes of the Cuban defeat in the Ten Year War (83).

²⁷ Roldán de Montaud, "La Banca Española en Cuba (1956-1921)" 12.

²⁸ "En virtud del convenio, algunas de las atribuciones propias del Estado—como son la

devastating for those living in the eastern part of the island, especially soldiers on the Spanish side (many of whom were forced to fight against their will) and rebels, it proved very profitable for the business group involved not just in the loan, but also in providing clothing and weapons for the army (*La Restauración en Cuba* 107).

The Ten Year War ended in 1878 with the treaty of Zanjón. It was followed by another small rebellion, the so called ‘guerra chiquita,’ in 1879, which lasted only a year. In Cuba and Puerto Rico elections were established between two main parties, one of them liberal and favoring autonomy, the other conservative and supporting Spanish interests. This was accompanied by a partial lifting of censorship of public expression. The existence of new political reforms appeased insurgent tendencies at first. However, throughout the next two decades, both political parties would experience an increasing frustration with Spain, due to the lack of implementation of significant reforms.

I will now return to the beginnings of the Ten Year War in order to explain the importance of the racial question, both in determining the course of the war and the subsequent years leading up to revolution, as well as for the role of Spanish propaganda in promoting a racial interpretation of the rebellion. The Ten Year War originated in the Eastern part of the island and never reached the Western part, something that has been attributed to the latter’s dependency on sugar production and slave labor. (Ferrer, “Esclavitud Ciudadanía ...” 103) The leader of the Cuban side was Carlos María Céspedes, a controversial figure, a sugar planter and slave holder who had been educated in Madrid and was well travelled. He had also participated in Spanish rebellions on the side of the progressive liberals (alongside Prim). From the beginning he realized that the success of the revolt would require the collaboration of the Afro-Cuban population and thus, after the Grito of Yara, he invited slaves to join his cause. However this movement soon manifested several contradictions regarding racial and abolitionist issues. Céspedes initially did not proclaim the freedom of slaves but conveyed a mere desire for racial equality and declared himself in favor of a gradual process of abolition in the future. His attitude towards abolitionism was like that of Prim towards the working class movements in the 1868 Revolution.

If anything, the outcome of the war, in favor of Spain, proved that even in 1878, there was much social disunion among the Cubans and that independence from Spain, was, at least at that time, not generally regarded as probable or possible. Moreover, some of the political changes implemented by Spain after the war strengthened adherence to Spain, even among some of those who had participated in the Ten Year War, by reviving the hope that Cuba and Puerto Rico could become provinces with equal rights. However, at the same time, the war made clear to those seeking independence the need to work even harder to overcome racial divisions.

política arancelaria y la gestión de las aduanas—quedaron en manos del banco, condicionando uno de los principales elementos de cualquier política colonial: la apropiación de excedentes por medio de la fiscalidad” (Rodrigo y Alharilla 54).

Spanish authorities on the island were aware of racial issues among the insurgents and used them to portray the insurrection as a race war, making connections to the Haitian war of the previous century, a common tactic throughout the 19th century, as Fischer has shown.²⁹ By 1870 the Spanish forces had begun to use the desertions of some of the white participants in the rebellion to present the insurrection as one dominated by the black population. This strategy proved especially successful during the ‘Guerra Chiquita’ of 1879. Spanish officers “sought consciously to shape features of the war to make it fit the label they gave it. For example authorities consistently represented the rebels as black savages—as wild animals who went barefoot and naked or almost naked” (Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba* 77).

Cultural productions after the war were crucial for the social cohesion during the final war of independence. Historians have argued that the final independence movement was decisively strengthened by the narrations of the Ten Year War in the late 1880s and 1890s, intended mostly to create a common patriotic feeling above racial differences.³⁰ There was an intense historiographical production in Cuba narrating the events of the revolutionary years of the seventies, such as Felix Figueredo’s *La Guerra de Cuba* (1878), Ramón Roa’s *A Pie y Descalzo* (1890), Manuel de la Cruz’ *Episodios de la Revolución Cubana* (1890) and Enrique Collazos *De Yara hasta el Zanjón* (1898) (Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba* 114). These narrations constructed “a passive and safe black insurgent” that posed no threat to the white hegemony (121). Non-white intellectuals, among them Morúa Delgado, felt an obligation to help erase prejudices against the Afro-Cuban population and convince the white Creoles that they were fighting for Cuba and not for a black republic, as in Haiti.³¹ In this way, *Sofía* had, among others, the concrete purpose of unifying the racially diverse population of Cuba and acting against the imperialist project.

The historiographical work I have recounted is intended to fill out the novels’ representations of the shared political, economic and social circuit during the period of the Six Year Revolution, the short-lived First Republic, the Restoration and the drive that would eventually lead to independence for Cuba and Puerto Rico. As we have seen, this period was one in which the economic and political developments on both sides of the

²⁹ See *Modernity Disavowed*.

³⁰ See Ada Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba: Race, Nation and Revolution, 1868-1898*.

³¹ “Thus the black insurgent in the prose of independence appeared to lack not only political agency but also any trace of sexual will. Indeed, the absence of sexuality was essential to the portrayal of his political passivity and indifference. ... Nowhere was white recognition of the absence of that desire more visible than in Martí’s 1894 description of Salvador Cisneros Betancourt ... who during the 10 Year War decided to bury his white daughter in the same grave as a black man. In this moment, which Martí exalted as emblematic of the revolution, unity between black and white, between slave and master, was given literal and permanent form in the union of the bodies of a white woman and a black man. Yet even here that union posed no threat, not only because it occurred in death but also because it represented not black will but white benevolence and generosity” (Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba* 121).

Atlantic were inextricably linked, even though these links have for various reasons often remained hidden. Especially in the metropolitan novels, details of the shared political and economic history of the period are essential to tracing out sparse and sometimes indirect allusions to the colonies, slavery and the slave trade. Doing so allows the transatlantic dimension of the novels to emerge.

The historiography has not only shown that the contours of the economic and political history bring peninsular Spain and the Caribbean territories closer than one might have expected. It also reveals a rich and intricate web of social and ideological connections between the two sides of the Atlantic. In particular, it provides the resources to understand connections between colonialism and imperialism on the one hand, and issues such as social mobility, class divisions, feminism and race relations on the other; the latter set of issues are too often studied in confinement to a single geographical space. One of the recurrent motifs in my dissertation is what I refer to as the interplay of discourses, for example, when imperial and male discourses, or discourses of feminism and abolitionism, are juxtaposed over a single character or group. Such interplay needs to be understood, in the first instance, as reflecting the myriad social and political movements that were in play during the time, in dialogue with one another as well as with the economic changes and stagnation due to the transatlantic circuit. In this way, the novels allow us to understand social and political categories in circulation.

Social, political and economic currents were, as the historiography shows, related in complex ways, often running against one another or with ambiguous relations to the imperial project. Social movements such as feminism, abolitionism, and the working class movement were subject to unstable alliances; the feminist movement, for example, could invoke the figure of the slave, without necessarily sympathizing with the abolitionist cause. And, as I mentioned above, political factions sought actively to portray progressive movements, including independence movements, as threats, through racial images, notably using the specter of the Haitian Revolution against progressive movements both within the metropolis and the Caribbean. In the novels we will see that various discourses—imperial, social, political—similarly interact with one another in dynamic and unstable ways. Moreover, a juxtaposition of discourses often brings out the unevenness or discrepancy between different situations in addition to, or instead of, a point of commonality, especially through the use of ironic distancing techniques. Elsewhere such juxtaposition reveals underlying tensions in a social or political movement, for example, the traumas and anxieties that plague the metropolitan imaginary during the Restoration, brought out by Alas' *La Regenta*. Finally, the novels are not merely representing, reflecting and revealing aspects of the issues and currents of the period. As we will see with regard to racial discourses in *La Tribuna* and *Sofía* and the critique of consumerism in *Cecilia Valdés* and *La Desheredada*, for example, the novels are actively participating in, and configuring, social, political and ideological developments, which must be understood on a transatlantic stage.

Chapter Two

Land and Sea

In this chapter I will undertake a comparative study of Hostos' *La Peregrinación de Bayoán* (1863) and Leopoldo Alas' *La Regenta* (1884-5). I will offer a transatlantic reading of these two novels. While such a reading has only recently been elicited by new postcolonial interpretations of *La Regenta*, it might not be entirely surprising in the case of Hostos' novel, which is about a journey across the Atlantic.³² And yet, *La Peregrinación de Bayoán* has been most often understood from the point of view of Puerto Rican national construction. Accordingly, its lack of fixedness in space has been treated by a great part of the scholarly tradition as an imperfection and a sign of Hostos' immaturity at the time.³³

La Peregrinación de Bayoán is set before the 1868 Revolution and *La Regenta* after 1874, during the Restauración. The story of *La Peregrinación de Bayoán* takes place for the most part on a ship navigating the Atlantic, and, for brief periods of time, on the islands of Santo Domingo—the shortest stopover—Cuba, Puerto Rico and finally, Spain. *La Regenta* is based in the city of Vetusta, a fictional name for the city of Oviedo in Asturias, Spain.

I will explore the novels as expressing (i) different moments—pre-1868 Revolution versus the Restoration; (ii) different ends of the metropolis-colony axis—provincial Spain versus a journey across the Atlantic; and (iii) different political models—a centralized imperial one versus a federal one. I will focus in particular on gender and sexual discourses as essential aspects of the construction of political models (whether imperial or anti-imperial) and as intrinsically connected to both the transatlantic economy and to the geopolitical situation.

³² For post-colonial readings of *La Regenta*, see García, “Vetusta Imperial: América y la Colonia en *La Regenta* de Leopoldo Alas Clarín” and Ramos-González, “El Colonialismo Finisecular y sus Metáforas en *La Regenta* de Leopoldo Alas Clarín.” Notably, Channon-Deutsch's recent survey of interpretive trends on Alas (“Between Agency and Determinism: A Critical Review of Clarín Studies”) does not mention post-colonial or transatlantic approaches to *La Regenta*.

³³ The need to find fixity in the land explains, according to Rosa, why the Puerto Rican scholarly tradition has chosen certain novels to bear a foundational function, for example, Zeno Gandía's *La Charca* (1894), as opposed to his *El Negocio* (1922), in which the land as the anchoring reality remains absent (“Crédito, Propiedad y Narración” 4).

La Regenta describes the period of the Restauración, when the political establishment in power tried to restore a centralized nation-state in response to the 1873 federal constitution. It is also a period when the colonial policies were strengthened and the revenues from colonial enterprises were especially high. However, Spain's already diminished imperial power was being threatened by recent independence wars in the Caribbean and the memory of the recent 1868 political revolts was still very vivid. In this context of national and imperial anxieties, Alas tells the story of Ana Ozores, a middle class woman who has difficulty integrating herself in provincial Vetusta, and whom different men try to seduce, control and tame.³⁴ The crisis of imperial power is translated into, and informed by, a domestic crisis.³⁵

I understand *La Regenta* as representing the Restoration's centralized national discourse as an imperial project full of anxieties, traumas and insecurities. In this sense, as I will clarify further below, *La Regenta* presents some of the features of a metropolitan novel

³⁴ Noël Valis takes Vetusta and Ana Ozores to jointly illustrate the lack of social cohesion and the degeneration of the social body. While she understands the social body and its degeneration as confined to the boundaries of peninsular Spain, I propose that the fractured social community ought to be understood in a transatlantic dimension. "The real driving force of *La Regenta* arises from a vision of the world as socially fractured, lacking communitas, and profoundly unredeemed. Like Ana Ozores (the titular Regenta) in whom a psychic split issues from the unfounded accusation of carnal sin during childhood, the social body of the fictional provincial city Vetusta has suffered a deep wound to its collective moral spirit" (*Sacred Realism* 13). "The entire fictional world of Vetsuta is as damaged as the protagonist. ... Ana's dissolving, fragmented psyche is paralleled in the disordered and degeneration of the social body, attributed in my earlier work to a dual naturalist Darwinian and decadent vision. ... Ana's individual trauma, however, also arises out of the particulars of her flawed family origins and childhood (154).

³⁵ My reading differs greatly from that of Labanyi's, which is limited to the peninsular boundaries. For example she writes, "As Stuart Hall has said, 'nationalism constructs identities by giving us images to identify with'. As he also notes, the function of nationalism is 'to represent difference as identity' for the modern nation-State, constructing its citizens as members of a common 'imagined community' (to borrow Benedict Anderson's term) is a homogenizing agent. But such identity formations are complex, for they may enact anxieties without resolving them, and the multiplicity of characters allows plural if not contrary contradictions. What we find in most Spanish realist novels is precisely a critique of this homogenizing process, encapsulated in Ana's dilemma in *La Regenta* as to whether or not to be 'como todas'. The issue of the maintenance and erosion of difference between town and country, middle and lower classes, public and private, masculine and feminine—is central to these texts, as it was to contemporary public debate" (*Gender and Modernization in the Spanish Realist Novel* 5).

pointed out by Said, but with a scornful detachment.³⁶ The image of a stable, firm and grounded tower, with which *La Regenta* opens, illustrates a masculine metropolitan discourse and re-enacts a centralized imperial project. However, the novel will end up revealing the muddy ground on which the tower and what it signifies rest. Even the idea of imperial *centrality*, which according to Said is one of the defining features of metropolitan novels (*Culture and Imperialism* 65), is put into question by *La Regenta* with regard to the peculiarities of Spanish imperialism in the late 19th century. Despite the novel's criticism of the Restoration's imperialism, we will see that the narrative voice of *La Regenta* adopts a perspective that replicates some of the same imperial discourses, creating a tension between form and content.³⁷

La Peregrinación de Bayoán describes Bayoán's transatlantic journey as an attempt to establish contacts among the most progressive Spanish liberals of the 1860s in the hope of making a political pact based on shared principles and on the model of a federal republic that would include Puerto Rico as a province with the same rights as the peninsular territories. The name 'Bayoán' refers to Urayoán, a native of the island of Puerto Rico who proved the mortality of the Spaniards by drowning one of them in a river. It signifies, among other things, Bayoán's desire to reach an agreement with the metropolis on equal terms, and the refusal to maintain a subordinate position, something that will ultimately prove impossible.

La Peregrinación de Bayoán narrates the material conditions of living on a political periphery. Its most representative image is that of the ship on the open sea. The craft's groundlessness reflects Puerto Rico's geopolitical situation. The ambivalences, changes, lack of positive proposals and oscillation between judgments that we find in the narrator do not provide the kind of fixity required for a national foundational text and have prompted the scholarly tradition to consider this novel as an 'immature text.'³⁸ It is interesting to note that this kind of paradigm for evaluating Hostos' novel resembles *La*

³⁶ For a detailed study of irony and satire in *La Regenta*, see Díaz' *Ironía e Ideología en La Regenta de Leopoldo Alas*.

³⁷ Valis finds similar kind of split, from a national and religion-based perspective, rather than one based on imperialist discourses. She argues that while critical towards religion, *La Regenta* adopts in its narrative mode the authoritarian and revealing techniques of confession. "Even as Alas' narrator undermines one form of authority his own narrative authority is unquestioned. The narrator possesses qualities akin to those of a confessor or spiritual director, like Fermín de Pas, as we see in the opening scene of *La Regenta* ... The narrator in seeking the revelation of hidden realities performs his duty as a supra-director of conscience and authorizes himself by making his authority necessary to the text ... Once authority is made present, revelation must follow" (*Sacred Realism* 176).

³⁸ Rosa argues that critics' frustration with these features of the text reflects a certain interpretative point of view, from which 19th-century Latin American literature is regarded retrospectively according to a teleological progressive process of maturation, whose culmination would be the modern European nation (*Los Fantasmas de la Razón* 39).

Regenta's ideal of stable and firm land and the masculine metropolitan discourse associated with it.

The temporal and geopolitical differences between those novels are reflected not only in their political projects, but also in their representations of masculine discourses. While the main male characters in *La Regenta*, Fermín de Pas and Álvaro Mesía, are defined (and mocked) in terms of their subjugating power, Bayoán is characterized by his (albeit problematic) refusal to play the role of the male conqueror. On the other hand, *La Regenta*'s Ana Ozores, a middle-class woman, and *La Peregrinación de Bayoán*'s Marién, a Cuban white Creole, share many features. They are inscribed in discourses of dependency, both gender-based and imperial. Also, these two women are represented as part of a transatlantic circuit of wealth and slavery. I will focus especially on the comparison of Ana to an unfinished cigar, and on Marién's dependence on a Cuban plantation economy that fosters the colonial situation of Cuba.³⁹ They can be described using McClintock's words: "white women were not the hapless onlookers of empire but were ambiguously complicit both as colonizers and colonized, privileged and restricted, acted upon and acting" (7). The topic of the ambiguity of women's roles in the imperial project will recur throughout the remaining chapters.

The fact that the male discourses of the two novels differ, while discourses of white and middle-class women share many commonalities, shows, among other things, that political agency was reserved for men, and that this agency varied depending on which side of the Atlantic the men resided: the male population on one side was allowed to exercise political agency, while that on the other, subject to a colonial regime, was deprived of political rights. In *La Regenta*, Fermín de Pas represents the power of the church, Álvaro Mesía the liberal sector, while in *La Peregrinación*, Bayoán literally enacts the transatlantic crossing to Spain necessary for carrying out political and intellectual duties. On the other hand, both *La Regenta*'s Ana Ozores, a middle class woman in provincial Vetusta, Spain and *La Peregrinación*'s Marién, a white Creole woman on a slave-based plantation, play a passive role and are represented as projections of masculine desire and possession.

Despite their common lack of agency, Ana and Marién nevertheless take part in different political models. This applies especially to the fact that Marién and Ana are represented as failing to be satisfied by their male counterparts, though for different reasons. While *La Regenta* depicts its male characters in a series of attempts to conquer Ana, Bayoán ends up refusing to adopt that male conquering role. *La Regenta* can be seen as narrating imperial discourses as the essence of the national project and the defining feature of the Restauración. Its interpretation of the Restoration's centralized national political model

³⁹ It has been repeatedly argued that one of the main reasons Cuba did not gain independence during the period discussed here was the presence of slavery, which created the need for Spain to counteract any possible insurgency and to guarantee the illegal entry of Africans. In many ways both women occupy ambiguous positions with respect to the imperial project.

and imperial frustrations take shape in the representation of the romantic relationships between a masculine conqueror and a feminine object of conquest, embodied by Ana Ozores. On the other hand, Bayoán's rejection of imperialistic projects is enacted in his relationship with Marién.

In many ways, Alas and Hostos enjoyed similar intellectual influences and political affiliations. Both collaborated with the Spanish Republican Party and were influenced by currents of thought such as Krausism and positivism. Hostos actively participated in Spanish political life until his famous speech at the Ateneo of Madrid in December 1868, after which he declared himself anti-Spanish and pro-independence, consequently abandoning Spain.⁴⁰ Alas evolved from his initial radical progressive positions to eventually defending Castelar's unitarian (non-federalist) republican model.

However, even while Alas was a progressive liberal, he showed some of the ambivalences with regard to colonial policies that were characteristic of this political faction. While acknowledging the abuse and exploitation perpetrated in the colonies, he failed to sustain a clear and explicit stand on them. He always favored the ideal of an Iberian cultural community that would include the progressive intellectuals on both sides of the Atlantic. However, until the last decade of the 19th century, Alas indicated little explicit interest in the 'colonial question,' despite his progressive alliances. His concern was directed mainly at the sacrifices endured by Spain's poorest classes during the last Cuban War of Independence. Alas believed that the reason another war had erupted in Cuba was the existence of reactionary politicians and businessmen more interested in maintaining their privileges than in doing what was right. Later, he argued that, had Spain been a republic, the independence wars would have been precluded. He criticized the matriarchal image of the 'madre-patria,' which was used to represent the relationship between Spain and the territory overseas, for granting some kind of superiority to Spain. He suggested instead a relationship emphasizing a brotherhood based on race, language and culture, and he expressed support for Cuba's full autonomy. Similarly, he claimed that Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines were an integral part of Spain, defying both those who treated them as colonies, as well as those on the other side of the political spectrum who regarded them as independent nations. Thus, he considered the Cuban war a civil war. When Cuba and the other territories became independent, Alas continued to believe that Spain had a right to those lands.⁴¹

The first Section of my discussion of *La Regenta* will focus on the representation of gender and the second on sexuality, both of these as aspects of centralized nation-state and imperial discourses. As I will show, masculinity ultimately comes down to sexual prowess. The use of sexuality for imperial discourses has been discussed in postcolonial theory as far back as Said's *Orientalism*, where he argues that the representation of the East in 19th-century British novels as a sexualized female object depicted it as the object

⁴⁰ Hostos, "Discurso y Rectificación en el Ateneo de Madrid, 20 de Diciembre de 1868."

⁴¹ See Yvan Lissorgues, "España ante la Guerra Colonial de 1895-1898: Leopoldo Alas (Clarín), Periodista y el Problema Cubano."

of male power. Alas' novel makes use, with an ironic and sarcastic distance, of the kind of intertwining of the imperial and the sexual that *Orientalism* brings to light. The novel's repetition of the imperial cliché from an ironic distance employs the old Spanish Empire and its purported grandeur as a point of contrast with the current diminished power of the Restoration. The reference to the old times reflects the nostalgia of the Restoration, a sentiment that is not shared by the novel's narrator, who regards imperial discourses with critical eyes. As I mentioned, however, *La Regenta* stable, omniscient narrator replicates some of these aspects of imperialism at the level of the novel's form.

In the last Section dedicated to *La Regenta* I will show that the imperial project is represented as part of an economic discourse, insofar as it is related to the influx of wealth from the colonies, especially Cuba. Ana Ozores' comparison of herself to an unfinished cigar will help me to integrate the sexual and economic as part of an interplay of discourses. From there I will move to the novel's description of the wealthy indianos coming back from Cuba loaded with money made in the slave trade.

My study of *La Peregrinación de Bayoán* will begin by exploring Hostos' federalism and its development against the backdrop of the decade before the Six Year Revolution, when progressive reform of colonial policies, including the abolition of slavery, began to be more openly discussed in Spain. In the second Section, I will explore what Rosa has called the vacillating nature of Hostos' novel as reflective of Puerto Rico's colonial situation, subject to the whimsical decisions of the metropolis and the Capitán General, but also, as a de-centering strategy actively adopted to approach the complexities of some of the questions that Bayoán tackles. Both his political situation and his federal political ideal demand a masculine discourse different from the conquering model depicted in *La Regenta* and its narrative style. Finally, I will focus on the depiction and role of Marién in the context of Cuba's dependence on the slave-based economy. I will explore the gender, racial and economic discourses that she represents as an integral part of, and not just a metaphor for, the dynamics of imperial and anti-imperial projects.

1. Introduction to *La Regenta*

The story of *La Regenta* revolves around Ana Ozores, wife of the former Regente of Vetusta, Víctor Quintanar. Ana, prone to nervous breakdowns and emotional instability and without much life experience, has been raised by a strict and corrupt Spanish-British nanny, her liberal father having been largely absent during her childhood. The marriage to Víctor was arranged by Ana's aunts, who were more interested in getting her a well-to-do husband than in her own happiness, and by Frigilis, a friend of Víctor's. Ana's beauty, inaccessibility and peculiar personality attract the attention of both the young Canon priest of the City, Don Fermín de Pas, and the liberal Álvaro Mesía, a charming and successful womanizer. The two compete for her attention and, ultimately, for her sexual favors.

The lack of narrative dynamism of *La Regenta*, despite its occupying two volumes, has been attributed to the historical time described in the novel (Ramos-González 221). On the surface, it is a novel about the pettiness of bourgeois life. It also reflects the precarious political situation of the Restoration, a conservative/centrist politically coordinated attempt to avoid the continuous succession of military uprisings that characterized Spain's 19th century and to neutralize the progressive forces mobilized during the Six Year Revolution. The most characteristic feature of the political stage of that period was the so-called 'turno pacífico' or peaceful alternation of the two main political parties, the Partido Conservador and the Partido Liberal. The pre-arranged alternation of the two main parties was accompanied by the cooperation between local authorities (caciques) and central/Madrid authorities, as *La Regenta* shows.

While the narrative form of *La Regenta* invites us to experience the stagnation of the Restauración, the detailed descriptions of Vetusta society give us an intricate picture of that period's corruption. The political parties and their peaceful alternation are represented in the ongoing collaboration and mutual support between Álvaro Mesía—a member of the Liberal Party—and the Marquis of Vergallana—a member of the Conservative Party. *La Regenta* also pays special attention to the church, an institution which, after great economic losses due to the economic reforms during the Six Year Revolution, tried to regain its power during the Restoration. The great corruption of this political period is already alluded to in the first chapter, where the narrative voice describes the town of Vetusta sleeping off the afternoon lunch and digesting the "olla podrida," a dish whose name literally means "rotten stew." Corruption hides below the town's normal daily routine and the novel takes us along the borderline between that appearance of normality and its hidden or suppressed traumas, secrets, and decadence.⁴²

2. Imperialism and the construction of gender

The novel represents different discourses of imperial power and reveals the anxieties sustaining them. The imperial project, as it is shown here, does not just refer to overseas territories, but informs and is informed by peninsular power relations. In this Section I will focus on the first chapter of the novel, which contains Fermín de Pas' well known description of Vetusta, as he surveys the town from the cathedral tower with a small

⁴² Valis understands decadence in reference to, and as the result of, the corrupt, egoistical and morally disorganized behavior of Vetusta. In particular she explains such behavior as symptomatic of the Restoration period. She comments on Alas' use of Darwinian and Zolesque images to depict the dehumanization and animalization of Vetusta's inhabitants. I understand Vetusta's corruption instead within a transatlantic context and from the perspective of imperial practices described in the novel. See Valis, *Decadent Vision in Leopoldo Alas*. In *Sacred Realism*, she later adds an interpretation of Ana's childhood, during which she is made to believe she has committed a terrible sin, to explain Vetusta's social fracture. I compare Ana's introduction into the ideology of sin to the church's colonization of America.

telescope. Quiet and stillness float over the tranquil city while its inhabitants digest the afternoon lunch. In their dreams, they still hear the monotonous sound of the bells in the cathedral tower. The town is depicted as a unified sleeping body whose center is established in the tower, which is present in Vetusta's inhabitants even at a subconscious level, without their awareness: "[Vetusta] descansaba oyendo entre sueños el monótono y familiar zumbido de la campana de coro, que retumbaba allá en lo alto de la esbelta torre en la Santa Basílica" (*La Regenta* 93).

The tower situates the priest's access to Vetusta at a certain spatial position, which becomes the city's stable and immovable geopolitical center, from which distances are measured and the different coordinates are established. It is also regarded as a source of economic revenue during the Restoration to compensate for the church's losses during the revolution.

Alrededor de la catedral se extendía, en estrecha zona el primitivo recinto de Vetusta. Comprendía lo que se llamaba el barrio de la Encimada y dominaba todo el pueblo que se había ido estirando por Noroeste y por Sudeste. Desde la torre se veía en algunos patios y jardines de casas viejas y ruinosas, restos de la Antigua muralla ... La Encimada era el barrio noble y el barrio pobre de Vetusta ... al Sudeste, donde la Fábrica Vieja levantaba sus augustas chimeneas, alrededor de las cuales un pueblo de obreros había surgido ... el Magistral que veía, con amargura en los labios, estos despojos de que le daba elocuente representación el catalejo, podía abrir el pecho al Consuelo y a la esperanza contemplando, fuera del barrio noble, al Oeste y al Norte, gráficas señales de la fe rediviva. La revolución había derribado, había robado; (*La Regenta* 109-12)

Fermín de Pas as he looks over Vetusta is described as a conqueror, a man looking at a feminized space of conquest that is depicted as a colony, as an object of study. The narrator emphasizes the masculine features of the tower, which are identified with its strength, depicted in the 'muscles' and 'nerves' of the stone, which rises up out of physical effort.

no era una de esas torres cuya aguja se quiebra de sutil, más flacas que esbeltas, amaneradas, como señoritas cursis que aprietan demasiado el corsé; era maciza sin perder nada de su espiritual grandeza, y hasta sus segundos corredores, elegante balaustrada, subía como fuerte castillo, lanzándose desde allí en pirámide de ángulo gracioso, inimitable en sus medidas y proporciones. Como haz de músculos y nervios la piedra enroscándose en la piedra trepaba a la altura, haciendo equilibrios de acróbata en el aire. (*La Regenta* 94)

The novel is almost anxiously underlining the masculinity of the tower—which in Spanish is referred to by a feminine noun, 'la torre.' On the other hand, the city is feminized in the novel by its name, Vetusta, different from the original and masculine

sounding one, 'Oviedo.' It is as if the gender relations represented by the tower and city were written over gender anxieties. "If, at first glance, the feminizing of the land appears to be no more than a familiar symptom of male megalomania, it also betrays acute paranoia and a profound, if not pathological, sense of male anxiety and boundary loss" (McClintock 24). The notion of 'boundary loss' is something I will focus on in the next two Sections, first in relation to Spain's diminished imperial power, and then in relation to the social changes and revolts that occurred during the 1868 Revolution.

The opposition between the knowing and the known is thus represented along gender lines, making the masculine the active knower and the feminine the object of knowledge. The gendering of these spaces is also reflected in the object of Fermín de Pas' surveillance: he is ultimately trying to see Ana Ozores from the tower, whom he desires sexually and has a need to control. In the end, the feminization of Vetusta under the image of a colony not only subordinates the colonial as an object of male desire but also represents the female as a subordinated reality within the domestic borders. As McClintock writes,

Once feminized, the city was more easily represented and made docile for male knowledge and power, for such representations could depend on the prior fact of the social subordination of women. In the process, however, a conversion and a disavowal take place. (83)

The conquering discourse is explicitly referred to by the narrative voice in free indirect speech. Both the allusion to "leguas" (leagues), a measurement used in nautical navigation, and the specific reference to the 'mar' inform the image of de Pas. On top of the tower with his cassock in the wind, looking at Vetusta with a small telescope, he invokes the figure of a ship's captain surveying a new territory. The tower thus embodies the centeredness associated with imperial knowledge, which maps the world around it, in a display of different discourses of power.

Ver muchas leguas de tierra, columbrar el mar lejano, contemplar a sus pies los pueblos como si fueran juguetes, imaginarse a los hombres como infusorios, ver pasar un águila o un milano, según los parajes, debajo de sus ojos, enseñándole el dorso dorado por el sol, mirar las nubes desde arriba, eran intensos placeres de su espíritu altanero, que de Pas se procuraba siempre que podía. (*La Regenta* 104)

One of those discourses is scientific: Fermín de Pas represents himself as a someone scientifically curious about Vetusta: "inspección minuciosa como el naturalista estudia con poderoso microscopio" (*La Regenta* 105). He treats everything around him as an object to be known, explored and ultimately controlled. This association between de Pas' scientific role and a gender perspective follows a familiar pattern of enlightenment metaphysics. Thus McClintock has emphasized, especially in reference to iconic figures such as Bacon and Descartes, that "enlightenment metaphysics presented knowledge as a relation of power between two gendered spaces as well as an imperial geography" (23).

This pursuit of knowledge is also described as a violent activity. De Pas' small telescope, which resembles those used by ships' captains, is mistaken for a rifle by one of the church aides, nicknamed Bismarck (the name of the historical German chancellor who, in the Berlin Conference of 1884-5, distributed Africa among the major European powers—not Spain).⁴³ This 'mistake' alludes to the material violence involved in the activity of conquest. It also suggests the Foucaultian relationship between power and knowledge and invokes the potential violence involved in the very same act of knowledge, insofar as it is motivated by a desire for possession of and control over the object known. Notice also the phallic undertones of the telescope/rifle in the following passage:

Bismarck, oculto, vio con espanto que el canónigo sacaba de un bolsillo interior de la sotana un tubo que a él le pareció de oro. Vio que el tubo se dejaba estirar como si fuera de goma y se convertía en dos, y luego, en tres, todo seguidos, pegados. Indudablemente aquello era un cañón, chico, lo suficiente para acabar con un delantero tan insignificante como él. No; era un fusil porque el Magistral lo acercaba a la cara hacía con él punterio. Bismark respiró: ni iba con su personilla aquel disparo; apuntaba el carca a la calle. (*La Regenta* 103)

The novel assigns conquering and scientific activity primarily to a priest. It also compares this conquest to Pizarro's conquest in the 16th century. Apart from the ironic undertones of this comparison, which I will address later, the novel is offering a critical interpretation of the old Empire. The reference to the conquering activity of a priest comes as a reminder of the role of religious orders in the colonization of America. Also, the novel links the role of the priest with that of the scientist, which serves to highlight the scientific aspects of the church's work.⁴⁴ Klor de Alva has identified the work of the first generations of priests and friars in the Americas as the origin of modern ethnography. In particular, he argues that the 16th century friar Bernadine de Sahagún "inaugurates modern ethnography not merely as a colonial practice but as a Roman Catholic colonial practice" ("Sahagún and the Birth of Modern Ethnography" 42) by developing sophisticated disciplinary techniques to use on Native Americans. The success "in imposing a new ideology and in extirpating previous customs required a careful examination of native beliefs and practices" (41). In an attempt to make confession more

⁴³ The first volume of *La Regenta* was published in January 1885, though it was already given to its publishers in May 1884, some months before the Berlin conference took place. I have not been able to determine when the conference was publicly announced.

⁴⁴ Valis, in *Sacred Realism*, has positioned herself against those who see *La Regenta* as a purely anticlerical novel. She argues that Alas' novel reveals the author's conflictive stand on religion. Accordingly she uncovers passages in the novel, such as that of Ana's religious procession, in which religion is depicted favorably. She attributes the scholarly emphasis on Alas' anti-religiousness to the fact that such passages "do not fit the academy's dismissal of religion as a vestige of pre-modern belief" (155). However, I suggest that confession should be understood as part of a narrative of modernity.

efficient, Sahagún developed “experiments with field methods that we can identify today as modern” (41). This friar considered himself a ‘physician of the soul’ thus highlighting the empiricist approach to confession (41).

With regard to the identification between knowledge and violence, the first chapter illustrates a metonymic contiguity between the rifle/telescope and the religious confession. While up in the tower, Fermín de Pas seems to be looking for something specific to observe with his telescope. Later, we learn that he was trying to find Ana Ozores. Ironically, he could not see her from the tower because she was already inside the cathedral looking for him, so that he could take her confession. Fermín does not need to get to Ana. She is already coming voluntarily to him to confess her sins. The religious confession, as a manifestation of the ideology of sin, is a complement to military activities and a more efficient tool of conquest.

Ana Ozores’ presence inside the cathedral can be interpreted as her being swallowed by the building and the religious power it represents. In fact, Fermín’s desire to control Vetusta and its inhabitants is depicted in terms of a desire to eat them. “Lo que sentía en presencia de la heroica ciudad era gula; hacía su anatomía, no como el fisiólogo *que sólo quiere estudiar*, sino como el gastrónomo que busca los bocados apetitosos; no aplicaba el escalpelo sino el trinchante” (*La Regenta* 105, my emphasis). The interpretation of the religious/scientific/conquering activities in terms of swallowing further reinforces the idea of the religious confession as erasing the identity of the conquered.⁴⁵ The epistemology that goes along with those activities is one that imposes the conqueror’s parameters upon the known object, its own being swallowed up and ultimately destroyed.⁴⁶ And, of course, the reference to ‘eating’ invests the scene with erotic meaning. As Sinclair has already explored, the novel uses food scenes to underline and metaphorically signify the physiological aspects of sexual appetite and consumption (119).

The sexual and the religious/scientific/conquering are not only informing but also confounding each other. That is, it is not just that one can be understood in terms of another but also that the more abstract relations of power can be seen as masking more

⁴⁵ See Klor de Alva, “Telling Lives: Confessional Autobiography and the Reconstruction of the Nahua Self.”

⁴⁶ My take on ‘confession’ differs from that of Valis. She claims that “to see the confessional process as alienating to the subject and little else, however, ignores the imaginative interplay between the inner text of personality and the imposed text of confessional practice. It ignores the way both texts interact to produce a third text that is neither entirely repressive nor entirely liberated” (*Sacred Realism* 182). I agree that confession need not result in the total erasure of an identity. At the same time, from the church’s perspective confession is intended to erase and transform the ‘victim’s’ identity. Moreover, within the rhetoric of imperialism, the novel is clearly underscoring the violence and destructive elements of the religious conquest.

trivial and basic instincts. Fermín is acting out the role of a scientist, but he is ultimately sexually longing for Ana.

Masculine discourses come down to sexual dominance, which I interpret not just as signifying imperial power over a feminized land, as Said does, but also as underlying the physical and material dimensions of that power. In the passage to be discussed below, Fermín de Pas' body is compared to the tower, not only on the basis of their shared masculine strength, but also insofar as their virility is suppressed and contained, a masculinity "of stone" rather than flesh, with no apparent sexual inclinations under the respectable image of neutral purity exhibited in the cassock. The novel is expressing a split between de Pas' sexual inner self and the pure public self. As Sinclair remarks, this conflict never recedes, and de Pas' attempt to master and suppress his sexual drive is ultimately unsuccessful (187). At the same time, this passage suggests that Fermín's and the tower's masculinities, defined in terms of their strength, are ultimately explained by reference to an underlying sexuality, even if it is not publicly exhibited, as is Álvaro Mesía's, when he announces his romantic conquests to everyone. Although de Pas' sexuality conflicts with his spiritual concerns, it is still a source of pride, albeit a secret one.

el mozo fuerte y velludo que tenía enfrente, en el espejo, le parecía un *otro yo* que se había perdido, que había quedado en los montes, desnudo, cubierto de pelo como el rey de Babilonia, pero libre, feliz.... Le asustaba tal espectáculo, le llevaba muy lejos de sus pensamientos de ahora, y se apresuró a vestirse. En cuanto se abrochó el alzacuello, el Magistral volvió a ser la imagen de la mansedumbre cristiana, fuerte, pero espiritual, humilde: seguía siendo esbelto, pero no formidable. Se parecía un poco a su querida torre de la catedral, también robusta, también proporcionada, esbelta y bizarra, mística; pero de piedra. Quedó satisfecho, con la conciencia de su cuerpo fuerte, oculto bajo el manteo epiceno y la sotana flotante y escultural. (*La Regenta* 410)

Here the irony is, as Sinclair has pointed out, that a priest, committed to celibacy vows, embodies sexual strength. Though Fermín de Pas' power is great, it is also limited in the act of possession, since he cannot, in principle, physically consummate his relationship with Ana. Ultimately, the church's power needs to be complemented by secular forms of social control. The novel assigns the mandate for these secular forms of control to the characters of Víctor Quintanar and Álvaro Mesía. But they are incapable of carrying out this mandate. The former is impotent and the latter becomes literally exhausted trying to satisfy Ana's sexual appetite, pointing again to the crisis of Spain's imperialism.

3. Swords and cigars

Though the novel points to desires other than heterosexual ones, it also shows that heterosexuality is the predominant interpretative framework of those desires.⁴⁷ And within this framework, as I have pointed out in the previous Section, male sexuality is the conquering force and female sexuality the object of that conquest. There is a moment when Obdulia, a friend of the family, contemplating Ana and sexually desiring her, wishes to be a man.

¿Cuándo llegará? preguntaba la viuda, lamiéndose los labios, invadida de una envidia admiradora, y sintiendo extraños deseos de una especie de lujuria bestial, disparatada, inexplicable por lo absurda. Sentía Obdulia en aquel momento así... un deseo vago... de... de... ser hombre. (*La Regenta* 361)

Another moment of identification between female and conquered/consumed object occurs, as I mentioned, when Ana Ozores compares herself to the half-smoked cigar her husband, Víctor, has snuffed out in the remains of his coffee. The dregs of the coffee combined with the ashes of the cigar offer a dirty brown and grey image, whose colors bring to mind the mud and dirt of rainy Vetusta, elements that, as Sinclair has remarked, contain sexual undertones throughout the novel (Sinclair 49, 53 and 62). Ana Ozores complains that she, like the cigar, is being ignored by Víctor. It should be recalled that during her life as a married woman there is no sexual union, let alone any other kind of sexual relation, between Víctor and her. The phallic significance of the cigar points in this case to her unsatisfied needs.

The scene's identification of the cigar as an object of male desire, combined with the fact that Ana Ozores occupies an inferior position of power, invites us to interpret this scene in Lacanian terms. Lacan argues that a woman becomes the phallus when she is regarded as the projection of male desire and as reflecting that desire. In some cases scenes describing male sexual desire for women use objects resembling the male sexual organ as a way to signify the female as a function of male sexuality and social power.⁴⁸ We

⁴⁷ James Mandrell argues that *La Regenta* describes conquering in masculine terms. Alison Sinclair has addressed Mandrell's argument by pointing out that women appear as desiring subjects as well, though in distorted and inappropriate ways (62-3). I add to their interpretations of a conquering male discourse an imperialist perspective.

⁴⁸ "For Lacan the Phallus is the signifier of signifiers, the term which defines each subject's access to the symbolic order" (Grosz 104). Judith Butler concisely summarizes Lacan's notion of the Phallus as follows: "To be the Phallus is to be the 'signifier' of the desire of the Other and to appear as this signifier. In other words, it is to be the object, the Other of a (heterosexualized) masculine desire, but also to represent or reflect that desire.... For women to 'be' the Phallus means, then to reflect the power of the Phallus, to signify that power, to 'embody' the Phallus, to supply the site to which it penetrates, and to signify the Phallus through 'being' its Other, its absence, its lack, the dialectical confirmation of its identity" (59-60). "Through a man, a woman can become the Phallus

encountered another case of a phallic object projected over a feminized space in the scene of Fermín de Pas in the cathedral tower looking out over Vetusta as a reflection of his masculine power. In the case of the cigar the fact that Ana herself makes this identification means that she has internalized the idea of herself as an object of male desire as her ideal-ego, the model according to which she is judging herself. Like Obdulia, she can only think of the female in terms of an object of conquest.

The cigar is also as a point of intersection for imperial and gender/sexual discourses, to the extent that Víctor's lack of sexual vitality suggests a reading in terms of diminished imperial power. The cigar/cigarette with colonial significance will appear again in Chapter Three's discussion of *La Tribuna*, and Chapter Four's discussion of *La Desheredada*. In all of these cases, I will propose, tobacco embodies allusions to Cuba specifically and to the colonies in general. Throughout *La Regenta*, Cuba and the slave trade are present, especially in the indianos returning with money from Cuba. On one occasion, the indiano Don Frutos Redondo refers to his life in Cuba and his participation in the slave trade as a hell he does not want to repeat: "La idea de volver, en Venus o en Marte, a buscar negros al África y comprarlos y venderlos a espaldas de la ley, le parecía absurda a Redondo y le volvía loco" (*La Regenta* 149). Don Frutos Redondo is notorious for his attempts to 'conquer' and marry Ana Ozores. The repeated failures of these attempts make him so bitter that he decides to go back to Matanzas to increase his fortune even more: "La hizo. Don Frutos se volvió a Matanzas, prometiendo volver vengado, es decir, con muchos más millones. Cumplió su promesa" (245). Again there is a confluence of the representations of Ana, the colonies and conquest.

The cigar represents both female and colonial discourses from a male metropolitan point of view. The dominating gaze imposed over Ana is also projected over the colonies. The image of the cigar applied to the colonies portrays them, within this framework, as longing to be 'consumed' and as a projection of metropolitan power, in line with Said's analysis, which points to the sexualization of the feminized Orient for the possession of the West in the context of European realist novels. As I will explain later, this consumption can be understood in political and economic terms. However, the comparison between Ana and the colonial has its limits, since the former is extradiegetically invoked but intradiegetically absent. Ana does not make the connection between the cigar on the one hand, and slavery and other forms of colonial exploitation on the other. She sees in the cigar only an image of her own misery. The extradiegetical allusion to the colonies opens up this scene to references—colonies, slavery—that minimize and even question the relevance of Ana's petty bourgeois world and her longing. In Chapter Three I will comment on a similar relatedness and distance, between a white Creole woman's dependence on her husband and a slave's exploitation in Morúa Delgado's *Sofía*. In *La Regenta* the cigar invokes several layers of lack and loss: Ana's lack of sexual attention, Spain's lack of imperial power, and the bourgeoisie's lack of attention to colonial and slavery exploitation.

(his object of desire); through sexual relations with a woman, a man can be affirmed as having a Phallus" (Grosz 133).

In what follows I will further explore the question of Spain's diminished imperial power in relation to both the scene of the cathedral tower and Víctor Quintanar's associations with the old empire. Spain's decreasing imperial relevance in the global sphere is depicted ultimately in terms of masculine virility. The lack or loss of colonies has an emasculating effect on Spain's imaginary.

In the first chapter, Fermín de Pas compares himself to the conqueror Pizarro and the city of Vetusta to Perú, once famous for its silver mines. The discrepancy between the dimensions of the old conquest and the current one, set in insignificant Vetusta, draws attention to the gap between Spain's old empire and current colonial power. The narrator's distancing ironic remarks, together with the lack of progress and stagnation of the plot I have previously referred to, convey the view of Spanish politics of the Restauración as linked to the lack of success of the recent colonial enterprises (Callao, México), the dramatic reduction of the extent of colonial domination in America after the independence of the new Latin-American Republics, and anxiety about losing the remaining overseas territories, especially Cuba.

Mediante el estudio de la metáfora del estancamiento y cómo esta tomaba repercusiones de orden social, podemos ver como la falta de circulación 'lo que se estancaba en el cuerpo' se considera un reflejo de cómo se atrasaba España en la carrera 'progresista' por dominación en el mundo. (Ramos González 221)

The gap between the old empire and current times is pointed out again in the context of the novel's description of Víctor Quintanar's love for the baroque. In one scene Víctor and his wife attend a production of Zorrilla's *Don Juan Tenorio*, a romantic drama first performed in 1844 and since then performed annually on All Souls Day. The piece is about the womanizer Don Juan and his relationship with the chaste Doña Inés, and is based on a 17th century drama, *El Burlador de Sevilla*, by Tirso de Molina.⁴⁹

The date of the performance of this piece, November 1, honors the memory of all who have passed away. It is thus a day of looking back into the past, remembering the missing, mourning, and visiting the cemetery. And indeed, one of the recurrent themes of romanticism, the genre of Zorrilla's *Don Juan Tenorio*, is loss, which is here projected on the womanizer Don Juan and the Golden Age period it describes. The novel emphasizes the losses alluded to by the play, both in reference to Ana's husband's impotence and to the narrator's burlesque portrayal of Álvaro Mesía as Don Juan, as I will show next.

⁴⁹ Valis understands the decadence of Vetusta as exemplifying "a contrast between two distinct modes of existence, between a positive past and a negative present" (*The Decadent Vision in Leopoldo Alas* 24). She mentions Spain's imperial past as part of the contrast, though she does not take into account Spain's present imperialism.

Víctor admires the grandiose walking manners of the actors as nostalgic remnants of Spain's old grandeur, and complains about the current state of affairs regarding the Cuban question. Víctor—haunted by his own sexual impotence—expresses his admiration for not just this particular Don Juan, but in general anyone carrying a 'sword' beneath the overcoat. "El buen Quintanar" mentions this to his wife, suspecting that she too—also a victim of his impotence—shares his admiration for Don Juan's virile manners. Both Víctor and Ana look to the fictional character of Don Juan as the bearer of something they lack, either, in Ana's case, being totally possessed and consumed, or, in Víctor's case, being the possessor.

En general don Víctor envidiaba a todo el que dejaba ver la contera de una espada debajo de una capa de grana, aunque fuese en las tablas y sólo de noche. Conoció que Anita contemplaba con gusto los ademanes y la figura de don Juan y se acercó a ella el buen Quintanar diciéndole al oído con voz trémula por la emoción:

—¿Verdad, hijita, que es un buen mozo? ¡Y qué movimientos tan artísticos de brazo y pierna!... Dicen que eso es falso, que los hombres no andamos así... ¡Pero debíamos andar! y así seguramente andaríamos y gesticularíamos los españoles en el siglo de oro, cuando éramos dueños del mundo; esto ya lo decía más alto para que lo oyeran todos los presentes. Bueno estaría que ahora que vamos a perder a Cuba, resto de nuestras grandezas, nos diéramos esos aires de señores y midiéramos el paso ... (*La Regenta* 44-5)

Ana Ozores becomes thrilled by the romantic style of the piece, the wager between Mejía and Don Juan over whether the latter can seduce Doña Inés, and the character of Doña Inés herself, who, as the audience notices, looks exactly like her. She feels haunted by Inés' and Don Juan's intense passion and devotion to each other and sees it as something missing from her own life. The representation of the possibility of giving oneself completely to one's lover provokes Ana's uncontrollable tears. The narrator, who seems to be using free indirect speech, and thus reproducing Ana's thoughts, makes the following ironic comment about Ana's non-sexual interpretation of the lovers' passion, anxiously negating any erotic meaning, and so precisely suggesting it. "No era ya una escena erótica lo que ella veía allí; era algo religioso; el alma saltaba a las ideas más altas, al sentimiento purísimo de la caridad universal... no sabía a qué; ello era que se sentía desfallecer de tanta emoción" (*La Regenta* 51). The narrator, still using free indirect speech, asks whether Ana would succumb to a Don Juan. "¿Sucumbiría ella como doña Inés, caería en los brazos de don Juan loca de amor? No lo esperaba; creía tener valor para no entregar jamás el cuerpo, aquel *miserable* cuerpo que era propiedad de don Víctor sin duda alguna" (*La Regenta* 51, my emphasis) She will later end up succumbing to Álvaro Mesía. From a retrospective point of view, Ana's mention here of her 'miserable' body as the 'property' of the impotent Víctor reveals hidden frustrations. The passage suggests that Ana's desire to be possessed has erotic causes, suppressed by an ideal of religious purity and still hidden from Ana herself. Ana's anxious negation of any sexual connotations recalls Fermín's repression of his sexuality.

Ana's intense emotions for the play take place while, sitting next to her, Álvaro Mesía, *La Regenta's* own Don Juan, is unsuccessfully trying to flirt with her. Álvaro marvels at Ana's rapt attention to the play. He does not understand how someone can be so entertained by a play full of stock characters that has been performed annually over the last forty years. At the same time, Ana, absorbed in the play, is unable to recognize the character of Don Juan in Álvaro. For his part, Álvaro is unable to see himself as a poor copy of the original romantic hero, an intended imitation of a Golden Age conquistador (Mandrell 49). Again, the novel is both comparing, and exposing the gap between, Spain's past imperial glory and its current power.

The analysis of this intricate relationship between old empire, sexuality, lack, performance, romanticism, cliché and religion exceeds the present study. However, I am interested in pointing out the connection in this passage between Spain's social structure and discourses of masculine sexuality and imperialism. Spain's diminished imperial power runs parallel to a domestic/national crisis. The impossibility of holding on to an empire is translated into an inability to sexually possess the female. Ana represents here both the female and the colonial and acts as a signifier of those realities that cannot be subsumed under the social and political model of the Restauración.

The 1868 Revolution was seen as threatening Spain's colonial ambitions and its domestic stability. It was a time of awakening and strengthening of progressive social and political movements advocating for the rights of women, the working class, the colonies, and slaves. 1868 was also the beginning of Cuba's Ten Year War, a rebellion that drove the Spanish treasury to bankruptcy and presented the first real threat of emancipation. The representation of Ana Ozores and the colonies, through the cigar, as longing to be consumed, can be understood as a way of symbolically counteracting the recent social and political unrest, which threatened the privileges of certain social groups, in particular those with colonial interests.

These longings to be consumed can be understood as 'fantasies' parallel to what Sibylle Fischer calls the 'fantasy of the submissive slave' in 19th-century abolitionist novels. According to Fischer, these novels aimed to neutralize, at a symbolic level, the historical fear provoked by the Haitian black revolution by projecting extradiegetically the fantasy as a fictional reassurance against a very real threat of slave revolt. Similarly, the scene of the cigar suggests several types of fantasy—that of women desperately desiring to be projections of male power, and that of colonies longing to be projections of metropolitan power—which represent ways of symbolically dealing with the anxieties about the diminished or altogether lacking male and metropolitan power. Although *La Regenta* is critical towards this imperialist fantasy of the colony/woman longing to be consumed, it does allow the reader to indulge in that fantasy and so in an imperialistic regard over Ana, again pointing to tensions between the novel's form and content.

Fermín de Pas' act of looking at the feminized city of Vetusta suggests a similar kind of anxiety, in this case, for the loss of the church's power over realities that threatened the

status quo. This anxiety has an economic component, which is underlined by the commodity of the cigar. Spanish anxiety about the loss of the colonies in particular was crucial given their increasing economic importance in the years following 1868. I will focus next on the economic dimension of Fermín de Pas' conquering surveillance of the city of Vetusta.

3. La Colonia

In his scrutiny of Vetusta, Fermín devotes special attention to its wealthier residents. And the neighborhood of the Colonia, made up of the newly wealthy indians is the one that has the best prospects of becoming de Pas' prey. Fermín de Pas' gaze over the city points to a dynamic economy, in the form of the wealth that is still arriving from the colonies in the Caribbean and the Pacific, and the new possibilities of strengthening the church, which needs to revitalize itself after the losses suffered during the Six Year Revolution.

Pero no importa, el Magistral no atiende a nada de eso; no ve allí más que riqueza; un Perú en miniatura, del cual pretende ser el Pizarro espiritual. Y ya empieza a serlo. Los indios de la Colonia que en América oyeron muy pocas misas, en Vetusta vuelven, como a una patria, a la piedad de sus mayores: la religión con las formas aprendidas en la infancia es para ellos una de las dulces promesas de aquella España que veían en sueños al otro lado del mar. Además los indios no quieren nada que no sea de buen tono, que huelga a plebeyo, ni siquiera pueda recordar los orígenes humildes de la estirpe ... Por todo lo cual el Provisor mira al barrio del Noroeste con más codicia que antipatía; si allí hay muchos espíritus que él no ha sondeado todavía, si hay mucha tierra que descubrir en aquella América abreviada, las exploraciones hechas, las factorías establecidas han dado muy buen resultado, y no desconfía don Fermín de llevar la luz de la fe más acendrada, y con ella su natural influencia, a todos los rincones de las bien alineadas casas de la Colonia, a quien el municipio midió los tejados por un rasero. (*La Regenta* 114-5)

Bahamonte and Cayuela have shown that the infusion of capital from the colonies to the Peninsula between 1869 and 1890 was greater than during any other period in Spanish history and six times that of the period from 1840 to 1868.⁵⁰ This wealth made possible,

⁵⁰ “con respecto a la etapa 1840-1868. Esto plantea una cuestión de importancia: la época 1869-1890 fue el periodo más intenso de todo el siglo de la repatriación de capitales, muy por encima de pretéritas y futuras ... los primeros datos que hemos manejado permiten sugerir que la transferencia de capitales hacia la Península había decaído en los años inmediatamente anteriores a 1898. Es decir, los grandes hombres de negocios que habían controlado los ámbitos portuarios traspasaron a la Península, sin que ello supusiera el total abandono de las actividades realizadas en Cuba, la mayor parte de sus patrimonios antes de la pérdida de la colonia. Esto nos hace suponer que el hasta ahora sobrevalorado

to a large extent, Spain's economic development and modernization. Thus, de Pas is right to envision the indiano's fortunes as a bountiful source of income for the church during the Restoration. The anxiety about the loss of those economic possessions thus becomes especially significant.

The geopolitics of mapping and organizing a world towards a center, exemplified in the image of the immobile tower of the cathedral, presumes an economic circuit designed to serve and benefit its core. The scientific and religious discourses I referred to above now acquire an economic significance. The theoretical is materially informed by the pursuit of economic revenues. The convergence of scientific and economic interests has been discussed by Pratt in reference to 18th-century British explorations. While economic benefit was the ultimate justification for these scientific explorations, the two kinds of interest were carefully distinguished; commercial interests were even hidden at times.⁵¹ The same can be applied to Spain's colonization of America.

The novel describes a number of indiano's returning from the Americas, who have become wealthy there in only a few years. Despite their enormous fortunes, they lacked the social prestige that only a lineage going back several centuries could provide. The few years they needed to gain their fortune are not enough to erase the memory of their humble social origins. Everyone in Vetusta can still remember the day the indiano's had to flee to America, poor and in complete misery. And, everyone knows, as Fermín de Pas reminds us, that in Cuba the indiano's attended very few masses, a sign of the illicit and immoral enterprises they were likely engaged in.

Thus, for those returning from America the church is associated with the good customs and manners of the old nobility. Going to church in Vetusta is a way of acquiring social capital. The church is also the place for the indiano's to whitewash and sublimate their guilt about the means used to acquire their fortunes. The ghost of slavery hovers over their money, questioning the morality of its origins, and the church, with its moral capital, is ready to help exorcise those ghosts. In exchange for their economic support, the church allows them to return to childhood innocence and forget their wrongdoings in America. Their sinful capital is redeemed in the hands of the priests, who are also indirectly taking advantage of the lucrative slave trade.

trasvase en el año mítico de 1898, como consecuencia de la pérdida de la colonia, debe de ser rebajado considerablemente" (Bahamonde and Cayuela, "Traficantes, Armadores y Hacendados" 17).

⁵¹ In *Imperial Eyes* Mary Pratt writes that in the 18th century, "the interests of science and commerce were carefully held distinct. Expeditions mounted in the name of science, like Cook's to the South Seas in the 1760s and 1770s, often went under secret orders to look out for commercial opportunities and threats. That the orders were there, yet were secret, suggests the ideological dialectic between scientific and commercial enterprises. On the one hand commerce was understood as at odds with the disinterestedness of science. On the other, the two were believed to mirror and legitimate each other's aspirations." (34).

Los indios de la Colonia que en América oyeron muy pocas misas, en Vetusta vuelven, como a una patria, a la piedad de sus mayores: la religión con las formas aprendidas en la infancia es para ellos una de las dulces promesas de aquella España que veían en sueños al otro lado del mar. Además los indios no quieren nada que no sea de buen tono, que huelga a plebeyo, ni siquiera pueda recordar los orígenes humildes de la estirpe; en Vetusta los descreídos no son más que cuatro pillos, que no tienen sobre qué caerse muertos; todas las personas pudientes creen y practican, como se dice ahora. Páez, don Frutos Redondo, los Jacas, Antolínez, los Argumosa y otros y otros ilustres Américo Vespucios del barrio de la Colonia siguen escrupulosamente en lo que se les alcanza las costumbres *distinguidas* de los Corujedos, Vegallanas, Membibres, Ozores, Carraspiques y demás familias nobles de la Encimada, que se precian de muy buenos y muy rancios cristianos. (*La Regenta* 115)

The references to a colonial setting within the demarcations of the peninsular boundaries also allude to an issue that comes up several times in Galdós' novels, namely that Spain, after the Six Year Revolution, had fallen into the hands of a group of wealthy and powerful colonial entrepreneurs, and had become a kind of colony of those interests. In *La Desheredada*, Galdós compares Spain's economic dependence on the wealth coming from the colonies to the dependence of a courtesan, Isidora Rufete, on her economic supporter, something I will explore in Chapter Four. In *La Peregrinación de Bayoán*, published and set several years earlier, Hostos' Bayoán compares Madrid to a deceitful courtesan. In the second prologue Hostos mentions that the freedom of Puerto Rico and Cuba was interconnected with the Peninsula's own freedom. By pointing to the possibility of Spain being tyrannized, Hostos foresees what would unfortunately come to pass in the Restauración: "España tiranizadora de Puerto Rico y Cuba, estaba también tiranizada. Si la metrópoli se libertaba de sus déspotas, ¿no libertaría de su despotismo a las Antillas? Trabajar en España por la libertad, ¿no era trabajar por la libertad de las Antillas?" (*La Peregrinación de Bayoán* 2). Hostos regards his failure to alter Spain's relations with Puerto Rico and Cuba as a failure to achieve a greater degree of freedom in Spain within a progressive liberal framework. I discuss Hostos' views of the role of the colonies in peninsular Spain in more detail below.

La Regenta represents not only the failure of Hostos' project, as I will describe below, but also describes the anxiety resulting from a revolutionary threat of the previous years and from an ongoing Cuban war endangering Spain's most precious colony. Indeed, the novel encapsulates that anxiety at various levels. First it is translated into Spain's social imaginary anchored in an imperial past and revived in the context of the remaining colonies. Second, gender and sexual anxiety is a fundamental aspect of the imperial discourses of past and present. Third, questions concerning the overseas territories and those pertaining to the Peninsula's social dynamics are intimately interconnected, especially in reference to the 1868 Revolution.

4. *La Peregrinación de Bayoán*: Hostos' political development

In the 1860s it seemed possible to advance innovative reforms in Spain, especially regarding Spain's colonial policies. In particular, it was a promising time for Cuban and Puerto Rican reformists, that is, for creoles fighting to introduce more freedom, though not necessarily independence, for the colonies. As Hostos writes in the second, 1873 introduction, the way to influence Spanish colonial policies was by changing Spain's general political direction. And so, these reformists participated actively in, and left their imprint on, many aspects of Spanish civil and political life at a time when different progressive associations were being created.⁵² One example is the anti-slavery movement. Schmidt-Nowara has emphasized the abolitionist movement's transatlantic dimension and its deep roots in the Puerto Rican reformist movement (7, 13). Julio Vizcarrondo, one of the founders of the Abolitionist Society (1864), arrived in Spain in 1864 from the United States, where he had spent some years in exile from Puerto Rico.⁵³

⁵² Schmidt-Nowara describes the two decades before the Six Year Revolution as a time when important social changes started to be envisioned: "The 1850s and 1860s were a period of struggle over the political economy of Spanish liberalism. Was Spain to be a democracy? An oligarchy? Was the economy to be based on a free market or on state intervention on behalf of domestic producers? What were the rights of labor? These profound questions logically extended to the colonies, not only because Antilleans were fighting over the same issues, but because of the intimate links between the colonial and metropolitan political and economic orders" (56).

⁵³ Vizcarrondo gained much support from the Spanish Free Society of Political Economy, with members such as Figuerola and Moret. The ties between anti-slavery and economic liberalism were not new. Adam Smith had already advocated, in his defense of the free market, the abolition of slavery for purely economic reasons. In Spain the defense of economic freedom was fought against by those with interests in a protectionist economy, especially, Schmidt-Nowara argues, those with ties to the Catalan textile industry. "The Catalan protectionist argued that the nation was to be the basis unit of economic activity and analysis in opposition to the 'individualism' of the economist" (Schmidt-Nowara 62). Schmidt-Nowara further describes the support of the Free Society of Political Economy for reforms in the Caribbean. He also points out that this society was not against racial discrimination: "in debates held at the Free Society of Political Economy, the economists envisioned a new Spanish colonialism based on economic liberty. Laureano Figuerola argued that economic interest was the foundation of modern colonialism and that such interest flourished only in absolute liberty. ... the denunciations of the repressive features of Spanish rule in the Antilles and the liberal principles expressed by the economist were music to the ears of Antillean reformers, Cuban and Puerto Rican alike. ... to those who feared the loss of markets or the colonies themselves, both Antillean and Spanish reformers responded that more than material interests linked Spanish and the Antilles. ... the final guarantee of Spanish rule in Cuba and Puerto Rico was not the Spanish military and customs officers, but the profound racial identification between Spain and the white population of its last American colonies" (111).

Vizcarrondo incorporated many of the tools of civil activism, such as public meetings, fliers and conferences, which he had seen operating in civil movements in the United States. He also founded two journals, *El Abolicionista Español* and the *Revista Hispanoamericana*, as vehicles for expressing his reformist ideas (Jiménez de Wagenheim 159). During his association with the Ateneo of Madrid, which provided a forum for talks, often those expressing progressive viewpoints, Hostos spoke on several occasions. He collaborated with the Partido Republicano and was especially supportive of the idea of a Federal Republic, a political model which almost became a reality during the brief period First Republic in 1873.

However, Hostos' support for federalism goes beyond Spanish politics and should be understood within his political thinking more generally. In fact, during his life he advocated different forms of federal organization, first with Spain, then with the Latin American republics and even with the United States. As Rosa remarks, “muchas de las ideas de Hostos cambian drásticamente a través de su carrera pero la idea de la *federación* aunque pasa por varias transformaciones permanece como un punto central” (*Los Fantasmas de la Razón* 51, my emphasis). In 1868 he argued that his idea of a federation came naturally to him, and that it was the only choice, one dictated by his Caribbean background. He gives the image of the constellation of Antillean islands in constant communication and connection with each other—something that he enacts in *La Peregrinación* by setting the story in both Cuba and Santo Domingo on his way to Spain.

Yo soy americano: yo tengo la honra de ser puertorriqueño y tengo que ser federalista. Colono, producto del despotismo colonial... me vengué de él imaginando una forma definitiva de libertad y concebí una confederación de ideas, ya que me era imposible una confederación política. Porque soy americano, porque soy colono, porque soy puertorriqueño, por eso soy federalista. Desde mi isla veo a Santo Domingo, veo a Cuba, veo a Jamaica, y pienso en la confederación: miro hacia el norte y palpo la confederación, recorro el semicírculo de islas que ligan y ‘federan’ geográficamente a Puerto Rico con la América latina, y me profetizo una confederación providencial. (Hostos, “Discurso y Rectificación en el Ateneo de Madrid, 20 de diciembre de 1868” 97-8)

Hostos' support for federal organization stems from his reluctance to embrace a model of a nation-state in which social and political unity and homogeneity are given priority over the individuality and autonomy of the constitutive parts. This resistance to a centralized model of the nation can be partly understood as a reaction to the political developments of the recently independent Latin American republics, as Richard Rosa has pointed out. In fact, in a critical scene in *La Peregrinación*, an old man tells Bayoán about the failure of the new republics as they have given rise to new oligarchies of power. With great symbolic significance, this encounter takes place in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, an image contrary to the telluric metaphors often used in the representation of single nation-states. The Atlantic Ocean offers an in-between space of supranational circulation.

Hostos' rejection of an organic model of the nation can also be seen in later works such as the section of the "Programa (de la Liga) de los Independientes" (1876) entitled "Principio de Nacionalidad." For Hostos the unity embodied by the centralized nation-state is associated with discrimination on the basis of social differences, and even racial oppression. According to him, a federal organization is more likely to counteract the formation of oligarchic groups (which is interesting given that *La Peregrinación* is often understood as a foundational novel). Thus, Rosa, for example, explains that Hostos "contrasta la situación ideal que debe haber en las Antillas con la exclusión de indígenas en Perú, Bolivia y México, de los cuales hablará extensamente en los textos de *Mi viaje al Sur*, y con lo que ocurrió mucho antes en España y su exclusión de los grupos árabes y judíos" (*Los Fantomas de la Razón* 53).

La Peregrinación represents not only an attempt to reach out to the most progressive wings of the Spanish political spectrum, but also Hostos' failure to successfully engage them. It also links the independence movements to Spain's failure to recognize the overseas territories' rights. In 1873 Hostos wrote a second introduction to *La Peregrinación*, explaining how he had conceived of Bayoán's journey to Spain in 1863. He tells us that, at the time, he wanted Bayoán to tell Spain that the Antilles would be with Spain if rights were granted to them, but that they would be against Spain if the domination were to continue.

Quería que Bayoán, personificación de la duda activa, se presentara como juez de España colonial en las Antillas, y la condenara; que se presentara como intérprete del deseo de las Antillas en España y lo expresara con la claridad más transparente: "las Antillas estarán con España, si hay derechos para ella; contra España si continúa la época de dominación". Para expresar esta idea sin ambigüedades abarqué la realidad de la situación política y social de las Antillas en dos de sus aspectos y los fundí en el mismo objeto de la obra. Uno de esos aspectos nacía de la posibilidad de un cambio político interior y colonial en España ... El otro aspecto nacía de las condiciones de la vida social en las Antillas. Yo intentaba presentarla toda entera con toda sus congojas, angustias. (Introducción 13-4)

This passage reveals the original purpose of his novel. But by 1873 he no longer desired attachment to Spain. Hostos' change between 1863 and 1873 is reflected in the difference in opinion between what Bayoán/Hostos wrote in 1863 in the entry of *La Peregrinación* for February 13th and what he wrote again in a footnote to the entry ten years later. In the original entry Bayoán/Hostos writes that he does not regret that Spain is ruling over Puerto Rico: "¡Qué España nos dirija, no lo siento; pero que por nuestra debilidad nos prive del derecho de ser hijos, y en vez de, con nosotros gobiernen nuestro país esos indiferentes que vienen y se van encogiéndose de hombros...!" (139). In the footnote added in 1873, we read that Hostos now not only regrets Spain's rule but intends to do everything in his power to change the colonial situation of Puerto Rico:

Este libro fue el primer clamor, y no podía ser una maldición. Ni aún hoy maldigo; porque estamos demasiado lejos de 1863, no sólo siento que España nos dirija, sino que lo he sacrificado todo por conseguir, y lo conseguiré, que no siga dirigiéndonos (141).

5. Bayoán: ship and sea

La Peregrinación de Bayoán takes the form of a diary, narrating Bayoán's thoughts, feelings and impressions during his journey on a political mission from Puerto Rico to Spain, with stops in between at Santo Domingo and Cuba. Bayoán's journey starts on the 12th of October, the day of Columbus' arrival in America, investing his trip with a symbolic meaning of undoing the journey of the Spaniards and their arrival in America. Bayoán's pilgrimage will come to an end more than one year later. While in Cuba, he meets and falls in love with Marién, the daughter of a plantation owner, Guarionex, and starts a complicated relationship full of remorse and guilt, ending in Spain, where she dies. The name 'Marién,' as we are told by Hostos in the beginning of the book, refers to one of the most beautiful regions in Cuba. 'Guarionex' is the name of the cacique of La Española who rebelled against the Spaniards. The name 'Bayoán' recalls Urayoán, the native of Puerto Rico who, in the 16th century, doubted the alleged divinity of the Spaniards, and proved his point by drowning one of them in a river. All three names thus contain symbolic references to the island, while the two male names refer to a past of which there are now only traces on the island. The indigenous population of these Antillean islands had been wiped out one century after the Spaniards' arrival. *La Peregrinación*'s reference to the indigenous names is a way of standing on an origin which no longer exists. This groundlessness will continually surface throughout the novel in different forms.

The opening of *La Regenta*, with Fermín de Pas standing still in the cathedral tower in a firm, strong and secure position anchored to the land from where he maps the city, offers a stark contrast to the first lines of *La Peregrinación de Bayoán*. Bayoán starts the narration of his journey from a steamboat setting out from Puerto Rico. Along his journey, he will disembark in three islands in the Caribbean and, eventually, Spain. Thus, he does not adopt a permanent geopolitical 'center' and his journey will be subjected to the vicissitudes and unpredictability of the ocean.

From a formal perspective, the opening pages of *La Regenta* can be regarded as enacting some of the features commonly ascribed to the realist project. First, like Fermín de Pas looking over the city from a stable and firm tower, the omniscient narrator retains a single ideological perspective in his treatment of Vetusta's social reality and throughout the novel. Second, the narrator's access to people's private lives and thoughts, especially in the use of free indirect speech, resembles de Pas' access, through his telescope, to the houses and the people's private lives; Ana Ozores' intimate thoughts and feelings are

objects of voyeuristic display to the reader.⁵⁴ Third, just as Vetusta appears to de Pas as a delimited organism of exploration, the novel treats the well-circumscribed city and its inhabitants as objects of careful study. Thus the representation of Fermín de Pas in the tower replicates a realist narrator in a way that points to the ideological significance of the form of the novel. *La Peregrinación*, on the other hand, rests on a radical instability and even change of opinion and views, as a way of questioning both a unified and centralized model of the state, and a controlling and all-encompassing epistemology.

Bayoán actively embraces the uncertainty and variability that characterize his pilgrimage. Moreover, these features are mirrored in his own attitudes and decision making, and at the level of the narrative form of the novel. I will argue that they exemplify Puerto Rico's colonial status—as opposed to *La Regenta*'s metropolitan perspective.

Richard Rosa has offered several ways of interpreting Bayoán's constant vacillation. One of them is based on Moliner's definition of 'vacilación,' which underlines this word's sense of moving from one side to another as a result of a lack of stability or firmness, to show that Bayoán's doubts can be understood as a country's strategy in response to an imperial nation, in this case Spain. This kind of doubting is the result of the political and economic unpredictability resulting from being in a colony, subjected not only to the whims of a metropolis, but also to the unrestricted and unpredictable power of a Capitán General. Secondly, Rosa explains Bayoán's vacillating attitude as “una estrategia frente a situaciones en que no parece haber una opción definitiva” (*Los Fantasmas de la Razón* 56). This kind of doubt is a critical way of thinking that considers each option in all its complexity and can take different and even contradictory perspectives on one subject. It contemplates both positive and negative aspects and remains oscillating from one side to the other. It is the reflection of a 'de-centered epistemology,' one that refuses to adopt a permanent and firm standpoint. We will see this occurring in Bayoán's evaluation of Columbus' role and in his opinion on Spain.

Hostos' need to make a trip to Spain to demand autonomy for Puerto Rico reflects the island's colonial situation. While the tower of *La Regenta* represents a male imperial center deciding the fate of the colonies, Bayoán's journey in *La Peregrinación* embodies his need to sail to Spain in order to push for changes in colonial policy. The very beginning of the novel is in fact a repetition of this need to abandon the island once again in order to fulfill a political mission: “otra vez, otra vez ... y otra vez obligado a abandonarte!” (*La Peregrinación de Bayoán* 33).

In one of his talks in the Ateneo of Madrid in 1868, Hostos recalls that during the 19th century, Cuban, Puerto Rican and Philippine delegates were called to the Spanish parliament and that, in every case, their demands were ignored.⁵⁵ The third attempt was

⁵⁴ See Lou Charnon-Deutsch, “Voyeurism, Pornography and *La Regenta*.”

⁵⁵ “Discurso y Rectificación en el Ateneo de Madrid, 20 de Diciembre de 1868.” In 1836, after the death of Fernando VII, Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines were told for the second time in the 19th century to send their elected deputies to the Spanish parliament,

in 1865 when Cánovas summoned the reformists to join in a Junta de Información. This new attempt ended up failing catastrophically and initiated a sequence of events and dynamics that led to the 1868 Revolution (Piqueras 291). From the very beginning of the Junta de Información, there was little interest on the Spanish side in accommodating the Antillean demands. For one thing, the representation of the Antillean reformism was outsized by the presence of a greater number of Spanish conservatives (Maluquer de Motes, “El Problema de la Esclavitud y la Revolución de 1868” 57). Demands for changes in the tariffs imposed on transactions with foreign countries were ignored, and a new tariff was imposed in 1867.⁵⁶ And in the case of Puerto Rican abolitionist proposals, the Cuban representatives joined Spain in opposing them.

The novel itself experienced a long journey in many ways parallel to the pilgrimage of its main character. In the prologue to the second edition Hostos refers to the vicissitudes of the book as “la historia de este libro” (*La Peregrinación* 5). The book was initially published in Spain, and the author had the hope of influencing and opening the eyes of the Spanish liberals about the effects of their policies in the Antilles. However, the novel was barely acknowledged by Spain’s literary establishment, with some notable exceptions, such as Giner de los Ríos, and it was banned in Puerto Rico. This experience is foreshadowed in the narration of *La Peregrinación*. The fictional editor of Bayoán’s manuscript lets us know that Bayoán was not able to make friends in Madrid and that he was constantly alone. He attempted to found a newspaper because he wanted to have complete freedom to write, but ultimately could not afford to. He also had difficulty in publicizing his manuscript. Madrid is not a city that is open to his ideas, or that listens to and welcomes them. Madrid’s inhospitality replays both Bayoán’s personal experience and the collective experience of the Antillean reformists. Hostos eventually decided to publish the novel again in Chile in the hope of a better reception.⁵⁷

initiating in the colonies what Aguirre has called ‘el segundo periodo reformista.’ However, in 1837 the parliament discussed whether the elected deputies would be granted seats there. The result was negative and the representatives of Cuba and Puerto Rico had their rights taken away. It was decided that from then on the islands ought to be ruled by “leyes especiales” though “para nadie era un secreto que las tales ‘leyes especiales’ no iban a llegar nunca” (Aguirre 49).

⁵⁶ Cuba’s economy had been in recession for several years. Not only had the Junta de Información failed but a new tax was implemented in the island in a *decreto* of 1867, which established a single 10% tax on property. “Este decreto suprimía la alcabala de fincas, de esclavos el de consumo de ganado, la alcabala de remates, el derecho de vendutas, el diezmo ... Quedaban sustituidos por un impuesto del 10% sobre la propiedad rural y urbana” (Le Riverend 430). This tariff drew an immediate reaction. In the interior and eastern parts of the island, especially in the rural areas with low productivity, there was strong opposition.

⁵⁷ This kind of stagnation while waiting to be published, and often wandering geographically, was common for 19th-century Caribbean texts, which were subject to harsh censorship by Spanish authorities. For example, Francisco Manzano’s autobiography was first published in England in an English translation by Madden in

The journey's uncertainty is conveyed from the very first pages of *La Peregrinación*. Even the chosen form of a diary is an expression on the lack of a structural whole: this genre offers the possibility of narrating without appealing to an overarching vision or a sense of univocal direction. The narration is instead based on day-to-day occurrences, with constant interruptions and sudden changes. For example, on October 30 Bayoán writes, "Las borrascas de las costas del sur nos obligaron a cambiar de rumbo y navegamos hacia el este" (45). Days later he is stuck in Santiago de Cuba, unable to leave because of the weather: "¡Cuándo saldrá ese vapor!" (46) When he finally arrives in Cuba he has to stay there with the Guarionex family for an undetermined period of time due to the weather. Once he is on the boat, after having resumed his pilgrimage to Spain, a strong tempest threatens to sink the ship. When the storm will arrive, like the vicissitudes of the weather on which he depends, is not wholly determined:

veamos venir la tempestad ... La tempestad no viene, va de paso, ¿a dónde irá? ... pero no parece que se acerca: allí está la nube que la trae ... ¿Dónde estamos?, no lo sé: la aguja dice que navegamos N.E.: el capitán calla y oculta nuestra situación. (108)

The uncertainty of the weather is repeated throughout the novel:

Unas veces el viento que reina, contrario para salir; otras cualquier temor, ¡siempre un pretexto..! Y el buque no sale, El capitán difiere su partida tres, cuatro, quince días. Debíamos salir mañana... ya no sé cuándo saldremos. (137)

El barco se parece a mí: quiere andar y se lo impiden los vientos contrario. (203)

Bayoán's progress is dependent not only on the uncertainty of the natural elements, but also on the decisions of the Captain, which he must obey, even if he does not agree with them. On one occasion, when he clearly opposes the Captain's decision, he writes: "Yo hago mal en molestarme. Imitemos a la gente: todo lo que hace el Capitán es bueno, por más que algunos cuchichean en voz baja, y por más que murmuren los mismos que aplauden sus medidas: todo les parece bien si no les causa miedo" (113).

1837, and only nearly a century later in Cuba, in the edition by José Luciano Franco. *Cecilia Valdés*, published in 1882 in New York, was preceded by two much shorter versions of the love story between Leonardo ('Leocadio' in the first version) and Cecilia published some fifty years earlier. Felix Tanco y Bosmiel's *Petronia y Rosalía* was written in 1838 and first published in 1925. Suarez y Romero's *Francisco: El Ingenio o las Delicias del Campo* was written in 1838 and published more than forty years later. Zeno Gandía's *El Negocio* was not published until 1920, more than twenty years after it had been written. Gómez de Avellaneda's *Sab* was published in Madrid in 1841 and banned in Cuba. The first Cuban edition appeared in 1914.

The references to the captain as the ultimate authority on board with respect to which route to follow and when to stop and board again, becomes especially significant when compared to the historical figures of the Capitanes Generales of Puerto Rico and Cuba, supreme and incontestable authorities there. In 1812, the year of the proclamation of equal rights for Spain and the territories in America, it was argued that Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines required ‘leyes especiales’ accommodating the presence of slavery if they were to have a constitution. However, the project of the ‘leyes especiales’ was not carried through until just before independence. Until then the Capitán General of each island, later called ‘governador,’ was given ‘poder omnímodo’ to do as he wished without legal restraint.⁵⁸

Bayoán’s trip to Spain, subject to the rhythms of the weather and the decisions of the captain, exemplifies the situation of the colonies as subject to the decisions of the metropolis and uncertain about their own future. Hostos justifies the narration of the pilgrimage by writing in the introduction to the second edition: “Yo intentaba presentarla [condiciones de la vida social en las Antillas] toda entera, con todas sus congojas, con todas sus angustias, en una personificación palpable, en un joven sediento de verdad, que tenía, para conocerla que salir una y otra vez de su país” (14).

This de-centered oscillation is also reflected in his patterns of thinking, as if the tides of the oceans were translated into his thoughts as he evaluates different choices. Bayoán does not just choose one option and condemn and totally reject the alternative. Even when he has opted to follow a certain path, he continues cross examining it and longing for aspects of the option that had to be eliminated. This aspect of Bayoán’s thinking is experienced throughout the novel in relation to some of its essential themes and figures, such as Columbus, whose arrival in the Americas marks its foundational moment, the Spanish metropolis, about which he refuses to adopt a definitive negative judgment, and Marién.

⁵⁸ From the beginning of 19th century, when Cuba became the most important colony, the racial question was presented as an obstacle to granting full equal rights to the colonies. Fradera deals extensively with this subject in *Colonias Para Después de un Imperio*. There, he shows that “en definitiva había sido la ‘heterogenidad’ entre los territorios a ambos lados del océano (por no decir de Filipinas) el factor que hacía imposible una resolución estrictamente igualitaria de la condición política de todos los habitantes de la monarquía” (122). By ‘heterogeneidad’ he means the existence of the black slave population in the islands. Fradera tells us that “la cuestión de la ‘excepcionalidad’ volvería ser el argumento [en 1837] más utilizado para descargar el golpe definitivo sobre la representación de los coloniales, para acabar con la ambigüedad latente desde Cádiz” (159). Fradera also argues that slavery was constantly used by Spain to justify the political subordination of the colonies: “debe comprenderse que la esclavitud era el factor determinante de la subordinación política cubana, la piedra angular sobre la que descansó todo el sistema colonial español entre los años treinta y sesenta del siglo XIX. Esta triste realidad fue percibida por los cubanos desde mediados de la década de 1830” (256).

Both *La Peregrinación de Bayoán* and *La Regenta* make several references to the initial conquest of America. In *La Regenta*'s description of the Restauración, the early conquerors represent the nostalgia for power, conquest, possession, economic exploitation and the implementation of the geopolitical axis, center-periphery. We saw this in the image of Fermín de Pas as ship's captain. In *La Peregrinación*, as I will argue next, the references to Columbus take a different meaning. However, in both novels this reference to the past makes the present time they are narrating 'out of joint,' to use Derrida's expression when he is commenting on Shakespeare's *Hamlet* in *The Specters of Marx*. The specter, which Derrida applies to Marx and his continuous re-appearance in the panorama of European politics after the fall of communism, is an idea or thought that has become independent from its original substratum or body in order to acquire another form of sensible appearance. It represents a way for the past to be present, in a sense, without being wholly present and thus overcomes the distinction between being and not being, between present and past. Derrida argues that "one never inherits without coming to terms with some specter" (24), which is certainly applicable to Columbus and the conquest of the past in these two novels. In *La Regenta*, the old idea of conquest, represented in the ghosts of the conquerors, comes back as a demand for the actual (male) conquest by Fermín de Pas.

For Bayoán, Columbus is the origin of a number of atrocities and the loss of a paradisiacal nature. The arrival of the Europeans in America marked the end of a period of isolation and blissful ignorance, an arrival which, as he points out, was promising only in its initial moment. The belief in a happy and pristine paradise before the arrival of the Europeans conforms to the Rousseauian dichotomy and opposition between the good savage and the awakening of commerce, arts and industry. At the same time, Bayoán refuses to condemn civilization and progress. In his notes of November 5th, he writes: "Cuando Colón, en su segundo viaje, llegó a esta parte que costea mi barco [la parte oriental de Cuba] traía ya el remordimiento de su genio, el disgusto de ver profanado el mundo que él adivinó, la pesadumbre de haberlo arrancado de su *feliz ignorancia*" (47, my emphasis). Twenty days later he describes the Spanish conquest of the New World as a mixture of clarity and shadows, acknowledging that progress has come along with enslavement.

Y hay en esta impostura de la historia una verdad aterradora, porque mientras que Inglaterra y España y Roma antigua encadenan y martirizan al mundo de Roma, al Nuevo, y al más viejo, la humanidad progresa, el comercio se explaya, la industria rompe sus esposas, las artes se lanzan a su espacio, las ciencias utilizan hasta el rayo, la inteligencia engrandece a la materia / ¡Y hay luz, y sin embargo hay sombras; y en todas partes, y en lo grande y lo pequeño, ven los ojos claridad que los incita, el espíritu ve oscuridad que lo rechaza! (59)

The other specters that we find in *La Peregrinación* come in the indigenous names given to the main characters. These names, which refer to the first encounters between the

inhabitants of the islands and the Spaniards, point to realities that are materially absent in the present time of the narration. In a sense, they signify an attempt to anchor the political power of the contemporary inhabitants of Puerto Rico and the other islands in the indigenous possessors of that territory from the time before the Spaniards arrived. The right to political independence of the original inhabitants of Puerto Rico is passed on to the contemporary population in the symbolic sharing of common names. The name 'Bayoán,' because it alludes to the figure of Urayoán, also serves as a way to interpret the significance of the trip: Bayoán wants to establish a dialogue with the Spaniards on equal terms, without having to treat them as superior beings.

Of course, this inheritance of the past is not devoid of problems and conflicts, since Bayoán is not the successor of the indigenous people but the descendant of the European colonizers. The dialectic between Europeans and the natives of the islands is repeated within the character of Bayoán, as an ongoing and unresolved conflict that situates him simultaneously as conqueror and conquered. As Rosa puts it "Lo que parecería suceder en el Caribe es que, al no tenerse una continuidad con una población indígena a la que restaurar, el estatuto de autenticidad queda siempre en duda. ¿Con qué legitimidad se puede sustituir al usurpador?" (*Los Fantasmas de la Razón* 56).

If Urayoán was able to show the mortality and non-divinity of the Spaniards, Bayoán, in his attempt to reach out to them, will experience and bring to light the corruption and greediness of Madrid. But he is not yet prepared to break with Spain and sever ties altogether. His hesitation can be understood as emerging from his dual perspective: both sharing the experience of the colonized and inheriting the conqueror's deeds.

Indeed, with respect to Spain, *La Peregrinación de Bayoán* ends in an almost schizophrenic way, with the narrative voice split between the main character, Bayoán, who decides to continue his pilgrimage around the recently formed Latin-American republics in search of a country in which to anchor his political project, and the character of Hostos, the editor of the diary, who decides to remain in Spain. In fact, Hostos stayed in Spain throughout most of the 1860s, attempting to establish common ground with Spanish liberals. This kind of ambiguity is referred to in the second edition of the novel in the form of an unresolved contradiction: "¿Cómo hacer entender a las Antillas que, si era bueno todavía esperar, era inútil esperar?" (11).

6. Marién

In the final Section of this chapter I would like to refer again to different masculine discourses in connection with Bayoán's vacillating nature. Bayoán's vacillation emerges from his geopolitical situation and from the realization of the conflictive role he plays in relation to the imperial project. Also, Hostos' novel represents what I have called a de-centered way of thinking resulting in the defense of the political model of the federation, as one retaining individuality and difference within a larger unity. Both his political situation and his political ideal advance a masculine discourse different from, and in

many respects contrary to, the conquering masculine discourse we saw in *La Regenta*. I will in particular try to address the questions of why Marién's and Bayoán's relationship is unsuccessful and what this says about both Bayoán's views about women and his political project.

The relationship between Bayoán and Marién comes to an unhappy end in her death. But even before that tragic end the relationship is not devoid of conflict and uncertainty. Though Bayoán is attracted to her in an initial encounter, experiences pleasure in her company, and even feels tempted on several occasions to remain with her on her father's plantation, he mostly regards her as an obstacle to his political aspirations. Marién is opposed to Bayoán's political journey and wants him to stay with her in Cuba. However, she becomes dependent on Bayoán to the point that she literally cannot live without him. In order to continue their relationship she embarks on the journey to Spain with Bayoán. However, the trip and the progressive distancing from Cuba prove fatal for Marién, who ends up dying in Spain.

Marién's death at the end of the novel shows that there is no room in Hostos' political project for this kind of woman and the economy she embodies. Nevertheless Bayoán maintains an ambiguous relationship with Marién and does not reject her univocally. His reluctance to do so, far from expressing gender anxieties, stems, as Rosa explains, from his mixed and ambivalent attitude towards the plantation economy. If on the one hand Bayoán acknowledges the atrocities of the slavery system and the absolute need to put an end to it, on the other hand he portrays himself as related to that system and to that lifestyle: his friends and family members are slave owners.

The first time Marién appears in the novel she is depicted as part of the plantation economy and as symbolically standing for it, as I will show. In this way there is a portrayal of Marién as symbolically representing the hacienda. "Ella, diríamos es el objeto final del viaje a través de los cañaverales, arroyos, y faldas que aparece sugerir una cierta feminización de ese espacio; ella es el corazón y el futuro de la hacienda" (Rosa, *Los Fantasmas de la Razón*, 81). Rosa interprets her as "aquello que está más allá del objeto y que conlleva una sublimación en base a la cual se organizan valores reconocidos" (81). Also, the fact that her name signifies a region of Cuba invites us to understand her in such an allegorical sense.

But Marién is more than a political or economic allegory. First, she represents a certain kind of gender discourse. The connection between Marién and the plantation is based on their sharing similar discourses of dependency and subordination. The slavery system around her signifies her as a slave, as someone devoid of agency. And here we can think again of the comparison between Ana Ozores and the cigar. By adopting a submissive role, Marién, like Ana Ozores, is playing the fantasy of a woman desiring to be a projection of male power.⁵⁹ Second, she is economically dependent on the plantation

⁵⁹ The comparison between women and slaves is common in 19th-century discourses, as I will show in reference to Pardo Bazán's *La Tribuna* and Gómez de Avellanada's *Sab* in

economy and on slavery, putting her in an ambiguous position with respect to the imperial project and to slavery itself.

In Hostos' text we find that while the sugar canes and the working slaves are outside in the field with Guarionex and Bayoán, Marién is located inside the house: "Entregadas las bridas de nuestros caballos a un criado cruzamos un jardín, subimos una escalera, nos presentamos en la sala. Por una de sus puertas, salía en aquel momento una mujer..." (63). In order to get to her Guarionex and Bayoán need to cross a garden, climb up the stairs and enter a room. There Bayoán sees her and, a little later, her mother. In the case of white Creoles, the male space is identified as the economically productive open plantation, while the female is depicted metonymically by the domestic space.

Also, Marién first appears in the diary as an object of Bayoán's regard. She constitutes, together with all the other things *and slaves* he is looking at, the object of his regard and curiosity. Her appearance is thus completely mediated by the male gaze. She and her mother, who do not speak in the first encounter, do not even participate in the narrative production. This representation of Marién as a pure object devoid of agency fits well with Guerra Cunningham's interpretation. She argues that while Guarionex approves of Bayoán's political mission, Marién's mother, whose name is never mentioned, strongly criticizes it. She tells Bayoán that he should not risk his present happiness for uncertain future prospects and urges him to stay in Cuba with them. Guerra Cunningham concludes that both Marién and her mother exemplify a certain vision of women as linked to the present and to romantic fulfillment, by remaining on the margins of historical progression (141).

In this way, the scene offers several dichotomies corresponding to gender distinctions, where the feminine is informed by class and racial discourses. Such distinctions apply exclusively to the white Creoles. Female slaves, together with their male counterparts, were active workers on the plantation. Furthermore, while there is a gender distinction among the Creoles, the 'negros' are referred to in a general, essentialist way. *La Peregrinación's* representation or, better put, lack of representation of slaves—for they

the next chapter, and indeed the women's emancipation movement took shape only after the abolitionist movements. In *La Peregrinación*, Marién herself, like Ana Ozores in *La Regenta*, has internalized a certain imaginary of masculine power projected over her. She sees her own identity as the function/object of masculine desire and possession insofar as she cannot understand herself without Bayoán and insists obsessively on marrying and uniting with him. Even her doctor tells her that marrying Bayoán will help her to heal. Though they marry and there is a union by law, they do so when she is already very sick and the marriage is not consummated. I propose that her death in the novel, and its portrayal as a burden on Bayoán's political projects, represents the lack of a future for a sexual contract that subordinates women.

appear on very few occasions—has prompted some questions about the extent of Hostos' commitment to abolitionism.⁶⁰

At the same time, Marién is represented as part of a plantation economy because she depends economically and socially on it and the lifestyle associated with it, something that occurs at several levels: she feels attached to a patriarchal social structure, she benefits economically from slavery exploitation and finally, politically, slavery strengthens Cuba's dependency on Spain. She is not just an allegory of certain political and economic systems but an active participant in the slave-based economy, complicit to this extent in the imperial project.

During the pilgrimage to Spain, Marién becomes ill. The journey represents the possibility of change for Cuba and therefore for her own lifestyle. Her inability to withstand the journey reveals her own incompatibility with those changes. Marién's disease starts at sea on the way to Spain, more specifically, after she meets the old man I mentioned above, who fought in a Latin American independence revolution and who dies before arriving in Spain. This coincidence between the encounter with the old man and the beginning of Marién's disease has prompted Rosa to give a political interpretation to her sickness (83). As I mentioned, Bayoán wants to go to Spain to establish a dialogue with the most progressive sectors of the political spectrum, who were willing to consider political changes towards more autonomy in the colonies and the eventual end of slavery. Marién's physical distancing from the plantation during Bayoán's trip reflects the possible abandonment of the slave-based economy. If the future is one in which slavery has been abolished, Marién's attachment to the plantation makes her unable to progress towards that future. Recall that in the first encounter with Bayoán, Marién and her mother appear as immobile objects, waiting for the men inside the domestic sphere, in contrast to Guarionex and Bayoán, who are represented as mobile subjects riding horses through the plantation. Marién belongs to and depends on the plantation economy and its social structure like a plant on the soil; when she is pulled away from them her health starts deteriorating. Her connection to the plantation is even described in the novel in organic terms (*La Peregrinación* 151).

In order to understand the significance of the slave-based plantation for Marién and its relevance for the interpretation of the relationship between Bayoán and Marién, we must recall that one of the main disagreements between Cuban and Puerto Rican reformists concerned the abolition of slavery. Both Jiménez de Wagenheim and Schmidt-Nowara point out that—contrary to what has traditionally been believed—Puerto Rico had in the past depended greatly on a slave labor force. At the same time, Schmidt-Nowara also argues that already in the 1850s, due especially to the sugar crisis of that decade, the

⁶⁰ One possible explanation for the novel's scarce attention to slaves is the censorship existing in Spain about this question; recall that Hostos' novel was intended to speak to Spanish liberals.

island's economy was moving quickly towards free labor.⁶¹ This divergence came to the fore in the Junta de Información of 1865.⁶² The Puerto Rican delegation, now with a liberal majority, demanded the immediate abolition of slavery. They explained that Puerto Rico, unlike Cuba, was mostly based on free labor. They also argued that free labor was more profitable and efficient than slave labor, pointing out that Puerto Rico's productivity had increased even though the number of slaves had decreased (Jiménez de Wagenheim 159).

For example, José Julián Acosta, a liberal Puerto Rican reformist, had already started studying the changes in Puerto Rico's economy by that time. He had carried out several field studies and concluded that the country "had enough laborers and had only to incorporate them into the labor market to solve chronic labor shortages" (Schmidt-Nowara 45). By contrast, the Cuban economy was still heavily dependent on slavery for its sugar production and the Cuban reformists participating in the Junta de Información were advocating only a gradual abolition of slavery, which was to begin at some unspecified future time.

Bayoán does not reject Marién univocally and, consequently part of him accepts the economic and political world she is part of. However, Marién ultimately represents a duty, as we have seen in many occasions throughout the novel when Bayoán feels the obligation to stay by her and take care of her. Hostos is here demonstrating his ambivalence between duty towards family, tradition and a way of life, which he refuses to break with once and for all, and his obligation to pursue political ideals, which include the abolition of slavery.⁶³

The fact that a familial duty is responsible for his attachment to Marién and the plantation economy is corroborated by the way Bayoán criticizes the Puerto Rican slave holder. While the novel describes Guarionex's plantation in a romanticized paternalistic way, Bayoán's opinion of the Puerto Rican plantation owner is unsentimentalized, harsh and

⁶¹ Among the Puerto Rican intellectuals and academics living in Madrid and trying to exert influence in the Spanish government regarding abolition and autonomy were Baldorioty, José Julián Acosta, Eduardo Micault, Julián Aurelio Nuñez—who received a grant to study in Spain in the 1840s—Segundo Ruiz Belvis, Ramón Emeterio Betances—the last two were part of the independentist grito de Lares—Alejandro Tapia y Rivera and Manuel Alonso (Schmidt-Nowara 44).

⁶² Some of the Puerto Rican participants in this Junta were the "liberal abolitionists José Julián Acosta (1825-1889), from San Juan; Segundo Ruiz Belvis (1829-1867), from Mayagüez; Francisco Mariano Quiñones (1830-1908), from San Germán and the conservative Manuel de Jesús Zeno Correa" (Jiménez de Wagenheim 159).

⁶³ "Por un lado hay que tener en consideración la relación conflictiva de Bayoán con la misma clase hacendada que tenía la encomienda de crear la nación puertorriqueña a través de un discurso paternalista que trataba de subsanar las contradicciones internas entre su aspiración a la modernización y racionalización del proceso económico y su dependencia de formas arcaicas de producción" (Rosa, *Los Fantasma de la Razón* 59).

extremely critical. The point to notice is that this criticism is made at a distance from Puerto Rico; Bayoán is on his ship when he refers to a 'hacienda' he is contemplating, whose features he imagines rather than directly observes, as is pointed out in the use of the modal future tense.

Allí, cerca de Bayamón, hay una hacienda, su dueño tendrá esclavos: si quieren arrebatarlos resistirá, defenderá lo suyo ... después abandonará al látigo al capataz de sus esclavos ... Es cruel el hacendado porque se olvida del infeliz que le da oro ... Es ciego el hacendado porque es cruel (123).

Bayoán is making the familiar Puerto Rico unfamiliar by referring to an unknown plantation owner. His criticisms of Puerto Rico's plantation system have to be made from a perspective of 'objectivity' and sentimental disengagement, which a distance from the island and a lack of direct engagement with the plantation, seem to grant him. On the other hand, his personal interaction with those involved in slavery is always in reference to Cuba.

Even though his direct interaction with the plantation is displaced to Cuba, Bayoán's separation from this economic model is gradual and painful, occurring only with the death of Marién. He cannot simply abandon her; he waits until she dies to continue with his political project and then proceeds as if liberated from a burden. With Marién's death a concrete period is brought to an end, not through violence, but by being allowed to die, perhaps, as a way of expressing the limits of what active political intervention can achieve in the way of political and economic reform. Guarionex returns to his plantation in Cuba and life continues for him and his wife without their daughter, and consequently, without a natural heir that would perpetuate their economic system.

The failure of Bayoán's relationship with Marién reflects not only the plantation economy's lack of a future, but also the abandonment of a type of society based on domination of all kinds, including that of women. Hostos' idea of retaining individuality and difference within the unity of the whole, something already established in his federalist agenda of the 1860s, can be used to explain why the relationship between Bayoán and Marién does not succeed. Hostos' rejection of any contract that implies subordination of one of the parts translates into the novel's rejection of his sexual contract with Marién.

Chapter Three

Commodification and Constructivism: Race and Gender

This chapter presents a comparative study of Morúa Delgado's *Sofía* (1894) and Pardo Bazán's *La Tribuna* (1883). Both novels confront the question of the representation of marginalized subjects in the context of the realist/naturalist novel, *La Tribuna* focusing on women as objects of sexual desire and *Sofía* on slaves and the racial other. The two female characters I shall focus on are, in the most literal sense, products of the transatlantic economic circuit. Pardo Bazán's Amparo works in Galicia manufacturing tobacco coming from Cuba into a product to be consumed by Europeans, while Morúa Delgado's Sofia is the white daughter of a Spanish slave trader in Cuba, who is mistaken for a mulatta and forced to become a slave. Moreover, the situation of both women is put into dialogue with discourses of race and slavery, albeit in different ways and to different ends. *La Tribuna* participates in a transatlantic discourse of race connecting the Caribbean, Africa and Europe. *Sofía* is an attempt to respond to views like Pardo Bazán's, which link behavioral traits to race, by representing discourses of slavery and race as constructed through a series of discursive and material practices. In both novels, discourses of gender, race and class domination interact with one another in complex ways. This has the effect of breaking up binary power relations and de-essentializing major categories of gender, class and race.

La Tribuna tells the story of Amparo, a worker at the tobacco factory in the Galician town of Marineda, and her romantic relationship with the bourgeois Baltasar. The literature on Pardo Bazán's novel has neglected the question of why the first Spanish naturalist novel that focuses on the working class treats a tobacco factory,⁶⁴ whose raw

⁶⁴ The connection between tobacco factories and social revolution was already noted by Ortiz. He points out that making cigars and cigarettes did not at that time involve machines, and so was quiet enough to allow the reading of news, stories and political propaganda to the workers. This is described in *La Tribuna* as well: "La fábrica de tabacos de Marineda fue centro simpatizador (como ahora se dice) para la federal. De la colectividad febril nació la confraternidad política; a las cigarreras se les abrió el horizonte republicano de varios modos: . . . hubo en cada taller una o dos lectoras; les abonaban sus compañeras el tiempo perdido y adelante. Amparo fue de las más apreciadas, por el sentido que daba a la lectura" (*La Tribuna* 105). Ortiz writes that Spanish tobacco factories were centers of enlightened activity: "Trabajador de hojas de tabaco y de hojas de libro. Así es el tabaquero. Aún él es en Cuba el obrero iluminado con un barniz intelectual que lo hace sentirse superior en ese aspecto a los demás obreros."

product comes from Cuba, as the center of the labor movement during the 1868 Spanish revolution.⁶⁵ The 1868 Revolution, as I explain in the first Section, provides a historical backdrop to the events of the novel, and serves as the locus for the interaction between discourses of sexuality, gender, class and race. The Revolution helped bring to light not only the subjugated condition of the working class, slaves, and other social groups, but also unveiled their latent power—in working class, feminist, and federalist movements, as well as in the colonial revolts. The Cuban Ten Year War in particular proved very difficult to contain.

La Tribuna focuses on the representation of female sexuality through discourses of gender, race, class relations, and colonial exploitation. However, it represents working class and bourgeois female sexuality as having different relations to discourses of race and colonial exploitation. While Amparo's sexuality is compared to a cigar, that of Josefina—her bourgeoisie counterpart—is aroused at the sounds of a habanera song, a genre with both French and African influences. Class distinction is represented in terms of racial difference, something very common in 19th-century Europe (McClintock 23, 113). The novel depicts Amparo as being of a non-white racial 'type' by describing her as 'morena,' and through inter-textual references to Mérimée's *Carmen* (1845) and Bizet's opera of the same title (1875).

In *La Tribuna*'s depiction of female sexuality, colonial and racial discourses serve two different functions. On the one hand, these discourses highlight Amparo's and Josefina's subjugation, pointing out especially the extent to which their sexuality is a projection of male desire. On the other hand, *La Tribuna* depicts female sexuality as a threat, drawing on the 'morena' Amparo's unpredictable, menacing and irrational effects on Baltasar. In light of the historical background I will discuss in the next Section, we can appreciate in *La Tribuna* a tension similar to the one we saw in *La Regenta*: situations of subjugation and exploitation are represented in the context of certain social changes, which were seen as a threat to the bourgeoisie establishment. In addition, I will show that this double portrayal of Amparo's sexuality through the image of a cigar reflects the contradictory ways in which 19th-century working class and feminist movements appropriated discourses of slave exploitation.

On one level, as I explore in Section Two, female sexuality is construed as a projection of male heterosexual desire, in conjunction with class relations. By comparing Amparo to a cigar in the context of her erotic encounter with Baltasar, and having her work in a tobacco factory, taking on her raw materials' addictive appeal, the novel connects her to a

... Para las fábricas cigarreras de España, junto con los tabacos de La Habana, sus puros, cigarros, picaduras y sus rapas, fue la lectura en los talleres donde fueron lectoras las encargadas de esa supervivencia del iluminismo. En La Coruña, en San Sebastián, y otras galeras españolas hubo típicas lectoras que sirvieron a Emilia Pardo Bazán para la protagonista de su novela *La Tribuna*" (*Contrapunteo* 70).

⁶⁵ For example, is it is curious that Henn, while focusing on "aspectos políticos" of the novel, does not mention Cuba.

web of transatlantic exploitation. This kind of reading recalls Said's argument in *Orientalism*, that in 19th-century European novels the colonial is often portrayed as the object of Western sexual imagination. I will also draw on McClintock's account of the relationship between the colonial and the feminine, discussed in the Introduction.

As I mentioned, however, female sexuality is also represented as a disruptive threat. In this regard, the novel sees the exploited realities associated with female sexuality, namely, the working class, the colony and a dark racial 'type' that allegedly explains female sexuality, as forces threatening the bourgeoisie metropolitan establishment. I substantiate and explain the racial overtones in particular by bringing to bear a general European discourse on race in the intertextual connections between *La Tribuna's* plot, the novel *Carmen* and the opera of the same title, which unifies, into a single racial discourse, categories of African, Semitic and 'gypsy' origin. Finally, I discuss Pardo Bazán's engagement with ethnographic theories.

In the fourth Section, I address a scene in which *La Tribuna* puts male voyeurism on display and depicts women as sexually chaste when the male gaze is absent, or at least hidden. I argue that the novel is suggesting an ideal origin of racial purity, to which the non-white, and the sexual female stand as imperfect derivations. To further this analysis, I bring in Homi Bhabha's application of Freud's notion of an original sexual unity, as explained in *The Location of Culture*.

In the second part of this chapter, I explore the ways in which Morúa Delgado's *Sofía* confronts the question of the portrayal of slavery and the racial other in 19th-century Cuba. I focus first on the representation of the discursive and material practices involved in the social constructions of both racial and slavery exploitation. As I read it, *Sofía* attempts to show that race and slavery are social constructions, and thus, the novel can be taken as a response to *La Tribuna*. The way the novel attempts to demystify racial beliefs, however, is not by showing that those beliefs are false, but rather by singling out those beliefs themselves as the operative force in constructing our racial discourses. Žižek's analysis of practical ideology provides the theoretical foundation for the analysis of this aspect of the novel. I then show that the novel proves Foucault's historical division of disciplinary mechanisms in *Discipline and Punish* insufficient by depicting violent forms of torture in plantations together with discursive ones in the construction of racial discourses.

Section Five explores the novel's treatment of the problems surrounding the representations of slaves. *Sofía* can be placed in the tradition of abolitionist novels, that is, novels written for white people that narrate the suffering of black slaves. These novels provide detailed accounts of the miseries and pain endured by slaves. The representation of exploitation to an audience that is on the dominating side of the discourse of power can be a double-edged sword, both exposing the exploitation to which the other party is victim, and thereby running the risk of reinforcing extradiegetically the perspective from which exploitation takes place. I maintain that Morúa Delgado's novel recognizes the usefulness of the figure of the 'submissive slave,' so preponderant in anti-slavery novels,

as a tool for exposing the exploitation of slaves. At the same time, it recognizes and tries to address the shortcomings and negative consequences of the sentimentalization of slaves. For this discussion I will draw on Sibylle Fischer's *Modernity Disavowed* and Anna Peluffo's *Lágrimas Andinas*. By applying the 'submissive type' to a white character the novel disengages it from a certain race in particular. This goes along with my central claim that Morúa Delgado does not attempt to disprove the ideologized figure of the black. Rather, he is preoccupied with revealing that this figure is constructed independently of any essential characteristic, behavior or other empirical basis. Finally, my discussion will highlight and assess the 'hybrid' style of Morúa Delgado's naturalism.

I will conclude my study of *Sofía* by addressing an issue that is also present in *La Tribuna*, the use of slavery to portray and underline women's subjugation. Insofar as slavery is working in Pardo Bazán's novel as a metaphor, it masks the difference between a free woman's situation and that of a slave (Bhabha 106). *Sofía* breaks this purported homogeneity by juxtaposing two concurrent scenes: the abandonment of a white Creole woman by her husband and the rape of a female slave.

2. *La Tribuna* within the 1868 Revolution

La Tribuna, considered one of the first naturalist novels in Spain, depicts the working class and its relations with the bourgeoisie in a Galician town during the 1868 Revolution. The novel places one of the most important revolutions of Spain's history in a transatlantic context. Not only events happening on the other side of the Atlantic, but also, discourses of race, colonial subjugation and slavery, are represented as influencing and informing the characters and social structures of *La Tribuna*.

The novel is written in a highly 'costumbrista' tone, with many descriptions of the 'cuadros sociales' of Marineda. It tells the story of Amparo, a worker at the tobacco factory and the local leader of the Republican Party, and her romantic relationship with Baltasar, a bourgeois señorito, during the first years the Six Year Revolution. Baltasar, self-interested and calculating, finds in Amparo a source of entertainment and a sexual outlet, which his stereotypically bourgeois, conservative and sexually inhibited fiancée, Josefina, does not provide him.

'Marineda' is a fictional name for La Coruña, Galicia, at the geographical periphery of Spain. It is situated on the westernmost part of Spain, next to the cape of Finisterre—literally, "the end of the land." La Coruña is in particular situated on the coastline facing the Atlantic Ocean, so that Marineda's geographical positioning alludes to yet another kind of periphery, the geopolitical space of the colonies. The novel describes the ships appearing and disappearing beyond the field of vision, coming from, and leaving for, places beyond the horizon. The novel's gaze is projected from Marineda across the ocean to the colonies. *La Tribuna* also takes us to the world of the tobacco factory, where most workers were women, and thus it focuses on a socio-economic periphery determined by class and gender as well.

The relationship between Baltasar and Amparo, I propose, needs to be understood at a transatlantic level, especially in light of the 1868 Revolution, when abolitionism and colonial and class revolts endangered bourgeois economic stability. Anchored in the 1868 Revolution, the novel presents a dialectic confrontation between the working class Amparo, representing the republican movement, and the señoritos Baltasar and Borrén, whom the novel identifies as liberals, and, though it is not explicitly established, presumably as moderate liberals.⁶⁶ In principle, *La Tribuna* does not show much sympathy for either of these dialectical poles. It presents the republican movement with comic strokes, especially in the character of Amparo.⁶⁷ It also shows a bourgeois class preoccupied with its own preservation and oblivious to those worse off.

Working class and popular revolts with republican tendencies had two major moments during the Six Year Revolution: the Juntas Provinciales in 1868 and the revolt of the Cantones in 1873.⁶⁸ *La Tribuna* focuses on the initial revolts of the Juntas Provinciales and, as I will show below, attributes increased popular support for these revolts to poor social and economic conditions.

After the military coup in Cádiz in 1868 several Juntas Provinciales, organized by the Democratic and Republican Parties and modeled on anti-Napoleonic movements in Spain's War of Independence, instigated open rebellion and declared independence from a central power, calling for the reorganization of Spain into a federal republic. Their main goal was to decentralize Madrid's political power:

Durante la desecha borrasca de ideas políticas que se alzó de pronto, observóse que el campo y las ciudades situadas tierra adentro se inclinaron

⁶⁶ Scanlon has suggested that the attention of the novel is diverted from political issues to psychological and romantic ones. This switch expresses, according to her, the author's disbelief in political movements and ultimately her conservative views (137-138). While I agree on the sarcastic tone of the novel, I also propose here that the novel makes claims at the political and collective level.

⁶⁷ The novel makes it clear that she does not understand the propaganda she reads or the political movement she stands for. The narrative voice highlights her ignorance by, for example, pointing out her misuse or mispronunciation of certain words. She becomes "sujeto agente y paciente" (*La Tribuna* 123) of the revolution. The working-class revolt is described on several occasions in physical terms as an 'efervescencia política,' thereby erasing the political agency of its participants. However, *La Tribuna* does not praise the liberalismo moderado represented by the Sobrados either, but rather, shows them taking advantage of their economic and social superiority.

⁶⁸ In the aftermath of the victory of the Republican Party in 1873, there was a second important popular uprising in Spain, the *Levantamiento Cantonal*, in which certain counties, instigated by a wing of the federalist movement, declared themselves independent from the central administration as a first step towards a bottom-up construction of the federal republic.

a la tradición monárquica, mientras las poblaciones febriles y comerciales, y los puertos de mar, aclamaron a la república. En la costa cantábrica, el Malecón y Marineda se distinguieron por la abundancia de comités, juntas, clubs, proclamas, periódicos y manifestaciones. Y es de notar que desde el primer instante la forma republicana invocada fue la federal. (*La Tribuna* 105)

The Spanish Republican Party and the majority of the Partido Progresista advocated the abolition of both slavery and of the system of compulsory military service, the so-called ‘quintas,’ by which young men were recruited to serve either in the Carlistas war or in the colonies. The quintas was based on a lottery, but one could also buy an exemption from military service from the state. This way out, however, was not feasible for the lower classes, which helps account for working-class support for the revolution, whose leader, Prim, had promised to eliminate the quintas (Sales de Bohigas 121). Despite his promise, Prim was unable to do so given the ongoing Cuban war and the new Carlist uprisings.

Miren ustedes—decía Amparo—que eso de que arranquen a una de sus brazos al hijo de sus entrañas y le lleven a que los cañones le despedacen por un rey. ¡Clama al cielo señores! Por lo mismo queremos la república republicana ... se va a hacer una cosa *manífica*, que se llama descentralizar, y veremos cómo después se le baja el orgullo a la corte. (*La Tribuna* 125)

With respect to the Federalist party’s attitude towards the abolition of slavery, there is a moment when the señoritos Baltasar and Borrén are listening to a ‘federalista’ giving a speech against slavery and they say: “ese... dice que es de los que quieren perder las colonias y salvar los principios: hombre de líneas rectas, de geometría” (*La Tribuna* 156). This phrase “perder las colonias y salvar los principios” refers to an 1870 speech given by the Catalan Parliament member, Puig y Llagostera. He paraphrased Robespierre’s famous sentence in reference to the debate over the right of the Caribbean black population to vote in the National Assembly in 1790: “let the colonies perish rather than our principles” (Lewes 162). Unlike Robespierre, however, Puig y Llagostera argued against abolitionism. In a tough exchange with Figuerola, Prim’s Minister of Finance, he claimed, “no, sálvense las colonias y piérdanse los principios. Húndanse los principios pero sálvese el país” (Maluquer de Motes, “Abolicionismo y Resistencia a la Abolición en la España del Siglo XIX” 314). *La Tribuna* does not place Baltasar and his friend Borrén on the side of abolitionism, and points to their moral ‘flexibility’ regarding it. In fact, they accuse the federalista of applying a strict, suicidal logic to the question of slavery: “Según Palacios, que lo conoce, la ecuación entre la lógica y el absurdo; no en balde es ingeniero. Si para lograr sus ideales tuviese que desollarnos... ¡Pobre pellejo!” (*La Tribuna* 156).

In the parliamentary debate mentioned above, Puig y Llagostera was responding to the attempts by both the Republican Party supporters and the most progressive sectors of the Liberal Party to abolish slavery and concede equal rights to the colonies. In 1870 Emilio

Castelar, a member of the Republican Party and president of the First Republic, gave a famous speech to the Spanish Parliament, entitled “La Abolición de la Esclavitud.” And, as I mentioned in the Introduction, in 1873 the Republican Party proposed a bill, albeit one that never passed, which would have abolished slavery in all the colonies and implemented a federal republic in which Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines would be provinces with equal rights.

In sum, the novel’s references to the historical events I have just recounted highlight the transatlantic dimension of the 1868 Revolution. Issues such as abolitionism, the decentralization of political power, and the quintas, key elements in the development of the Six Year Revolution, were influenced by and, in turn affected, events and circumstances on both sides of the Atlantic.

With regard to the fragmentation of categories I referred to in the Introduction, Amparo, a metropolitan woman and a member of the Republican Party and the working class, is placed in an ambiguous position with respect to the relationship of metropolis to colony. Indeed, Amparo’s position within this relation is complex in at least two ways. First, she is a member of the Republican Party, which was more open than other parties to abolitionism and the colonies’ autonomy. Second, as I will show below, she is the point of intersection for myriad discourses on race, sexuality, gender, and class.

2. Discourses of exploitation in a transatlantic setting

Here I will focus on a scene narrating a sexual encounter between Baltasar and Amparo, in which he compares her to a cigar, the product of her labor. This scene functions as a hinge between the representation of Amparo as an object of subjugation, through discourses of domination—what I will explore in this Section—and her representation as a potentially disruptive force and a threat to the bourgeois establishment—which I will highlight in Section Three. In this scene, economic, sexual and racial discourses converge.

Había llegado Baltasar al mayor número de pulsaciones que determinaba en él la calentura amorosa. Su pasión, ni tierna ni delicada, ni comedida, pero imperiosa y dominante, podía definirse gráfica y simbólicamente llamándola apetito de fumador que a toda costa aspira a consumir el más codiciado cigarro que jamás produjo, no ya la fábrica de Marineda, sino todas las de la Península. Amparo, con su garganta mórbida gallardamente puesta sobre los redondos hombros, con los tonos de ámbar de su *satínada, morena y suave tez, parecía a Baltasar un puro aromático y exquisito*, elaborado con singular esmero que estaba diciendo: ‘fumadme’. Era imposible que desechase esta idea al contemplar de cerca el rostro lozano, los brillantes ojos, los mil encantos que acrecentaban el mérito de tan preciosa *regalía*. Y para que la similitud fuese más completa *el olor del cigarro había impregnado toda la ropa de la Tribuna, y exhalábase de*

ella un perfume fuerte, poderoso y embriagador, semejante al que se percibe al levantar el papel de seda que cubre los habanos en el cajón donde se guardan. Cuando por las tardes Baltasar lograba acercarse algún tanto a Amparo e inclinaba la cabeza para hablarle, sentíase envuelto en la penetrante ráfaga que se desprendía de ella causándole en el paladar la grata titilación del humo de un rico veguero y el vicioso mareo de las primeras chupadas. Eran dos tentaciones que suelen andar separadas y que se habían unido; dos vicios que formaban alianza ofensiva: la mujer y el cigarro íntimamente enlazados y comunicándose encanto y prestigio para transformar una cabeza masculina. (*La Tribuna* 198-9, my emphasis)

In this passage, the image of a cigar projected over Amparo identifies her as an object of consumption in sexual, racial, and economic terms that inform and qualify one another. The cigar depicts her as an object of Baltasar's sexual desire. She is thus converted into an object of male power in a way that suggests psychoanalytical theories. According to Lacan, for example, in a society where power is reserved for men, a woman can still share that power by becoming the object of male desire.⁶⁹ And before him Freud argued that women's physical attraction is the result of both an absence of power and the desire to mask that deficiency by acquiring the power they originally lack.⁷⁰

However, I do not want to give the sexual discourse priority over other forms of exploitation that are signified by the cigar as well. Consider again McClintock's proposal: "I wish to challenge the primacy of the phallus in the realm of fetishism and open the Freudian and Lacanian theories of fetishism to a more varied and complex history in which class and race play as formative a role as gender" (138). Accordingly, I will turn now to the economic and the racial meanings of the cigar in relation to Amparo. The interaction of the economic and racial meanings with those of gender and sexuality mentioned above de-essentialize their general categories and allow for more nuanced interpretations of the relations of exploitation they encompass.

The fact that Amparo is here compared to a commodity makes it necessary to add an

⁶⁹ "The phallus is the crucial signifier in the distribution of power, authority and a speaking position, a kind of mark or badge of a social position" (Grosz 125). "Through a man, a woman can become the phallus (his object of desire)" (Grosz 140).

⁷⁰ "The characteristics of femininity Freud outlines (1933: 132) – seductive, coquettish behavior, narcissism, vanity, jealousy, and a weaker sense of justice – are a consequence of her acceptance of her lack (of the phallus). They are strategies developed to ensure that, even if she doesn't have the phallus, she may become the phallus, the object of desire for another. She retains her position as the object of the other's desire only through artifice, appearance, or dissimulation. Illusion, travesty, make-up, the veil, become the techniques she relies upon to both cover over and make visible her 'essential assets.' They are her means of seducing or enticing the other, of becoming a love object for him. While concealing her 'deficiency' by these means, she also secures a mode of access to the phallic" (Grosz 132).

economic perspective to Lacan's view, and so to merge Marxian and psychoanalytic perspectives. In Marxian terms, the commodity is the objectification of the workers' labor. The cigar signifies her sexuality as an object of consumption (Scanlon 141). But it also invests her beauty with an economic significance.⁷¹ In Amparo the subject-worker and the object-commodity are one and the same. Moreover, it is a bourgeois man who is falling for her. If she marries him she will move up the social ladder. In addition, class differences reinforce Baltasar's power over Amparo. She tells him on one occasion that he would not treat a bourgeois woman with the lack of respect and consideration he reserves for her.

Porque no me conviene a mi perderme por usted ni por nadie. ¡Sí que es uno tan bobo que no conozca cuándo quieren hacer burla de uno! Esas libertades se las toma usted con las chicas de la fábrica, que son tan buenas como cualquiera para conservar la conducta. ¿A que no hace usted eso con la de García, ni con las señoritas de la clase de usted? (*La Tribuna* 200)

Amparo's sexuality is not just metaphorically identified with a commodity. We are told that she is even physically transformed by the presence of the aroma of the tobacco in her clothing. Her long hours making cigars have made her literally take on physical features of the commodity she manufactures. The material conditions of labor have effects on the working class, reinforcing class differences. It also points to Ortiz' notion of transculturalization: the power of the colonized territories to influence the colonizing ones. The tobacco not only physically affects Amparo, but further transforms and deranges Baltasar's mind ("transformar una cabeza masculina"). The cigar has a double effect on Amparo: on the one hand it underscores her commoditization, and on the other, as I will explain in the next Section, it grants her power over Baltasar.

Amparo is also compared to a cigar on the basis of their perceptible qualities; Her skin, soft and dark, is reminiscent of the texture and tone of the cigar. Throughout the novel

⁷¹ The investment of her beauty with an economic significance occurs in at least two more scenes. In one, when Amparo is still a little girl, she runs into Borrén and Baltasar. After Borrén notices and remarks upon her potential physical beauty, Baltasar asks Amparo for a kiss in exchange for anything she wants: "Mira te convido a lo que quieras ... pero con una condición" (78). Something along the same lines occurs a few years later in a scene I discuss below. Amparo, along with other poor children, bursts into Baltasar's house, who is celebrating his birthday with friends and family. Amparo is again noticed by Borrén, who alludes to her physical beauty. Amparo who was observing the living room and all of its expensive pieces ("conchas de Filipinas, juego de café con filete dorado," *La Tribuna* 87) becomes the one observed and admired by Borrén, a member of the bourgeoisie. Her beauty is thus raised to the level of those expensive commodities. Her sexual appeal again acquires an economic significance as the vehicle to advance socially. It becomes an instrument of gaining power, but only insofar as it is a reflection of Baltasar's and Borrén's superior social and gender roles.

she is described as being of a 'moreno' type. In the 1869 edition of the *Diccionario de la Lengua Española por la Academia Española*, 'moreno' is defined in the following terms: "que se aplica al color oscuro tirando al negro. Hablando del color del cuero el menos claro de las razas blancas. Se dice del hombre negro por esquivar la voz negro que es la que le corresponde." It refers to a darker skin tone within the 'white races' and to a black person in a way that avoids the term 'black.' The fact that tobacco comes from Cuba further suggests an interpretation of Amparo's dark features (morena) as racially non-white.⁷² In the next Section I will refer to *La Tribuna's* intertextual references and to Pardo Bazán's ethnographic views to further account for Amparo as a non-white character.

The economic, racial, and sexual meanings of a cigar also inform the representation of the colonial world, which, like Amparo, is depicted here as a projection of Baltasar's desire—who stands for male metropolitan power. This brings to mind Said's analysis of the representation of the 'Orient' in Western cultural discourse as a feminized land for Western possession. But, as a way of enriching Said's interpretation, we need to take into divisions within the metropolis, namely, class, race, and gender differences. The metropolitan ownership of the colonial is secured by, and based on, white, bourgeois and masculine power.

In fact, discourses of exploitation together with the racial elements suggested by the image of a cigar, invoke the figure of the slave.⁷³ The connections between Amparo's exploitation and slavery can be enriched from two historical perspectives. First, in relation to working class and women's civil rights movements, the cigar underscores Amparo's exploitation as both a worker and a woman. Second, with regard to actual ongoing slavery in Cuba, not abolished until 1886, a cigar, as part of an economic network that involves Cuba's slavery, suggests metonymically the Cuban working slave.

The discourse of slavery was used by women's emancipation movements to highlight their economic and legal dependence on men. Indeed, like slaves, women, in principle, legally belonged to their parents or spouses, and had no right to possess property. Their

⁷² Ortiz's *Contrapunteo*, written some decades after Pardo Bazán's novel, also associates tobacco with the black race: "El tabaco no cambia de color, nace moreno y muere con el color de su raza" (*Contrapunteo* 6).

⁷³ Ortiz claims in *Contrapunteo* that the slave population was not used in the tobacco plantations. Joan Casanovas Codina, on the other hand, argues, successfully in my opinion, that black slaves were used in the Cuban tobacco fields, the same way they were used in the Virginia plantations. "Un gran número de esclavos trabajaba en la producción de tabaco. Según el historiador Levi Marrero, el trabajo esclavo era indispensable en todas las áreas del cultivo y la manufacturación del tabaco. Pese a su importancia, este aspecto de la esclavitud cubana no ha sido estudiado con detenimiento. La mayoría de los estudios de la esclavitud se han entrado en las plantaciones azucareras ... muchos esclavos fueron utilizados en el cultivo y la manufactura del tabaco, en los cuales se requería una fuerza laboral cualificada en todas sus etapas" (Casanovas Codina 26).

children were bound to their husbands, and could not be kept by their mother if she decided to abandon her spouse.⁷⁴

Pardo Bazán's views on the connection between gender and slavery discourses became more concrete some years after the publication of *La Tribuna*. In 1891, she translated and wrote an introduction to Mill's essay, "The Subjection of Women" (1861), which in the Spanish version had the title "La Esclavitud Femenina," again employing the image of the slave to represent the situation of women. The change from 'subjection' to 'esclavitud' is not ungrounded. Throughout his essay Mill compares the conditions of slaves with the conditions of women. However, Pardo Bazán's introduction contains no references to actual slavery, a shocking detail given that Cuba had abolished slavery only five years earlier. Furthermore when she mentions a list of Mill's works she admires, she does not refer to his famous letter, "The Negro Question" (1850), an attack on slavery written in response to Carlyle. Still, she renders the essay's title in terms of 'esclavitud,' perhaps taking advantage of the recent abolition of slavery and the broader impulse for civil rights which informed it.

Although Pardo Bazán's introduction to the Spanish version avoids any explicit reference to the past existence of slavery in Cuba, it cannot avoid making indirect allusions to it with the term, 'esclavitud.' This tension is also characteristic of *La Tribuna*, where there is a certain abstractness in the identification between slave and woman in Amparo. Reminding us again of the duality of absence and presence in Derrida's category of 'hauntology,' the figure of the slave appears phantasmagorically through the image of a cigar.

It is important to bear in mind class distinctions when thinking about the invocation of slavery in feminist discourses because the comparison between female subjugation and slavery had different implications for different classes of women. For bourgeois and upper class women involved in feminist movements, such as Pardo Bazán, an aristocrat, their self-identification with slaves reflected the point of view and interests of women who enjoyed the social and economic comfort of their male counterparts without sharing their rights. However, the identification of Amparo with a slave occurs by way of her

⁷⁴ The analogy between woman and slave was very common in the 19th century and had already been in use since the 17th century. However, it was during the French revolution that women began to use the word 'emancipation,' taken from the context of slavery, for their own cause, identifying marriage with slavery. See Sklar and Stewart, eds., *Women's Rights and Transatlantic Slavery in the Era of Emancipation*. Women invoked images of slaves to make gender inequality visible within existing social formations. In Spain, this comparison became especially common in the period of the so-called female romantics, a group of writers who tried to open their own space in a literary world dominated by men. For example, poems by Carolina Coronado depict women's subjugation in terms of the chains typically used for slaves (see Kirkpatrick's *Las Románticas: Women Writers and Subjectivity in Spain, 1835-1850*). The comparison between slavery and female oppression did not, however, necessarily involve sympathy with the abolitionist cause.

being represented as an exploited working-class woman.

At the same time, this comparison should not be taken to imply that Amparo sympathizes with the abolitionist movement. Her role with respect to abolitionism is much more ambiguous in the novel. The novel's advocate of abolitionism is an anonymous engineer belonging to the Republican Party. He is an educated man and presumably a member of the bourgeoisie. As Maluquer de Motes has shown, during the Six Year Revolution in Spain, few workers took part in the abolitionist demonstrations, which they considered manifestations of a bourgeois ideology.⁷⁵ And in general, the connection between the European working class movements and abolitionism is, from a historical point of view, extremely complex, largely because of the complexity of the motivations behind the abolitionist movements, a topic which remains very much debated.⁷⁶ For example, while some have claimed that religious and ethical forces propelled British abolitionism, others have cited self-serving economic interests.

The novel's primary interest is not, of course, as a commentary on abolitionism. Still, something of the instability and complexity of the historical connection between abolitionism and workers' movements can be seen in Amparo's relations to Baltasar, on the one hand, and to those worse off than her, on the other. Thus *La Tribuna* depicts the distinction between exploited and exploiter as one that is neither permanent nor stable, as I pointed out in the Introduction. Amparo is depicted both as a member of the exploited group and, at the same time, as showing little consideration for those worse off than she. This is especially clear in her treatment of Jacinto o Chinto, a young boy from a village who comes to help Amparo's father, the barquillero. Chinto is terribly exploited and mistreated by Amparo and her family. He is treated like an animal and becomes a spectacle for the rest: "fue la diversión de los comensales por sus largas melenas" (*La Tribuna* 90).

3. *L'amour est un oiseau rebelle*: female sexuality as a subversive racial force

⁷⁵ For example the anarchists reacted against the "'hipocresía burguesa' de abolir la esclavitud de 'nuestros hermanos negros' para someterles a la nueva esclavitud del salario ... Los marxistas de La Emancipación reclamaban la abolición de todos los derechos de propiedad y rechazaban el paternalismo abolicionista" (Maluquer de Motes, "Abolicionismo y Resistencia a la Abolición en la España del Siglo XIX" 330, quoting *La Federación* Dec. 28, 1872).

⁷⁶ For example, Carlyle in his 1849 "Occasional Discourse on the Negro Question" defended slavery on the basis of its allegedly better working and living conditions than those of European workers. His position was attacked by John Stuart Mill in "The Negro Question." More recently some scholars of abolitionism have argued that Britain's anti-slavery movements provided ideological justification for the exploitation of the British working class (Schmidt-Nowara 10-11).

While cigars and Amparo are inscribed in a discourse of social exploitation, as I have shown in the previous Section, they are also exercising an uncontrollable power over Baltasar. This suggests, in the image of the cigar, Ortiz' idea of transculturalization: the tobacco arriving directly from Habana at the port of Marinada has actual effects on the conquering metropolis. But it is also indicative of much more. Female sexuality is described in colonial terms and as correlated to a non-white racial type, but not as a way of illuminating the subjugation of women. On the contrary, at issue here are discourses of the colonial and especially of the racial other as menacing threats. Moreover, I propose that the use of racial discourses reflects Pardo Bazán's ethnographic views, which tie female sexuality to a non-white racial 'type.'

As I mentioned, the passage in which Amparo is compared to a cigar functions as a hinge connecting different uses of discourses of exploitation, and so we must consider the passage once again. Amparo and a cigar, her sexuality and tobacco, are compared to one another and treated as two distinct forces working towards the same effect, namely, deranging Baltasar's male mind: "Eran dos tentaciones que suelen andar separadas y que se habían unido; dos vicios que formaban alianza ofensiva: la mujer y el cigarro íntimamente enlazados y comunicándose encanto y prestigio para transformar una cabeza masculina" (*La Tribuna* 199). The descriptions of the effects produced by both tobacco and Amparo's sexuality on Baltasar's brain invoke the distinction between rationality on the one hand, and appetitive desires on the other. The disruptive force of woman/cigar is understood as lacking rationality and as having the addictive capacity to lead one to perform 'irrational' acts. By letting himself go, under the influence of both agents, Baltasar is literally 'losing his mind.' In moral/Christian terms the woman/cigar illustrates the sexual in the sense of bodily 'temptation.' Ortiz already pointed to the religious connotations of tobacco in *Contrapunteo del Azúcar y del Tabaco*, where he refers to the association of cigars with 'demoniac' effects. In this passage of *La Tribuna*, the distinction between rationality and irrational desire also reflects gender, racial and class differences, as was typical in 18th and 19th-century European discourses. The brain is here defined in masculine bourgeois terms, and what disrupts it is associated with female sexuality,⁷⁷ the racial other and the working class; it is not just any woman, but a member of the working class of a non-white racial type, who has an irrational effect on the bourgeois Baltasar.

The representation of tobacco and Amparo (both as a woman and as a worker), as two elements working jointly towards a common disruptive end, alludes to an event during the 1868 Revolution. Conservative and reactionary sectors portrayed class revolts and colonial pro-independence movements as interrelated elements of a single threat to Spanish unity. In 1871, taking advantage of the fear created by the Paris Commune (March-May 1871) in the Spanish bourgeoisie, Antillean interests promoted the Liga Contra el Filibusterismo y la Internacional. Through their own periodicals and the most conservative presses they worked to establish associations between the events in Paris,

⁷⁷ See for example Barrows, *Distorting Mirrors: Visions of the Crowd in late Nineteenth-Century France* (1981) and McClintock, *Imperial Leather*.

which were characterized as violent episodes of public disorder and attacks on private property, and colonial reforms. In 1872, the Liga Nacional para la Integridad was created by the Centros Hispano-Ultramarinos, and it opposed the Saboya dynasty and abolitionism. The Liga not only used the republican revolts to justify its anti-reform agenda, but also helped instigate revolts as well as turn existing revolts into violent riots, as was the case with the 1872 public demonstrations (Espadas Burgos 290). They intended to show the ‘danger’ of the more progressive forces in order to gain the support of the middle class. In the passage comparing Amparo to a cigar, both working class and colonial categories appear together as part of a unified disruptive force against the metropolitan bourgeois establishment. The irrational and deranging features of Amparo’s sexuality should also be understood as part of a non-white racial discourse, as I will show below.

A connection between cigars and mulattas was already represented in no uncertain terms by the images on ‘marquillas,’ which often portrayed seductive mulatta women in licentious scenes, insinuating themselves to white men, and representing a danger to honest family life.⁷⁸ These images would be seen by men when unwrapping a cigar before smoking it. If we bring back the sexual connotations of a cigar insofar as it is projected over Amparo by Baltasar to illustrate his desire for her, the associations between working class female sexuality and non-white race become stronger. The figure of a mulatta on a cigar band can then be understood as projected over Amparo in order to bring out discourses of social threat and sexual licentiousness. At the same time, from the perspective of her working-class status, Amparo is informing the discourse of the mulatta as that of an inferior social class. Race and social distinction go together. McClintock has commented on the parallelisms between descriptions of female workers’ sexuality and those of African women in 19th-century Britain (23). In both cases their sexuality was seen under racial categories as licentious, desirous and disordering.

Amparo’s racial features also reflect ethnographic discourses applied to social groups within Spain. The representation of Spain, and especially southern Spain, as having a population mixed with non-European ethnicities was common during the 19th century. Merimée’s *Carmen* recounts the experiences of a French ethnographer travelling in Andalucía in 1830. In this novel and the opera based on it, the protagonist is a Roma woman from Seville, who, like Amparo, works in the city’s tobacco factory. She seduces a young soldier, Don José, who falls madly in love with her. In the novel Don José is said to be originally from the Basque country in Northern Spain.

The ending of the French novel and opera differ from that of *La Tribuna*. Instead of killing Amparo, Baltasar simply abandons her when he hears that she has become pregnant with his child. In this version, more bourgeois than its romantic French counterparts, Amparo’s capacity of seduction is more limited, as we will see below. And even Amparo, as Alas pointed out in his review of *La Tribuna*⁷⁹, is depicted with

⁷⁸ See Nuñez Jiménez, *Marquillas Cigarreras Cubanas*.

⁷⁹ “La Tribuna. Novela Original de Doña Emilia Pardo Bazán.”

distancing sarcasm that highlights her ignorance and lack of education. We could say that *La Tribuna* is the ‘realist’ version of the romantic story. It is interesting, as well, to appreciate Pardo Bazán’s gesture of de-romanticizing an exotic French vision of Spain. At the same time *La Tribuna* shares with both the opera and the French novel a racialized vision of Spain.

Merimée’s novel underlines the contrasts between Northern and Southern Spain and especially the exotic character of Andalucía. In fact, in order to underscore those differences, *Carmen* tells us that the well mannered and discreet Don José is not used to, and is afraid of Andalusian women (52). Carmen, in turn, uses her charms to control Don José’s behavior. The novel compares her extraordinary power of seduction to witchcraft and suggests that she uses magic brews (41). Due to Carmen’s destructive power, Don José ends up jeopardizing his military career, and has to run away with Carmen and the other Roma.

The racial features of Carmen are especially highlighted in Merimée’s novel. The French traveler notices that Carmen’s race is not *pure* during their first encounter. He wonders whether she is Moorish or *even* Jewish⁸⁰ and describes her beauty as a combination of sensuality and fieriness⁸¹—something that also occurs in reference to Cecilia Valdés.⁸² Her skin is described by him as being of a copper color. There is even an orientalization of Andalucía by the French traveler. When Carmen asks him if he is an Englishman, he explains to her that French and English travelers are often mistaken for one another, not only in Andalucía but also in the East (*Carmen* 39). Andalucía and the East are both presented as places of exploration and study by Northern European travelers, thus linking the two in their exoticness.

The opera makes a further connection between Carmen’s Roma heritage and Africa by introducing the music of the habanera sung by the gypsy protagonist. These songs were brought to Spain from Cuba by sailors and indians and became very popular, especially among the middle and upper classes. They are believed to have evolved from the contradanza brought to Cuba from Haiti after the latter’s revolution at the end of the 18th century. The harmony of the songs is a mix of European, Creole and African sounds (Sublette 134). In general, then, habaneras were associated with the exotic and with

⁸⁰ “Alors, vous seriez donc Moresque, ou... je m’arrêtais, n’osant dire: juive” (*Carmen* 39).

⁸¹ “Je doute fort que Mlle Carmen fût de race *pure*, du moins elle était infiniment plus jolie que toutes les femmes de sa nation que j’aie jamais rencontrées. ... C’était une beauté étrange et sauvage, une figure qui étonnait d’abord, mais qu’on ne pouvait oublier. Ses yeux surtout avaient une expression à la fois voluptueuse et farouche que je n’ai trouvée depuis à aucun regard humain. Oeil de bohémien, oeil de loup, c’est un dicton espagnol qui dénote une bonne observation” (*Carmen* 40).

⁸² “Las mejillas llenas y redondas y un hoyuelo en medio de la barba, formaban un conjunto bello, que para ser perfecto sólo faltaba que la expresión fuese menos maliciosa, si no maligna” (*Cecilia Valdés* 73).

passionate love. In the opera, Carmen makes her appearance on stage in the first act singing the famous habanera, “L’Amour est un Oiseau Rebelle,” which depicts love, in exotic chromaticism, as lawless and intensely passionate.⁸³

Amparo is certainly not a gypsy. And her capacity to seduce is limited in comparison to that of Carmen. However, the allusions to both the French novel and opera can be seen neither as coincidental, nor, for that matter, as innocent. In this regard, the repeated characterization of Amparo as ‘morena’ and her maddening influence over Baltasar do not come as a surprise when put in the context of racial and ethnographic theories of the time. *La Tribuna* is suggesting a transatlantic discourse on race, connecting Africa, Europe and the Caribbean. As Dendle has shown, Pardo Bazán was deeply engaged with such theories.

Through her interest in folk-lore (she was founder and president of *El Folk-Lore Gallego*), she met such ethnologists as Mortillet. She contributed frequently to *La España moderna*, a journal which regularly published articles by such anthropologists as Ilombroso, Tarde, and Ferri; she herself discussed Ilombroso’s theories of criminal atavism and hereditary transmission in *La piedra angular* (1891). The extent of her knowledge of the racial ideas of French critics and historians is revealed in *La literatura francesa moderna ...* (Dendle 19)

These theories were mainly applied to the Iberian Peninsula in an attempt to explain Spain’s national character. Pardo Bazán believed that race was at the base of people’s behavior and psychology. But beyond associating race with physical and moral traits, she believed in a hierarchical measure of different races, and considered northern European whites most superior.⁸⁴ Among other things, she believed that the presence of the African, Arabic and Jewish races in Spain was responsible for the alleged barbaric and wild characteristics of Spaniards (Dendle 22). Martín-Márquez points out that

⁸³ The Habanera sung by Carmen is based on a song of the same genre, “El Arreglito” written by the Basque composer, Sebastián Yradier.

⁸⁴ “Because she considered race to be a special form of heredity established by scientific laws, the rôle of race in determining character and behavior in such novels as *Insolación*, *Morriña*, *El niño de Guzmán*, and, above all, *Una cristiana*; *La prueba* can only be considered as naturalistic. Despite her protestations that man does possess free-will, and despite her demonstration in *Una cristiana*; *La prueba* that a Christian can, if with difficulty, overcome racial feeling, Pardo Bazán does, in her racial ideas, advocate a more pessimistic form of scientific determinism than that of such ‘naturalists’ as Zola and Blasco Ibáñez. Zola and Blasco Ibáñez both believe that science and reason will one day give man knowledge of, and mastery over, the laws of social evolution ... Pardo Bazán, on the other hand, emphasizes racial factors, which she considers cannot be changed, rather than those of culture and environment, which are capable of modification” (Dendle 30-1).

in her [Pardo Bazán's] 1889 treatise on Spanish women [*La Mujer Española y Otros Artículos Feministas*], although she affirms the concept of Spanish national unity, she also distinguishes the 'Celtic Galicians and Asturians from the Basques and all of the former from the 'African or Semitic' Andalusians and residents of Madrid, whose lascivious dances evoke 'the barbaric oriental legend of Salomé.' (Martín-Márquez 46)

Since Amparo is from Galicia, she would, in principle, fall into the northern Iberian category, which is not here associated with an African or Semitic influence. On the other hand, the depictions of Amparo throughout the novel as *morena*, the comparisons of her skin to the darkness of the tobacco leaves, and the intertextual connections between *La Tribuna's* depiction of Amparo and depictions of Southern gypsy women strongly invite the reader to think of Amparo as a non-white woman.

La Tribuna provides us with yet another scene depicting a racialized female sexuality. In the course of the following discussion we will see that colonial and racial elements illuminate the representation of the character of Josefina's sexuality, as they did with Amparo. However, while above the racial was represented by a commodity, this time it will be depicted through an artistic expression, the *habanera*. This distinction of mediums of representation signifies the class difference between Amparo and Josefina.⁸⁵ Josefina herself points to Amparo's dark skin as a criterion for class distinction: "¿A mí?—murmuró Josefina entre dientes y con agresivo silbido de vocales—. No me pregunte usted, Borrén... Esas mujeres ordinarias me parecen todas iguales, cortadas por el mismo patrón. Morena... muy basta" (121). The racial discourse here is different from that applied to Amparo, not only because the medium of sexual representation is different, but also because it is never suggested that Josefina herself is of a 'dark type.' Nevertheless the depiction of her sexuality appears in relation to a Cuban product, a *habanera*, with non-white racial connotations, suggesting a more general relation between female sexuality and non-white racial discourse.

At Baltasar's birthday celebration, Josefina is at the piano trying to play a Bellini piece she has learned from her music teacher. Despite the dedicated instruction not only of her teacher, but also of her mother, Josefina's attempts to play the piece are unsuccessful: "¿No te encargó doña Hermita que pusieses el pedal en ese pasaje?" (*La Tribuna* 82). Frustrated with the technically complicated music, Josefina decides to switch to *La*

⁸⁵ Also, the novel's treatment of each one's sexuality is radically different, insofar as the representation of Amparo's sexuality, in contraposition to Josefina's, contributes to her objectification. While there are many pages dedicated to Amparo, there are but a few dedicated to Josefina. We read of Amparo becoming a woman, of the awakening desire in her to be attractive to men, and of several of her romantic/erotic encounters with Baltasar. On the other hand, the depiction of Josefina's sexuality is limited to the passage I will explore in the next section. In addition, the treatments of Amparo's and Josefina's sexuality differ in the kinds of scenes represented and in the explicitness of the sexual encounter.

Blanca Luna, a romantic song in the habanera style about a fisherman waiting for his lover. Recall the intertextual relations between *Carmen* and *La Tribuna* as well as the mixed origins of the habanera genre.

At the sound of the habanera, Josefina starts moving sensuously, following the rhythm of the music. “Josefina, al tocar, se cimbrea levemente, cual si bailase y Baltasar estudiaba con curiosidad aquellos tempranos coqueteos, inconscientes casi, todavía candorosos, mientras tarareaba a media voz la letra” (*La Tribuna* 82). We are told that she does better with the habanera music than with Bellini, alluding to a certain sympathy and understanding between Josefina and the exotic Creole melody.

La melodía comenzaba soñolienta, perezosa, yámbica; después, de pronto, tenía un impulso de pasión, un nervioso salto; luego tornaba a desmayarse, a caer en la languidez criolla de su ritmo desigual. Y volvía monótona repitiendo el tema y la mujercita que no sabía interpretar la página clásica del maestro italiano, traducía a maravilla la enervante molicie amorosa, los poemas incendiarios que en *La Habanera* se incendiaba (*La Tribuna* 82).

Josefina does not simply have an easier time with the notes of the habanera, but surprisingly (after her difficulties with Bellini), she is able to “marvelously translate the enervating and affectionate softness, the incendiary poems that catch fire in the habanera” into music. Though she has studied Bellini, she exhibits a natural inclination for this music. The habanera, in its harmonic hybridity, becomes the physical medium, like the aroma of the tobacco, by which colonial material reality becomes present in the metropolis. And like tobacco, it has actual effects on the bourgeoisie.

Josefina starts moving to the rhythm of the music when she is aware of being observed by Baltasar. “Y echando hacia atrás la cabeza y a Baltasar una mirada fugaz...” Indeed, Baltasar is carefully watching her: “Baltasar estudiaba con curiosidad aquellos tempranos coqueteos inconscientes casi, todavía candorosos, mientras tarareaba a media voz la letra” (82). This again shows female sexuality as a reaction to, and projection of a heterosexual male desiring gaze, as we have seen in the case of Amparo. Thus, the role of the male gaze is instrumental in the development of Josefina’s sexuality, as with Amparo’s. However, this scene also emphasizes a different element in Josefina’s sexuality, which is reflected in the ease with which she plays the habanera.

Josefina’s performance is interrupted by the abrupt eruption of a storm and the rapid precipitation of heavy rain. The banging of thunder is followed seconds later by the disorderly and disharmonious noises of the voices of some children, who are knocking on the door to sing Christmas carols. Among them is Amparo, still a small child. “Mas de improviso se escuchó un derrumbamiento, un fragor, como si el cielo se desfondase y sus cataratas se abriese de golpe” (*La Tribuna* 83). The natural eruption of the storm gives way to the discordant and tuneless *music* of the group of children who are accompanying their screams with a variety of different kinds of drums. “Casi al mismo tiempo otro ruido que subía del portal vino a dominar el ya formidable aguacero; una algarabía, un

chascarrás desapacible, unas voces cantando destempladamente con acompañamiento de panderos y castañuelas” (*La Tribuna* 83). This is the sound of the poor children, the daughters and sons of the working class of Marinada invading the bourgeois space of the Sobrados. It completes the progression from Bellini, to the enticingly passionate and exotic music of the habanera, and now finally to the wild disorder of the working class children.

Just after Baltasar has noticed Josefina’s awakened sexuality, Borrén now points to Amparo’s beauty and sexual potential: “Esto empieza a picar como las guindillas ... miren ustedes aquí” (*La Tribuna* 85). And while Josefina’s repressed sexuality is expressed modestly in the notes of the habanera, Amparo’s sexuality is linked to the disrupting noises of a storm and the drums. The power of Amparo’s sexuality foreshadows the power of the working class and republican revolts to disrupt the bourgeois establishment, which would come to light in the Six Year Revolution.

4. The dance of the cigarreras

In the last two Sections, I have attempted to distinguish two aspects of the way that *La Tribuna* depicts female sexuality: first, as a projection of male desire to consume, and second, as a subversive force, based on a ‘natural’ seductive tendency, which is linked, not merely metaphorically, to the colonial and the racial other. I begin this Section with a scene in which the novel brings the male gaze itself into focus. Then I will move to the description of the dance of the cigarreras, a scene that connects this sexual purity with a state of racial purity.

The novel’s focus on, and adoption of, the male gaze brings up the question of the representation of exploited parties, which I will also discuss in relation to Morúa Delgado’s *Sofía*. Both novels address the concern that representing social groups’ condition of exploitation can extradiegetically reinforce the perspective of power and control over that social group. In *La Tribuna* the relevant representation is that of female sexuality, both Amparo’s and Josefina’s, though especially the former’s, since it is the novel’s primary focus. In support of the thesis that the novel’s depiction can reinforce the commoditization of the depicted object, Jameson, in *Realism and Desire*, argues for a causal relation between the representation of desire and the arousal of extradiegetical desire: “a narrative element becomes desirable whenever a character is observed to desire it” (29). *La Tribuna* addresses this issue by calling attention to the heterosexual male gaze under which Amparo and Josefina are reduced to objects of sexual desire. So, if the novel is voyeuristic in some respects, it can also be said to put voyeurism itself on display.

This move of directing attention to the gaze itself can be seen in other aspects of the novel. Interestingly, it is primarily Borrén who, despite Baltasar’s initial skepticism,

draws attention to Amparo's beauty and sexual potential when she is still a child.⁸⁶ Borrén's insistence on Amparo's potential foreshadows and brings about Baltasar's eventual relationship with her. However, despite Borrén's almost obsessive interest in Amparo, his heterosexuality is called into question on several occasions. Though his primary social role is to act as 'celestino,' bringing couples together and organizing the romances in Marineda, he himself is not known to have had sexual relations with any woman.⁸⁷

By establishing two roles in the construction of Amparo's sexuality, those of Borrén and Baltasar, and by pointing to a discrepancy between Borrén's own sexuality and his heterosexual gaze, the novel is separating the agent from the gaze. It is qualifying the gaze as transferable and imitable, a form of power that can be adopted regardless of the agent's own particular views and experiences. The gaze constructs not only Amparo's social identity but also the identity of the agent who is adopting that gaze as part of a certain class and sexuality. The novel is not, however, simply putting the gaze on display.⁸⁸ *La Tribuna* also shows, through the character of Borrén, how it is working to construct Amparo as an object of desire at an extradiegetical level, thus revealing one of its own functions through the character of Borrén.⁸⁹

⁸⁶ Baltasar's first impression of Amparo is the following: "es verdad que había ojos grandes, pobladas pestañas, dientes como gotas de leche; pero la tez era cetrina, el pelo embrollado semejaba un felpudo y el cuerpo y el traje competían en desaliño y poca gracia" (*La Tribuna* 77).

⁸⁷ The following passage alludes to Borrén's lack of attraction to women: "La originalidad del caso está en que, con toda su afición a las faldas y sus profundos conocimientos de estética aplicada no se refería de Borrén la más insignificante historieta. ... Practicaba en materia de amoríos el más puro y desinteresado altruismo" (*La Tribuna* 75). The novel also compares him to a wooden doll: "La luz se proyectaba sobre la fisonomía de Borrén, siempre movida, agitada, y descompuesta, cómica a pesar del exagerado carácter viril que a primera vista le imprimían los cerdosos mostachos, las pobladas cejas y la prominente nuez. En su aspecto, Borrén era semejante a los guardias civiles de madera que suelen colocarse en el frontispicio de los hórreos y molinos del país: a despecho de sus bigotazos formidables, bien se les conoce que son muñecos" (*La Tribuna* 176).

⁸⁸ In fact, the nature and extent of Amparo's depiction as a sexual object have prompted some scholars to claim that *La Tribuna* is extradiegetically reinforcing her condition as an object. Goldman has compared the bourgeois mode of reification to the naturalist method of *La Tribuna* (62). Thus, Baltasar's lack of respect for Amparo, about which she complains, appears to be replicated at the narrative level. Such an appraisal could be softened by taking into account that the novel puts voyeurism itself on display.

⁸⁹ In parallel lines, by portraying Amparo from the point of view of the male heterosexual gaze, Pardo Bazán, a heterosexual woman, is not just creating Amparo but also configuring her own social identity in ways that conform to existing social norms, in this case, those of 19th-century realist literary circles, which were clearly dominated by men. See Margaret Cohen's *The Sentimental Education of the Novel*, which argues that male

The heterosexual male perspective, from which the representation of female sexuality is constructed, is powerfully represented in the description of the festival of the cigarreras, a scene that recalls Bakhtin's theory of the carnivalesque in the realist novel. During the carnival the cigarreras dress and act like men, stepping outside their assigned social roles, and relativizing them in much the same way that, according to Bakhtin, the carnivalesque relativizes given structures of order. The reader is informed that the dance of the cigarreras is performed inside a building, away from the eyes of observers. These women, thinking that they are alone, behave much more freely than they would otherwise. The passage uses the term "casta desenvoltura" (chaste ease) to describe their behavior in the absence of the male gaze. When men are not present, the women dance and move their bodies freely, without fear of being overly sexualized or misinterpreted.

The description of these women is provided from the perspective of the two men, Baltasar and Borrén, who are secretly observing them: "Y al decir así señalaba el teniente al corro de los grumetes" (*La Tribuna* 174). This description represents the women in a highly sexualized way. Though the women are behaving chastely, as the narrative voice assures us, the male gaze cannot help seeing and portraying them with erotic undertones. The reader only has access to the cigarreras from the male heterosexual gaze, as shown in the following description of Amparo dancing with the rest of the cigarreras.

Bien ajena a que la viese ningún profano, puesta la mano en la cadera, echada atrás la cabeza, alzando de tiempo en tiempo el brazo para retirar la gorrilla que se le venía a la frente, Amparo bailaba. Bailaba con la ingenuidad, con el desinterés, con la casta desenvoltura, que distingue a las mujeres cuando no les ve varón alguno, ni hay quien pueda interpretar malignamente sus pasos y movimientos. Ninguna valla de pudor verdadero o falso se oponía a que se balancease su cuerpo siguiendo el ritmo de la danza dibujando una línea serpentina desde el talón hasta el cuello. *Su boca, abierta para respirar ansiosamente, dejaba ver la limpia y firme dentadura, la rosada sombra del paladar y de la lengua: su impaciente y rebelde cabello se salía a mechones de la gorra, como revelación traidora del sexo a que pertenecía el lindo grumete—si ya la suave comba del alto seno y las figurativas curvas de su elegante torso no lo denunciase asaz.* (*La Tribuna* 174, my emphasis)

This scene portrays female sexuality as non-existent in the absence of men—there is no inherent or essential sexuality among women; it is men who make them sexual. According to the passage men always see women as objects of their sexual desire, regardless of women's actual behavior. This sexualizing gaze, in turn, as we have seen in previous scenes, provokes sexual behavior and desire in Amparo and Josefina, which otherwise would not have been present. Without the presence of men and the male gaze,

French realist writers expelled female writers from their literary world and relegated them to the sentimental genre.

women behave in a chaste and pure way. Female sexuality, just like the non-white racial discourse with which we have seen it associated elsewhere, is contrasted with purity.

Indeed, I believe that this passage too alludes to racial discourse with the adjective 'casta' (chaste). Though the original Latin word 'castus' signified just purity, being casto/a came to be understood on the Peninsula (including Portugal) in colonial times as being of pure, rather than mixed race. The latter category included not just Moorish and Jewish blood but also Native American and African, encompassing what I referred to before as a transatlantic discourse on races. A system of *castas* was developed during colonial times to categorize different ethnicities. Given that the sexual discourse used to depict both Amparo and Josefina is linked to colonial and racial discourses, and that Pardo Bazán's ethnographic theories based licentious sexual behavior on ethnic features, the racial connotations of the word cannot here be ignored. Of course, the term 'casta' does not imply that Amparo is no longer 'morena.' Rather the scene of the cigarreras recreates an ideal origin from which the non-white racial behavioral manifestations are absent. It is relevant to note that during the carnival the cigarreras dress and act like men, stepping outside their assigned social roles. When the cigarreras are not acting in a sexual way they dress like men, hiding their female body. So even if Amparo is not a man and she is still of a dark type, the dance enacts a moment of purity and chastity where racial and sexual differences are covered up.

The novel is suggesting a fantasy of an original purity in sexual and, I am suggesting, also in racial terms, what Bhabha describes as "a narcissism of the Imaginary and its identification of an ideal ego that is white and whole" (*The Location of Culture* 109). This 'original state' results from eliminating sexual and racial difference and adopting a dominating gender and race.⁹⁰ In the scene that we have just explored, the male gaze is referred to explicitly. At a literal level, it is the absence of the male gaze, or at least its perceived absence, that accounts for the 'chastity' of the dance. But there is, I am pointing out, a suggestion of an ideal of racial purity as well, along the lines of Pardo Bazán's ethnographic theories and the novel's intertextual references.

Thus, on the one hand, *La Tribuna* is concerned to bring the male gaze itself into view, and to expose its effects in the construction and objectification of female sexuality. And yet the novel suggests that female sexuality—or some aspect of it—has some 'natural' basis in behavioral traits. And at this level, the narrative voice seems perfectly willing to allow the reader to indulge in a gaze of the racial other that is equally subjugating.

⁹⁰ In his account of this original ideal ego Bhabha follows Freud's argument that establishes male sexuality as the original one and female sexuality as secondary and derivative. He then applies this argument to skin color, race and culture. Similar to the way, in which women represent the anxiety of castration and sexual difference, non-white races and cultures produce equally disturbing effects. "In Freud's terms 'all men have penises' in ours, 'all men have the same skin/race/culture'—and the anxiety associated with lack and difference—again for Freud 'some do not have penises' for us 'some do not have the same skin/race/culture'" (107).

Moreover, as if pressed by an anxiety to make room for a pure, asexualized femininity, the novel ties this ‘natural’ sexuality to the racial other. *Sofía*, to which I will now turn, addresses precisely this kind of racial discourse by showing how ideology, with regard to both material and discursive practices, is operating in the construction of both race and slavery. Thus, *Sofía* will press the question of race as the main criterion and instrument of societal organization and relations of power.

5. *Sofía*: Introduction

Morúa Delgado, a Cuban mulatto, became an important journalist at the end of the 19th century, and later an active politician during the first decade of the new independence. He wrote *Sofía* (1894) as a response to *Cecilia Valdés*, which he harshly criticized for anachronistically depicting racial divisions that, according to him, belonged to a former period and had little to do with the post Ten Year War times.⁹¹ This war, as Ada Ferrer has pointed out, helped to unify a country otherwise highly racially divided (“Esclavitud ciudadana...” 102). However, the war also showed that race was a major source of conflict and disunion among Cubans. Morúa Delgado’s novel should be understood in the context of the period after the Ten Year War and as an attempt to erase racial prejudices against Afro-Cubans.

In various ways Morúa Delgado’s complaint about *Cecilia Valdés* can be put in parallel to the concerns mentioned above about *La Tribuna*’s representation of female sexuality. Both *Sofía* and *La Tribuna* portray social realities with which their respective authors were familiar.⁹² Both of them point to the difficulties of representing identities, gender based or racial, which had hardly ever been agents in literary narration, though they had long been its objects. Both of them, moreover, share the concern that the representation of exploitation can reinforce those structures of power at an extradiegetical level. And they both point to the ideological construction of those objects of exploitation.

Nevertheless, the two novels address the problem of representing exploited subjects in importantly different ways. One difference has to do with their attitudes toward racial discourse, as I have already mentioned. Another important divergence involves the kinds of disciplinary power they represent. *Sofía*, as I will show, depicts physical torture as a form of disciplinary power alongside discursive ones.⁹³ Anti-slavery novels, among

⁹¹ “Que cuando todo en nuestros tiempos tiende a reformar, a democratizar las sociedades, y a enaltecer el sentimiento popular, claro está que no ha de recibirse con verdadera complacencia una obra que, no obstante de iniciar un plausible período de mejoramiento literario, ostenta en su fondo un marcadísimo apego a las más detestables vejezas de una época de maldición. Esto en cuanto a la moral social de *Cecilia Valdés*” (Morúa Delgado 80).

⁹² Morúa Delgado’s mother was a slave.

⁹³ In this regard Wood is correct in his response to Foucault: “Both the slave trade and plantation slavery seem, at every point, to confound the central division, the division

which *Sofía* is to be counted, often deal with this issue by presenting the slave in the figure of an absolutely passive victim as a way of creating sympathy and compassion in the reader. However, the depiction of disciplinary violence can result in a dehumanizing and degrading portrayal of the victim. Moreover, the portrayal of the slave as pure patient, elides the slave's agency. The slave is instead regarded as an object, albeit an object of pity. I will show that *Sofía* attempts both to refashion the figure of the submissive slave, and to circumvent these shortcomings.

Sofía address the relationship between slavery and feminist discourses of the kind seen in *La Tribuna*, where Pardo Bazán uses slavery as a metaphor to illuminate the lack of rights enjoyed by women. *Sofía* addresses the inadequacy of such metaphors by comparing a female slave's vulnerability with a Creole woman's abandonment by, and dependence on, her husband. When those two situations are juxtaposed, the inadequacy of the comparison between free woman and slave is painfully revealed. This is an instance of the fragmentation of the category of womanhood. In this case both women suffer the abusive behavior of men, and yet the difference in social condition, one free and the other slave, places one of them on the exploiting side and the other on the exploited one.

Sofía is a white girl who, in her early childhood, is mistaken for a mulatta and then forced to live as a slave until the age of nineteen, when she dies. She is the illegitimate daughter of Sebastián Unzúazu, a slave trader originally from Bilbao, and Doña Manuela, a brothel owner, both white. Sofia was conceived during their brief affair. Before Sofia's birth Unzúazu was married to a Cuban Creole woman, who died young after giving birth to their three children, Ana María (the oldest), Federico, and Magdalena (around Sofia's age).

Because of Doña Manuela's lifestyle and in order to keep Sofia from falling into prostitution, Unzúazu decides to raise his illegitimate daughter in his own house. However, he does not reveal her identity to the rest of his family. When Unzúazu becomes ill and feels that his death is near, he arranges a marriage between his eldest daughter, Ana María, and his employee, Acebaldo Nudoso del Tronco. Because Federico is still young, Unzúazu believes that another man is needed in the house to defend the interests of his children. When the patriarch of the family dies, Nudoso moves in—to fill the position of the authority—with Ana María, Federico, Magdalena and little Sofía, who is under the care and protection of an old white woman, Doña Brígida.

between ritualized torture and ritualized surveillance, which lies at the intellectual heart of *Discipline and Punish*" (230). Foucault argued for two different forms of disciplinary power and punishment and that during the 18th century the violent forms of torture were replaced by modern forms of surveillance, in which "disciplinary power became an 'integrated' system" of mutual surveillance (176). This system allowed for the progressive elimination of torture as a way of imposing certain behaviors on citizens.

Sofía has always lived with the Unzúazu family and been treated as a free person and part of the family. However, not much is revealed about her story, either intradiegetically or extradiegetically, and mystery surrounds her. From the moment Nudoso del Tronco moves into the house, after Unzúazu's death, he shows great animosity towards Sofía. One day he tells Sofía that she is a slave and should be treated as such, deprived of the privileges reserved for whites.

Sofía, still a small girl, has no one to stand up for her except for Doña Brígida, whose pleas prove insufficient. Nudoso, facing no opposition, expels her from the house and sends her to a plantation. The novel provides the reader with richly described scenes of her life in the plantation, where she is tortured and abused. Sofía's moral qualities and her vulnerable situation make her accept her fate without any resistance. She incarnates the pure victim who suffers her destiny without grudge or desire for revenge and her psychology stands out for its lack of complexity, especially in comparison to the rest of her family, whose motivations often remain hidden.

After Sofía has spent some time on the plantation, Magdalena, Nudoso's sister in law, asks Sofía, whom she now believes to be a slave, to come back to the house. She was terribly missing the girl with whom she used to play as a child. Sofía has now become a young woman who, despite the harsh life in the plantation, can still be considered beautiful. Federico starts chasing Sofía until, one day, he rapes her in her room. Her radical vulnerability makes her surrender to his continuous demands. Several months later the family discovers that she is pregnant, and as a consequence of that, they throw her out of the house. While she goes around town desperately trying to find a buyer who would want to acquire her, a lawyer of the family discovers that Sofía is indeed Sebastián Unzúazu's illegitimate daughter. Moreover, they find out that neither of her parents is black. Sofía is then welcomed back to the Unzúazu household. The family's attitude towards her changes radically. They start feeling great compassion and empathy for her situation, and provide her with love, attention and care. They even bring a doctor whose assistance was denied to her when she was thought to be a slave. However, Sofía ends up dying from injuries previously caused by Nudoso and from the shock of learning that she was pregnant with her half brother's child.

6. "No podía negar que era negra"

Even though the novel deals with the questions of slavery and racial division, all the characters but the slave Liberato are white. The novel can be seen as an interrogation of the social construction of slavery and the ideological misinterpretation of the black. By choosing a white person as the victim of slavery the novel dissociates slavery from being black and the latter from any inherent and recognizable traits. The novel suggests that racial discourse is not nurtured by any empirical basis. Racial discourse is a social construction all the way down. Žižek's analysis of ideology will help me develop this aspect of the novel.

I begin with a comment made by Magdalena, after the family notices that Sofía is pregnant. Magdalena says “no podía negar que era negra, aunque su piel fuera casi blanca” (*Sofía* 91). Magdalena, Sofía’s half-sister and protector, does not for a moment think that Sofía could have been the victim of a rape. On the contrary, she lets herself believe that her slave has been actively responsible for the sexual encounter. She feels ‘betrayed’ because, from her point of view, Sofía had misled her into thinking that she was a nice, quiet and modest girl. Moreover, Sofía’s behavior appears to her as an instance and a specific confirmation of the general prejudice that blacks are dishonest. Indeed, for Magdalena, Sofía is really black, despite appearances.

Magdalena’s comment and reaction might come as a shock to the reader, not only because she was, until then, Sofía’s main supporter, as well as a kind person, but also because both Sofía’s personality and the circumstances surrounding her pregnancy offer strong resistance to such an interpretation. She represents moral purity and simplicity of character—too simple even, something I will discuss below. She is a completely innocent victim with no shade of malevolence, double consciousness, or deception. Her agency is reduced to serving her masters. The reader has witnessed Sofía’s vulnerability in the face of Federico’s continuous harassment when he threatened to have her expelled from the house if she dared say anything to anyone. Nevertheless, Magdalena does not for a moment doubt her appraisal of Sofía’s guilt. Why does Magdalena have such a reaction? One might think that she is trying to protect her brother, or her sister’s husband, who are the most likely suspects for the rape. However, the novel does not mention any such motive. Magdalena appears to sincerely believe in Sofía’s dishonesty.

Magdalena’s comment and its function in the novel exemplify Žižek’s conception of ideology as that which always finds a way of being “corroborated by reality” (49). That is, ideology is *always* informing what we consider to be the real. Aspects of everyday experience that in principle should be contradicting this ideology are interpreted as confirming it. Sofía’s proven temperament and position of radical vulnerability in the house should be arguments in favor of her sincerity and honesty. However Sofía’s temperament is reinterpreted as a mask of her true self, so that it not only does not contradict Magdalena’s ideology, but actually confirms it.⁹⁴ As Žižek puts it “an

⁹⁴ “Let us again take a typical individual in Germany in the late 1930s. He is bombarded with anti-Semitic propaganda depicting a Jew as a monstrous incarnation of Evil, the great wire-puller, and so on. But when he returns home he encounters Mr. Stern, his neighbor; a good man to chat with in the evenings whose children play with his ... how then would our poor German, if he were a good anti-Semite, react to this gap between the ideological figure of the Jew (schemer, wire-puller, exploiting our brave men and so on) and the common everyday experience of his good neighbor, Mr. Stern? His answer would be to turn this gap, this discrepancy itself, into an argument for anti-Semitism: ‘You see how dangerous they really are? It is difficult to recognize their real nature. They hide it behind the mask of everyday appearance—and it is exactly this hiding of one’s real nature, this duplicity that is a basic feature of Jewish nature’ (Žižek 59).

ideology really succeeds when even the facts, which at first sight contradict it, start to function as arguments in its favour” (49).

It is only upon learning that Sofía is white that Magdalena changes her behavior towards her childhood friend. From blaming everything on Sofía, Magdalena and the rest of the family turn to seeing her as a victim. Everything about Sofía has remained the same, except the racial category under which she is viewed. By changing that element, the novel singles out the racial gaze as standing on its own and as informing what counts as real. Racial discourse does not depend on the actual behavior of the group discriminated against but on being considered part of a race with already ascribed features. The novel shows, furthermore how deeply entrenched the ideology behind racial discourse is.

From an extradiegetical perspective, the novel points to the ideological nature of Magdalena’s beliefs. But it does not do so by showing that those beliefs do not accurately correspond to reality. Sofía is, as a matter of fact, white, and so, her innocent behavior does not prove anything about blacks. Instead, the novel brings out the fact that those beliefs have nothing to do with how blacks are or are not. “The proper answer to anti-Semitism is therefore not ‘Jews are really not like that’ but that ‘the anti-Semitic idea of Jew has nothing to do with Jews’” (Žižek 49). *Sofía* is not directly addressing the truth or falsity of the ideology, but showing that this ideology is informing a certain way of seeing reality and not the other way around.

7. On the plantation

The novel not only represents discursive aspects of the ideological production of slaves but also reflects on the material practices involved in such constructions. In what follows, I contrast two cases of performative speech, from *La Tribuna* and *Sofía* respectively, which function differently and reveal different kinds of disciplinary power.

In *La Tribuna*, Baltasar and Borrén tell Amparo that she is beautiful, and thereby have an immediate effect on her behavior. “El día que unos ‘señores’ dijeron a Amparo que era bonita, tuvo la andariega chiquilla conciencia de su sexo: hasta entonces había sido un muchacho con sayas” (*La Tribuna* 101). Borrén’s disciplinary power is not violently forced upon Amparo. There is no use of physical torture. Following Lacan, the imaginative stage of her transformation is followed by a second and symbolic stage, in which she adopts the masculine gaze and starts behaving as a beautiful and attractive woman. This second moment occurs without direct coercion as well.

In another case of performative speech, Sofía is told that she is a mulatta: “¿Tú no ves que eres una mulata y que ella [Doña Brígida] es una señora blanca? Tú no tienes madre ni padre. A nadie tienes más que a tus amos y eres ya muy zangaletona para que no sepas que tu obligación es servir en lo que se te mande” (*Sofía* 16). Doña Brígida pleads that Sofía is not a slave. But, Nudoso insults Sofía, calling her ‘engreída’ (spoiled) for considering herself equal to the rest of the members of the household. He becomes

violent to the point of throwing Doña Brígida out of the house “El caballero se puso hecho una furia y botó de la casa a doña Brígida” (*Sofía* 16). Nudoso’s position of authority, in combination with Sofía’s unknown past, allows him to determine the ‘truth’ about her. He turns the absence of evidence into evidence of an absence. In Cuba, as well as in Spain, skin color was not a sufficient proof of one’s whiteness. It was also necessary to give evidence of one’s white ancestry (see Martínez-Alier’s *Marriage, Class and Color in Nineteenth-Century Cuba*). Contrary to what we saw in *La Tribuna*, Nudoso’s performative act involves coercive violence. The second and symbolic moment of the integration of Nudoso’s gaze in Sofía’s behavior contains a series of physical tortures, as well. Thus Nudoso’s disciplinary power over Sofía is physically and materially imposed.

After Nudoso has expelled Sofía from the house, she is taken in as a domestic servant at the Candelaria plantation, where she is treated brutally and without mercy. Her young age makes her especially vulnerable and she unquestioningly accepts her fate.

In the narration of Sofía’s transformation from a free girl into a slave, the novel continues to show the violence used in the creation of slaves. At one point Doña Trifona, the owner of the plantation, hears that a servant has dared compare her own child to Sofía, based on their physical resemblance. Doña Trifona waits until Sofía makes an insignificant mistake serving lunch and then starts beating her: “descargó un tremendo golpe a la muchacha en la cara, acreció el escalofrío que a la desventurada niña sobecogiera, se le desvaneció la vista, cayó en peso y fue dar con la cabeza en la plancha” (*Sofía* 18). In order to have the subsequent injuries treated, Sofía’s hair has to be completely shaved off. Then, her shaved head covered with a wildly colored headscarf, she begins to resemble a plantation slave. Doña Trifona looks at the result of her actions with pride: now, anyone can tell Sofía and her daughter apart and, moreover, appreciate the latter’s superiority.

Volvió a la casa de vivienda la infeliz chicuela y así que la vio la señora ensanchósele el pecho, notando ahora la diferencia en favor de su hija, puesto que Sofía llevaba en la cabeza en vez de su copiosa cabellera, atado un pañuelo de ‘bayajá’ de ruidosos colores, como los de las criollistas de la plantación (*Sofía* 20).

Sofía, who at one point had been considered equal to whites, undergoes a process of physical differentiation affecting her appearance and behavior, which ends up making her look and behave in a way that distinguishes her from whites. In *Sofía* forms of violence do not simply serve the purpose of making the slave submissive and accepting of his or her situation out of fear. More than that, they have the marked effect of de-socializing the slaves and bringing them closer to a state of nature. When Sofía returns to the Unzúazu household for the second time, her manners, her way of walking, and her way of talking to her ‘owners’ have changed completely. The plantation has eliminated Sofía’s initial sociability, which then needs to be re-introduced in a process of *civilizing* her. “Dos meses más tarde Sofía no levantaba demasiado las piernas para caminar; no bajaba la cabeza inclinándola de un lado, como abochornada de que le dirigiesen la palabra” (*Sofía* 29). Doña Trifona has succeeded in making Sofía into a slave and a black woman.

The reader is left to imagine the process of dehumanization that the slave trade inflicted on the slaves, first separated from their families and culture, and then piled up naked and tied to chains in the ships, so that upon arrival on the Cuban coast, they could already be presented as unsocial and even subhuman.

8. The dilemma of the submissive slave

In reference to the question of the ‘re-introduction’ of slaves into social settings, the sentimental anti-slavery novel has been regarded as a cultural practice intended to humanize subaltern members of society who had been ignored, brutalized and commoditized. In *Sofía* we find a kind of genre mixing in the combination of a naturalist approach to most of the characters as well as the plot, with a sentimental approach to *Sofía*, which oversimplifies her character.

In this Section, I will contrast my understanding of Morúa Delgado’s approach to the sentimental treatment of racially marginalized subjects with the perspectives suggested by Fischer’s *Modernity Disavowed* and Peluffo’s *Lágrimas Andinas*. It is especially useful to think about *Sofía* against the backdrop of Gómez de Avellaneda’s *Sab* (1841), which offers a paradigmatic example not only of a more ‘humane’ depiction of slaves,⁹⁵ but also, according to Fischer, of what she calls the ‘fantasy of the submissive slave.’

This romantic novel is the story of a slave mulatto, Sab, and his unrequited love for Carlota, his white cousin. Sab distinguishes himself by being extremely educated, refined and sensitive. His appearance is also confusing; he is not obviously of any race in particular. Even his gender identity is described in an indeterminate way. Carlota decides to marry Enrique Otway, the son of a British businessman, who is self-interested and calculating. While initially deeply in love with Enrique, she becomes increasingly unhappy some time into their marriage. In particular, she does not share her husband’s utilitarian and calculating perspective on life. Sab dies at the end of the novel after having made several sacrifices for Carlota, among them, donating his lottery prize to her and Enrique so that they can save their property. Especially at the end of the novel, Carlota sees in herself much more affinity with Sab, a romantic hero capable of loving her and making the ultimate sacrifice for her, than with her husband. When Sab, at the end of the novel, has the opportunity to buy his freedom, he refuses, in order to stay attached to Carlota.

⁹⁵ The connections between the feminist and slavery discourses in *Sab* have already being pointed out by scholars such as Susan Kirkpatrick and Doris Sommer. I find especially compelling Claudette Williams’ Bakhtinian approach to the novel, which takes into account the presence of diverse and often contradictory discourses about slavery and women.

The characters of Sab and Sofía exemplify what Fischer has called the ‘fantasy of the submissive slave,’ preponderant in anti-slavery novels. The ‘submissive slave’ is characterized by being humble, lacking aggressiveness and showing kindness towards his or her master, despite any wrongdoing he or she might suffer and endure. Often, this portrayal is accompanied by descriptions of physical torture endured by slaves on the plantation. The novel portrays Sab’s ‘free’ choice to remain a slave as motivated by his love for Carlota. A commitment out of love replaces the shackles of slavery.

Fischer’s interpretation of the figure of the ‘submissive slave’ in Cuban abolitionist novels draws heavily on the effects of Haiti’s revolution (1791-1804) on the white Creole population in the Caribbean. Haiti’s revolution gave rise to the first black republic and scared many of its white inhabitants off the island. As Fischer recounts, the Haitian revolution was portrayed as extremely violent and destructive, and in particular, as reflecting the alleged violent nature of the blacks participating in it. These portrayals created widespread fear of slave revolts among the white Creole population of neighboring islands. This distress was especially poignant in Cuba. Immediately after the Haitian revolution, massive importations of slaves into Cuba began, and they continued throughout the 19th century, to keep up production of sugar, which had been centered in Haiti during the 18th century.

Fischer also argues that the existence of the new Haitian republic made it impossible to ignore the fact that slaves too formed a social category, whose representation in cultural discourses by white Creoles had always caused a kind of dilemma in slave-holding societies, in which slaves were not supposed to have any social relevance.⁹⁶ The Haitian revolution projected an image of blacks as political and social agents, and was in this way a constant reminder of the suppressed rights of people of color. “With a black state on the neighboring island—a state run by former slaves and perceived as a permanent threat—black slaves could not simply be dealt with as ‘socially dead’” (Fischer 110). The relevance of Haiti’s Revolution for *Sab* might be supported by the fact that Gómez de Avellaneda’s family was originally from Camagüey, in the center-east part of Cuba, closer to Haiti.

The reality of Haiti’s revolution created the need to give slaves some social recognition. However, the strategy for representing slaves, who both were and were not social beings, could not just be to silence them, since that would not capture the actual social presence of the slaves, and more importantly, could not address the fear that existed in Cuba of a possible uprising like the one in Haiti. The solution provided by these fictions came via a strategy of “disavowal” (Fischer 111), which both made the slaves visible and silenced them as political and social agents.

⁹⁶ Schwarz claims that the portrayal of slaves in the 19th-century Brazilian realist novel did not pose any problem, since slaves were not considered to have any social representation (*Misplaced Ideas* 22).

Fischer understands the ‘fantasy of the submissive slave’ as a way of addressing the fear created by the Haitian war and as a form of disavowal of the political agency of the Afro-Caribbean population. The term ‘fantasy,’ along Freudian lines, refers to “an imaginary or imaginative compromise between the demands of defense and a wish or desire” (114). Portraying the slaves as submissive beings—which was far from the daily reality, especially on the plantations—conveyed a certain tranquility and confidence in the possibility of dominating the population of color.⁹⁷

In *Sab*, the fantasy of the submissive slave comes as a reassurance for Carlota, given that she lives on a plantation surrounded by slaves, who, from the perspective of the Haitian myth, are waiting to attack her at any time. In fact, the plantation is depicted with highly romanticized undertones and opposed to a more utilitarian and need-driven lifestyle.

Aquella atmósfera mercantil y especuladora, aquellos cuidados incesantes de los intereses materiales marchitaban las bellas ilusiones de su joven corazón. ¡Pobre y delicada flor!, ¡tú habías nacido para embalsamar los jardines, bella, inútil y acariciada tímidamente por las auras del cielo! ... Carlota no podía desaprobar con justicia la conducta de su marido, ni debía quejarse de su suerte, pero a pesar suyo se sentía oprimida por todo lo que tenía de serio y material aquella vida del comerciante. (*Sab* 117)

She misses her life at the plantation, that beautiful ‘paradise.’ In her husband’s household, her spirit is withered and tormented by the concerns of a daily and materialistic business life. As Claudette Williams puts it, “Carlota had been fed a romantic illusion enjoying her family’s sugar wealth and shielded from the brutality of the forced and unpaid slave labor that produced it” (17). Carlota understands freedom as the capacity not to be concerned about procuring the necessities of daily life, an ideal that depends on denying freedom to slaves—hardly a romantic thought.

⁹⁷ On the one hand Fischer acknowledges the power of the anti-slavery novels in the fight against slavery. In this regard she mentions the censorship to which they were subject and the threat they posed to the pro-slavery establishment. Most of these novels had to be read in small, secretive, circles, such as Del Monte’s literary tertulias (Fischer 109). Examples of such novels are Tanco y Bosmiel’s *Petrona and Rosalía*, *Sab* and Manzano’s *Autobiography*. Fischer reminds us that Del Monte, who promoted abolitionist novels in his tertulias and wrote against the slave trade and its negative consequences for the future of Cuban society, was falsely accused of participating in the conspiracy of La Escalera in 1844. As a consequence, he was sent into exile for the rest of his life. On the other hand, Fischer also positions herself alongside critics such as Portuondo, Carbonil and Bueno, who have pointed out that this moderate abolitionism did not generally imply a rejection of racial subordination (Fischer 108). In fact, Del Monte, a member of the famous Aldama family, owned several plantations with slaves, something that he himself pointed out in his defense against the accusations of having participated in *La Escalera*.

Whereas Fischer interprets the ‘fantasy’ of the submissive slave as a way of disavowing the agency of the black population, the portrayal of the submissive slave might also be viewed as a first step towards humanizing a group of people that, according to the dominant currents of the time, influenced especially by events in Haiti, were imagined as primitive animals to be exploited and controlled. Such an interpretation is suggested by Peluffo’s work on the 19th-century Peruvian novel, in particular, on the portrayal of the indio in *Matto de Turner*. Peluffo addresses the complaint that Turner has reduced the figure of the indio to a sentimental subject, which often embodies infantile features, and is thereby deprived of agency. She argues that such portrayals attempted to introduce the indio into the domestic representation of the republican nation by underlining his ‘humanity,’ and so to combat the image of the indios as violent and dangerous elements. They created empathy in the reader who, moved by the character’s undeserved situation, shares his or her suffering. The victim’s pathos creates a common understanding between him or her and the reader.⁹⁸ The sentimental bond is meant to reinforce social bonds. Along these lines, Sab’s death can be seen as a unifying sentimental loss for the reader and for the characters of the novel.

This way of bringing the reader closer to the suffering of the slave population differs sharply from Pardo Bazán’s technique in the portrayal of Amparo’s exploitation, which underlines her commodification. According to Peluffo, *Matto de Turner*’s sentimental novel projects, over the ethnic other,

una serie de valores espirituales (la honradez, la inocencia, la generosidad) que chocan con la ética materialista de la modernidad. Se podría decir incluso que en *Aves sin Nido*, se usan las virtudes indígenas para subrayar la maldad de curas y notables, dos grupos con los que compite la merviente burguesía a la que pertenece el ángel serrano del hogar. (Peluffo 51)

The same kind of strategy can be seen in *Sofía*, where the distancing narrative technique is applied to the white Creole population. On the other hand, the narrative voice, far from describing Sofía in objective and distancing ways, as was common in naturalist novels of the time, makes her into a constant object of pity, emphasizing her undeserved suffering. However, the sentimentalization of the slave still presents the problem of portraying them as lacking agency, as Fischer points out.

In my view, *Sofía* tries to avoid the dilemma between sentimentalizing the black population and portraying them with an utter lack of agency. On the one hand, the novel recognizes the importance of provoking pity, compassion and empathy in the reader for those undergoing the miseries of slavery and racial discrimination. It acknowledges therefore the usefulness of oversimplifying the slave’s personality to make him or her appear as total victim of complete underserved suffering. This is especially significant in the novel because the depictions of Sofía in the plantation occur when the reader does not

⁹⁸ See also Adam Smith’s *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, in which he argues that sympathy functions as a way of counteracting selfish and self-serving passions.

yet know that she is not black. On other hand the novel applies the ‘submissive type’ to a white character and thus disengages that type from a certain race in particular. It shows that this type is socially constructed and not racially based. This is another instance of the phenomenon I mentioned earlier. Morúa Delgado is not interested in fighting the ideologized figure of the black by attempting to disprove it. He is rather preoccupied with pointing out that that figure has nothing to do with how blacks are or are not.

9. “Ni ella misma lo sabía”

Throughout my discussion of *Sofía*, I have been drawing contrasts with *La Tribuna*. I would like to add one more in this last Section, which concerns the relation between the exploitation of free and slave women respectively. For this purpose I will focus on *Sofía*’s juxtaposed narration of Sofía’s rape by Federico and of Ana María Unzúazu’s abandonment by her husband, which take place concurrently in the same house.

In the discussion of Amparo’s comparison with a cigar I alluded to the figure of the slave as being projected phantasmagorically over her, as a way of underlining her subjugation in her double condition of worker and woman, and of referring to the ongoing slavery in Cuba. If treated as a fetish, the cigar can be understood in its double dimension of metaphor and metonymy. The metaphoric function of the fetish in its homogenizing capacity enables the unification and harmonization of realities as different as slavery and women’s subjugation. As Žižek writes, commenting on Lacan, “the metaphorical ‘cut’ is conceived as an effort doomed to fail: doomed to stabilize, canalize, or dominate the metonymical dissipation of the textual stream” (154). The metonymic dimension of the cigar, that is, its being part of an economic circuit involving racial exploitation, points to the colonial slave as the great absence in that comparison. The slave is only indirectly alluded to—as we saw in Pardo Bazán’s translation of Mill’s “The Subjection of Women.”

Sofía also compares the situation of free white women and that of slaves. It both shows similarities between the two situations and points to the gap between them—indeed, to the impossibility of homogenizing them under a common signifier. Both Sofía and Ana María Unzúazu, her half-sister, are desired in terms of their economic value. It is Nudoso’s fear that Sofía might have a claim to part of the Unzúazu inheritance that leads him to send her to the plantation. Nudoso already has access to a part of the family’s inheritance due to his marriage to Ana María, through which she and what belongs to her become his property. In this regard slavery and marriage are seen here as instruments of ownership with an economic meaning, as Kutzinski has pointed out.

In order to possess Sofía’s fortune, Nudoso literally has to turn her into his property. Since he cannot make her his wife he makes her his slave. Here, slavery works much like marriage to transfer financial resources and thus social control from female into male hands. (*Sugar’s Secrets* 115)

However, the novel also highlights differences between Sofía's and Ana María's plights by juxtaposing the scenes of Sofía's rape and of Ana María's abandonment by her husband. This juxtaposition of the two scenes brings out their lack of metaphorical affinity. The fact that they occur simultaneously in the same house expresses a non-metaphorical connection between the two events.

Nudoso arrives home late, after having spent the evening with his mistress. In the meantime, Ana María has been crying. At the end of the novel we learn of her husband's second family: he had been having an ongoing relationship with a mulatta, with whom he had fathered two children. Ana María's ignored sexuality emphasizes her economic value, by alluding to her inheritance money as the reason Nudoso married her. Recall the passage in Alas' *La Regenta*, in which Ana Ozores compares herself to an unfinished cigar left by her husband on the coffee table. Her husband too, whom she has no possibility of leaving, shows no interest in her.

In this scene, *Sofía* makes clear the incommensurability of Sofía's and Ana María's crying. Both women cry about their situation, but only Sofía knows why she is crying. As for Ana María, the narrative voice tells us that "ni ella misma lo sabía", dismissively suggesting that she has no reason to cry, despite her husband's abandonment and suspected infidelities. The narrative voice considers her crying an act of self-absorption, and a luxury that Sofía cannot afford. She dares to cry about her situation while she does nothing about the slavery around her.

También Ana María había llorado aquella noche; ¿Por qué? Ella misma no lo sabía. Pero Sofía lloraba por el brusco asalto de que había sido objeto; por la vergüenza de haber sido sorprendida desnuda por un hombre, el primero que así la contemplaba y el que tanto la asediara con sus apetitos lascivos; y lloraba también al imaginar que todo aquello se supiera al fin, convencida de que sobre ella caería toda la culpa, siendo así que no tenía ninguna. (*Sofía* 44)

Sofía's impotence and vulnerability go far beyond Ana María's pain. If Ana María is not getting what she wants, Sofía's rights and even her humanity are being attacked at the most basic level. Furthermore, Ana María takes part in enslaving and torturing Sofía, never raising her voice against Nudoso's violence towards Sofía. Also, when it is discovered that Sofía is pregnant, Ana María, ignoring the fact that someone else in the house is at least partly responsible, is one of the first to blame Sofía and eventually throws her out of the house. Here the use of slavery to portray women's subjugation in marriage appears obscene. The novel suggests that such a comparison effaces the particularly degrading condition of slavery.

From a historical perspective, *Sofía's* exposure of the ideological misinterpretation of the Afro-Cubans as dishonest and untrustworthy people, hiding evil and hatred behind benevolent and amiable appearances, had a concrete goal of contributing to the acceptance of slaves and free Afro-Cubans by the white Creole establishment. This was

important in the years leading towards Cuba's independence. As I mentioned in the Introduction, one of the main causes of Cuba's defeat in the Ten Year War was the racial discrimination against the Afro-Cubans. The innovation of *Sofía* is its turning the lens on the ideological fantasies themselves, by detaching the ideological figure of the black from any inherent behaviors or characteristics, and thus establishing a discontinuity between the racial prejudices of the white population and any alleged empirical basis.

Chapter Four

The Crisis of Liberal Ideals

This Chapter is based on two characters: Isidora Rufete from Galdós' *La Desheredada* (1881) and Leonardo Gamboa from Villaverde's *Cecilia Valdés* (1882). The former is a Madrilean bourgeois woman and the latter the wealthy white Creole son of a Spanish slave trader and plantation owner, Cándido Gamboa. The main theme I discuss in this Chapter is the failure of modern society to live up to its liberal ideals, such as social equality and mobility, especially as a result of self-reinforcing social structures of exploitation. These exploitative structures, based on gender and class distinctions, are furthermore connected with imperial discourses either figuratively, as in the comparison of the character of Isidora Rufete with the tragic event of the 'licenciados de Cuba,' or more materially in relation to the wealth of her lover Botín or, more obviously, in *Cecilia Valdés*.

Isidora Rufete does not want to end up in the typical role expected of a bourgeois woman, confined to the domestic realm, sewing, cleaning and saving money. Her attempt to break out of this role reveals a staggeringly unequal society, in which social mobility is primarily reserved for those engaging in exploitative practices. Her journey especially exposes gender inequalities and exhibits different ways of relating to imperial discourses depending on one's gender. *La Desheredada* reveals a liberal society that has not delivered on the promises of equal opportunity and the eradication of class and gender privileges. In *Cecilia Valdés*, Leonardo Gamboa lives with limited rights in comparison to those enjoyed by his male counterparts in Spain. His limited political agency is highlighted through the use of gender discourses. Leonardo reveals a transatlantic dimension of Spanish liberal society, as we also saw in reference to *La Peregrinación de Bayoán*. Accordingly, in this chapter, I will attempt to take into account geopolitical categories, specifically the different conditions and positions with respect to the colonial economy and political framework, on different sides of the Atlantic, as informing the representation of imperialism and social categories.

For both characters, the attempt to advance socially is tied to taking advantage of others and consequently to re-enforcing exploitative social structures, and often has the effect of cementing or even worsening each character's own situation. Isidora ends up moving up the social ladder by associating herself with those participating in colonial exploitation and by reducing herself to a sexual commodity. By making herself a commodity to be consumed by Botín, a Spanish businessman with economic interests in the Cuba, she puts herself in a subjugated position, comparable to that of a colony. Such a comparison is

also suggested by her self-identification with the ‘licenciados de Cuba,’ a group of students killed by the mercenaries financed by those like Botín. Feminine and colonial discourses are here related insofar as they share common aspects of subordination. At the same time, she embodies middle-class Spain’s dependence on the colonial lobby, illustrating the ambiguous role of metropolitan women within imperial practices. The novel thus brings together discourses of class and gender exploitation on the one hand, and imperial discourses on the other, in complex ways.

In *Cecilia Valdés*, Rosa Gamboa reminds her son Leonardo that he would not be able to enjoy his luxurious lifestyle if his father did not participate in the slave trade. “¿Echarías tú tanto lujo, ni gozarías de tantas comodidades si tu padre dejase de trabajar? Las tablas y las tejas no hacían rico a nadie. ¿Qué negocio deja más ganancias que el de la trata?” (*Cecilia Valdés* 256). Leonardo depends on his father’s wealth to pay for his expensive lifestyle just as Isidora relies on the wealth of Botín, who is deeply involved in the slave trade. But, as stressed throughout this work, the slave trade and slave labor only serve to cement Cuba’s colonial status with respect to Spain, despite Leonardo’s resentment of Spanish rule.

Cecilia Valdés offers a critique of Leonardo Gamboa’s luxurious and idle lifestyle and verifies the unfairness and inherent exploitative dimensions of the system that it re-enforces. *La Desheredada* also presents Isidora as exemplifying certain social maladies, such as consumerism and a lack of economic productivity, while at the same time calling attention to the systemic failures of the liberal system, especially by marking its class and gender divisions. As a woman, Isidora has limited means at her disposal. But Leonardo, as a white male, is called upon to muster what political agency he can in order to fulfill the symbolic mandate of breaking with Spain, represented by his father Cándido. His failure to do so is understood as reflective of his emasculation as part of a feminized consumerist class, again bringing together discourses of gender and class under a transatlantic dimension.

The strongest and most influential political and economic power represented in *La Desheredada* and *Cecilia Valdés* is that of the oligarchy of colonial businessmen, especially those involved in the slave trade and the financing of the Cuban war. As I mentioned, they were the driving force behind the Restoration, but also, as recent studies have shown, played a decisive role in the 1868 Revolution. This group is represented by Botín in *La Desheredada*, a character similar to the Marquis of Fúcar in *La Familia de León Roch*. Leonardo’s father, Cándido Gamboa, in *Cecilia Valdés*, is, through the slave-trade, also connected to this group.

Colonial wealth gave rise to a new form of aristocracy, both in name and in practice. With their fortunes they could purchase titles of nobility, as do the Marquis of Fúcar in *La Familia de León Roch* and Cándido Gamboa in *Cecilia Valdés*. The old aristocracy was seen as the social model to be emulated, as we saw in the case of *La Regenta*’s indianos returning from Cuba. And, in many ways the lifestyles of those enriched by colonial wealth was comparable to that of an aristocracy that had inherited wealth and

was therefore not preoccupied, like those worse off, with making a living. However, while their nobility titles and appearance assimilated them to the aristocracy, their wealth was derived from, and maintained through, colonial exploitation and capitalist practices, such as banking, market speculation, sugar plantations (the so-called ‘factories in the fields’) and real estate investment.

Both Isidora Rufete and Leonardo Gamboa have contradictory relationships with the aristocratic model. Isidora mistakenly believes that she is the secret daughter of the Marquise of Aransis, on the basis of which she feels entitled to a life of luxury, despising the work ethic of her bourgeois cousins and friends. Leonardo derides his father for the inherent incongruity in wanting to buy an aristocratic title and become a nobleman through the slave trade. Still, Leonardo’s leisurely life, as well as Isidora’s, resemble that of an aristocrat; they do not work and their luxuries are paid for by an exploitative economic system, ultimately, and more obviously so in *Cecilia Valdés*, sustained in unbreakable racial differences, parallel to the rigid social distinctions in a feudal system.

Whereas *La Desheredada* makes a clear cut distinction between bourgeois and colonial-based economies, Galdós’ *Lo Prohibido* (1884) explores the connections between those two socioeconomic models. *Cecilia Valdés* also points to the differences between a slave-based and a bourgeois economy. At the same time, it invites us to think of elements such as efficiency, control and standardization as bringing together economies as different as European bourgeois modern society and the plantation economy. And in this way, the Cuban novel illustrates another way in which imperial practices did not just emerge in the context of the colonies but were fundamental aspects of European modernity.

1. *La Desheredada*: Introduction

In *La Desheredada*’s Isidora Rufete we find a paradigm of consumerism, similar in many ways to other women in Galdós’ novels, such as Rosalía in *La de Bringas* and Eloísa in *Lo Prohibido*. Isidora Rufete, a lower middle class woman, originally comes from the small village of El Toboso in La Mancha and later moves to Madrid. Fuelled by the wild imagination of her priest uncle, Isidora is obsessed with a fantasy that that she is the secret granddaughter of the current Marquise of Aransis, whose daughter died after giving birth to two illegitimate children. Despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary, Isidora cannot stop believing in her connection to the Aransis family and consequently she spends the little money she has inherited on a series of unsuccessful lawsuits to prove her noble ancestry. After Isidora has been once and for all rejected by the Aransis family, she decides to move in with Joaquín Pez, Marquis of Saldeoro. Joaquín, a widower, incarnates many social diseases: he is lazy, has no job and is addicted to gambling. However, he is handsome and more importantly, he is a Marquis, a quality that Isidora values extraordinarily, given that she considers herself part of the nobility. She makes the terrible and irreversible mistake of publicly associating herself with a man without being married. Joaquín eventually abandons her for a wealthy Cuban Creole woman. The rest of the novel is the tale of the gradual social downfall of Isidora: without any kind of job

or a husband to support her, with a lover whom she has to support, and with an expensive lifestyle of her own, Isidora needs to become the mistress of several men, including Botín, a member of the colonial lobby.

In the next Section, I will focus on the two main economic models of the novel. The first, represented by Augusto Miquis and Juan Bou, is characterized by hard work and a frugal lifestyle. Isidora despises this boring bourgeois lifestyle, and longs for a life of idle consumption and luxury. This second model is characterized by a dependence, whether directly or indirectly, on colonial exploitation. This transatlantic dimension is especially manifest in the members of colonial lobby, like Botín.

In Section Three, I will discuss Isidora as allegorical figure of Spain's dependence on the colonial lobby. As Sinnigen has pointed out, Isidora's lack of a work ethic and uncontrollable consumerism can be taken to represent the social maladies of the Spanish middle class and its need for colonial wealth. Accordingly, her abandonment of Botín can be understood as symbolizing the Spanish government's payment of its debts to the colonial lobby. I will argue for a more complex interpretation of the comparison of Isidora to Spain, in particular, for the need to include both gender and class perspectives, a strategy that offers a more nuanced interpretation of social inequalities within Spain.

In Section Four, I will focus on additional aspects of Isidora's rebellion against Botín, specifically, the fact that she dresses up as a member of the 'pueblo' and, when she abandons Botín, identifies herself with the 'licenciados de Cuba.' I will explore both the appropriateness and the limitations of these associations, in which we find an intermingling of different class discourses within Spain, as well as gender and imperial discourses. Finally, I revisit and rethink Isidora's 'independence' from Botín in terms of colonial independence.

2. Two socioeconomic models

While Isidora's life is spiraling downward, she is presented with several opportunities to become a respectable, middle-class woman by marrying decent men who would support such a life. The first is Augusto Miquis, a medical student and the prototype of a liberal reformist. The second is Juan Bou, a Catalan of socialist leanings. Despite their political differences both men embody the same life values, hard work and honesty, and they represent in large part the novel's moral perspective. These two are opposed to a second socioeconomic model represented by Joaquín Pez, Sánchez Botín and Melchor Relimpio, who end up enriching themselves in various ways through colonial enterprises.

Like Isidora, Miquis comes from La Mancha and, despite his humble origins, aspires to a better life for himself. While in the capital he falls terribly in love with Isidora and wants to marry her. As he tells her, he is looking for a woman who can iron, sew, and cook (*La Desheredada* 125). But Isidora's dreams go far beyond that domestic life.

Isidora and Miquis represent opposite poles. While the former seeks luxury and wealth, the latter believes in a frugal lifestyle and a strong work ethic. In one of their first encounters, when Miquis is showing her around, she comments on the upper class people and aristocrats in the main streets of Madrid. Isidora admires their style and refined behavior: “Esta gente—afirmó Isidora con mucho tesón—sabe lo que hace. Es la gente principal del país, la gente fina, decente, rica, la que tiene, la que puede, la que sabe.” Miquis judges them to be vain, deceitful and untrustworthy, recalling Rousseau, according to whom luxury is the result of vanity and a desire to give a better, though false, impression. Miquis replies: “Trampas, fanatismo, ignorancia, presunción” (*La Desheredada* 135). Isidora’s other suitor, Bou, owns a printing shop. He is described in similar terms as Miquis, as someone who despises those driven by a lifestyle of false appearances, exorbitant consumerism and luxury, and who lack real productivity, that is, those who are either parasites on society, like Joaquín Pez, or try to exploit others for their own benefit, like Botín.

The distinction between the two types of lifestyle is made in relation to colonial exploitation. The colonies are associated not only with illicit ways of gaining wealth, but also with the possibility of amassing wealth very quickly. The social and economic success of those associated with colonial exploitation is weighed against the bourgeois models in the novel. With the exception of Dr. Miquis, who marries the daughter of a wealthy notary, none of the other middle class characters—Bou and the Relimpio girls—is able to advance socially through hard work alone. In fact, *La Desheredada* can be seen as illustrating the difficulty, if not impossibility, of moving from one social and economic level to another through hard work alone.

The *moraleja* that we read at the end of the novel conveys a different message than the story itself and an ambiguous one. The reader is instructed not to trust ‘fake wings’ when attempting to reach a high summit. We are advised to grow those wings naturally. However, in case this is not possible, a ladder will come in handy. “Si sentís anhelo de llegar a una difícil y escabrosa altura, no os fiéis de las alas postizas. Procurad echarlas naturales, y en caso de que no lo consigáis, pues hay infinitos ejemplos que confirman la negativa, lo mejor, creedme será que toméis una escalera” (503). The ‘artificial wings’ (alas postizas) bring to mind Isidora’s illusory dreams of advancing socially without any effort. The idea of growing such wings naturally invokes the idea of striving for a better life through honest work. And, finally, the ‘ladder’ alludes to the possibility of acquiring some extra help—such as marrying someone’s wealthy daughter—though it still might require some climbing. In this sense, the narrator’s irony in pointing to those succeeding without hard work and financial speculation (Botín, Joaquín, Melchor) questions the advice given at the end of the novel.

This representation of two distinct socioeconomic and ethical spheres, only one of which is connected to colonial wealth, will evolve in one of Galdós’ later novels, *Lo Prohibido* (1884). There, even the couple that exemplifies the most promising model for the bourgeoisie, Camila and Constantino, unknowingly benefit from colonial exploitation by inheriting money from José María Bueno, with origins in the slave trade from José María

Bueno.⁹⁹ In the last section of the novel, José María is plunged into serious financial crisis. In order to hold on to his last remaining property, he needs to make a payment, for which he must rely on loans from several people. The final portion of the debt is paid by Eloísa, Camila's sister, who, in an act of sacrifice for José María, decides to sell her body to Sánchez Botín for 6,000 duros.¹⁰⁰

José María is initially reluctant to accept Eloísa's money, since it was obtained through selling herself to Botín, and is morally stained through Botín's involvement in the slave trade. But José María Bueno is ultimately persuaded by his economic adviser that he will otherwise lose his property. This property will later end up in the hands of Camila and Constantino, the most promising model for the bourgeoisie.¹⁰¹

At the end of the novel, Camila is proud to be able to say that she has inherited the money because she always behaved well, which implies in this context that she never gave in to José María's sexual requests: "nuestra conciencia está en paz. ¿Qué me importa lo demás? Si algún estúpido sinvergüenza cree que me la dejas por haber sido tu querida, Dios, tú y yo sabemos que me la dejas por haberme portado bien" (*Lo Prohibido* 569). Her peace of mind stems from a belief that she herself has not engaged in any

⁹⁹ As the novel progresses, Camila, who is at first considered rude and messy, without a single redeeming feature, reveals herself as hard working, authentically sincere—thus recalling the values of Miquis and Bou in *La Desheredada*—and deeply committed to her husband—the only one of the three sisters who does not cheat on her husband. José María Bueno is so impressed with the couple that he decides to make them sole heirs to his fortune.

¹⁰⁰ Eloísa, the middle sister, has an uncontrollable need to spend, which brings her, like Isidora in *La Desheredada*, to offer herself sexually to men—the first being José María Bueno—in exchange for money. But when José María Bueno stops paying her bills, she moves to the Marquis of Fúcar, who is openly described as a 'negrero,' and finally to Sánchez Botín,

¹⁰¹ "Los herederos de la fortuna de José María, restaurada gracias a la prostitución y a la explotación colonial, son Constantino y Camila, los sencillos y virtuosos personaje, la 'alternativa utópica' (Blanco Aguinaga 72), que deben representar el contraste a la corrupción que les rodea. Camila es la única hermana que no tiene relaciones sexuales con su primo; un caso excepción en el universo galdosiano, es una esposa en la que se combinan la sexualidad activa y la monogamia. Constantino resulta ser un buen trabajador ... Camila y Constantino parecen formar la pareja ideal que se contrapone al adulterio y la esterilidad de tantos otros matrimonios galdosianos ... Sin embargo esta alternativa está manchada en sus raíces: en la próspera imagen ideal está inscrita la procedencia de la herencia. Resulta que los buenos del melodrama están involucrados en la corrupción, puesto que el bienestar de su futuro depende de la prostitución y del imperio, un expolio colonial que defiende Constantino desde su ministerio [de guerra] dónde el también ampara, aunque sea indirectamente los intereses de Botín ... permite que algunos disfruten de la comodidad material a una distancia que les permite desconocer la fuente de ella" (Sinnigen 112-113).

wrongdoing to receive the money. However her comment becomes ironic in light of the connection of José María's money to colonial exploitation as well as her sister's prostitution. José María knows, but never reveals to her, that the money is morally stained. In *La Desheredada*, however, the division between those who benefit from the colonies and those who do not, is, as I mentioned, more clear-cut. Only Isidora oscillates between the two economic spheres.

3. Isidora's participation in imperial practices

Botín, like the Marquis of Fúcar discussed in the Introduction, does business in Cuba, mainly providing food and clothes to the soldiers sent to the island. He also diversifies his investments in several projects, such as the construction of the railroad of Albarracín. In one passage, Joaquín Pez reveals that Botín is buying up, at very low prices, the vouchers by which soldiers are paid, taking advantage of their poverty:

El Gobierno no puede pagarles; pero Botín ha reunido millones en esos abonarés ... Pero esta tostada, con ser un negocio inmoral, no es tan atroz como la que resulta de comprar por un pedazo de pan los abonarés de los soldados de Cuba, que llegan aquí muertos de miseria, enfermos y con un papel en el bolsillo. El Gobierno no puede pagarles; pero Botín ha reunido millones en esos abonarés, y el mejor día se los admite el Gobierno en pago de un empréstito. (*La Desheredada* 348)

Joaquín even suggests that Botín could then loan the money made through the vouchers to the government in the form of empréstitos to finance the Cuban War and multiply his wealth even more. This is another instance of the ingenuity of colonial entrepreneurs in finding new ways to profit from the war.

Before she meets Botín, Isidora, desperate for money, asks her aunt, 'la Sanguijuelera,' for help. Isidora has fallen into great debt by supporting the parasite, Joaquín. Her aunt replies by comparing her situation to that of the Spanish government: "Si tú debes más que el gobierno, si te has metido en unos belenes ..." (*La Desheredada* 304). The Sanguijuelera's comments are further supported by the fact that Botín appears in the novel when Isidora has squandered her savings and is drowning in debt due to helping Joaquín Pez pay off his gambling losses. Similarly, due to inordinate spending on the Cuban Ten Year War, the Spanish government was forced to borrow at very high interest rates from a group of very wealthy businessmen with ties to the colonies—the group that Botín represents. Botín not only helps Isidora pay off her debts but provides her with a luxurious and expensive lifestyle. Furthermore, just as Botín requires complete commitment from Isidora and limits her freedom to go and do as she pleases, the Spanish government lost a great deal of autonomy, especially regarding colonial policy, by borrowing from the wealthy financiers. As I explained in Chapter One, the conditions on the loan given by the wealthy financiers to the Spanish government put colonial policy in their hands.

Drawing on an allegorical connection between Isidora and Spain in the hands of the colonial lobby, Sinnigen interprets Isidora's rebellion against Botín as the government paying off the interest on the borrowed funds. When Isidora decides to abandon him, Botín makes her return all that she has bought with his money. All the luxury that Isidora used to enjoy depended on accepting Botín's rules. Once she leaves him she is left with nothing.

Al echarle de su casa, Botín requiere la devolución de la ropa y las joyas que le ha regalado. ¿O no sería mejor decir prestado? Ahora la desnuda en un acto comparable a las relaciones financieras entre el Estado y el sector privado: los empréstitos que 'necesita' el Estado a la larga lo empobrece en favor de los prestamistas. (Sinnigen 72)

However, the comparison between Isidora and Spain is more complex; it does not merely reflect a unilateral relationship between Spain and its colonial financiers. The novel brings in discourses of class and gender that are reflecting unequal social relations within the metropolis. The use of a middle-class woman for such a metaphor (Isidora as Spain) relies on uneven power relations within Spain and on the fact that different classes and genders experience imperialism in different ways.

First, it is clear that only men, in this case, Botín, Joaquín Pez and Melchor, are able to directly access and control the flow of colonial wealth and to invest and start businesses as they please. Isidora's agency is limited to deciding whom she will marry or devote herself to. She will eventually enjoy colonial wealth as well, but only by becoming the mistress of the repulsive Botín, with her sexual favors reserved for him. Thus, even within her relationship with Botín, her freedom will be limited. This relationship replicates a wife's obligatory dependence on her husband and thus mimics the legal and social condition of middle class women. Gender issues are also emphasized in her relationship with Joaquín. Before she meets Botín, Isidora's decision to become the lover of Joaquín Pez is described, in the very title of the pivotal 17th chapter, "Igualdad: suicidio de Isidora", as a suicide. This is a 'suicide' for Isidora insofar as, by moving in with Joaquín, she can no longer hope to be seen a decent woman and have a respectable marriage. The same is not true for the Joaquín Pez, however, again exhibiting the differences between men and women when having extra-marital affairs.

This chapter also exhibits the relevance of class distinctions in understanding Isidora as a metaphor for Spain's participation in imperialism, through the parallel situations of Isidora and Spain in the hands of the colonial lobby. It narrates the moment when Isidora has been finally and univocally rejected by the Marquise of Aransis, the woman that Isidora claims is her grandmother, and her first encounter with Joaquín Pez. The novel places this episode in the context of the implementation of the First Republic and the expulsion of Amadeo I from Spain. The monarchy is replaced by a republic that promises equal rights to all the citizens, included those of the overseas territories, as well as the abolition of slavery.

In this historic moment, having just been rejected by her alleged grandmother, Isidora finds herself alone in the streets of Madrid, where she encounters public wonderment and excitement at the recent declaration of the First Republic. Isidora gets caught up in the egalitarian fervor and (unable to secure a place for herself in the nobility) aligns herself with the ‘pueblo,’ claiming that if her alleged grandmother does not want to accept her she will kick her off the throne, as they did with Amadeo. Indeed, she plans to use the law that grants equal rights to all in order to sue the Marquise (*La Desheredada* 276). Right after she proclaims her adherence to the egalitarian principles of the Republic, Isidora decides to go with Joaquín Pez, Marquis of Saldeoro, and eventually become his mistress.

Soon Isidora finds herself burdened by having to finance his gambling habit, due to his lack of a job. Paradoxically, Isidora’s association with a more powerful social group by becoming Pez’ mistress, with all the metaphorical implications at political and social levels, emphasizes her role as someone who is being exploited within the economic market. Isidora’s relationship with Pez can thus be seen as an allegory for the ambiguous prospects of the lower middle classes in the First Republic. On the one hand, they have some possibility to associate themselves with the upper classes. But on the other, the lower classes continue to serve the upper classes, which, in turn, continue to exploit and take economic advantage of them. The lower classes never achieve comparable agency and often debase themselves in other ways by their association with the upper classes, just as Isidora will end up with Botín in order to pay off Joaquín’s debts. As I mentioned in the Introduction, during the Restoration, and, as some historians have suggested, perhaps even in the years of the 1868 Revolution leading up to it, not only did existing structures of power remain relatively unscathed, but also, the economic oligarchy of colonial business interests gained in strength. This is illustrated by Joaquín, part of the wealthy pre-Revolution establishment, and Botín, both of whose power and wealth increase during the Restoration. So, although Isidora participates in the imperialist project by associating herself with Botín and using his money to maintain a luxurious and work-free lifestyle, there are limitations in her engagement with imperial practices, which reflect her class and gender.

4. Isidora and the licenciados of Cuba

While in the last Section I considered Isidora’s participation in imperial practices, insofar as it is conditioned by her class and gender, I now turn to parallels between Isidora’s position and that of the colonies. Such parallels are suggested on several occasions. First, Joaquín Pez is a liaison between Isidora and Cuba, putting them in similar positions as objects of exploitation. When discussing his economic difficulties with Isidora, he mentions to her the possibility of going to Cuba to remedy them.

Papá me ha hablado seriamente el otro día. Hemos hecho un balance. Le he descubierto todos mis líos; se ha incomodado y por fin hemos resuelto

que no tengo más remedio que irme a La Habana ... Sí, con un destino en la Aduana, un gran destino. Es el único remedio. Los españoles tenemos esa ventaja sobre los habitantes de otras naciones. ¿Qué país tiene una Jauja tal, una isla de Cuba, para remediar los desastres de sus hijos? (*La Desheredada* 345-6)

Instead of leaving for Habana, he decides to stay in Madrid and get the money he needs from Isidora, most of whose inheritance he proceeds to squander. The identification of the colony with a woman is not just made under the abstractness of the discourse of the masculine imperial power represented through a sexual discourse of conquest, as Said has suggested, but under more specific economic and material connotations. Joaquín Pez makes a living from Isidora as well as from the colonies. To him they are alternative sources of quick money.

We can draw further comparisons between Isidora and the colonies. For example, Joaquín lies to Isidora about his feelings for her while interested only in her money. This brings to mind the ambiguous status of the colonies with respect to Spain during the 19th century. Spain officially considered them ‘provinces,’ always promising the legality that never came, while at the same time, imposing on them the arbitrary rule of the Capitanes Generales and exploiting them for its own economic advantage.

There is also a quite literal connection between Joaquín’s exploitation of Isidora and colonial money. Joaquín’s financial dependence on Isidora’s eventually leads him to funds originating in colonial exploitation through Botín, indicating the pervasiveness of colonial money in the Spanish financial system. Naturally, Joaquín Pez, does not acknowledge his part in colonial exploitation and, despite taking money from Botín, claims that, unlike Botín, he would never take advantage of any ‘licenciado de Cuba.’

Tengo la conciencia tranquila. No he despojado a nadie. Joaquín Pez pedirá limosna antes que comerciar con el hambre y la desnudez de un licenciado de Cuba. Yo no puedo ver en la calle un pobre sin echar mano al bolsillo; yo no puedo ver una mujer guapa sin prendarme de ella. (*La Desheredada* 352)

Pez is connecting Botín to a tragic episode that resonated in Spanish public opinion,¹⁰² which Galdós mentions in *Amadeo I* (1910) as well.¹⁰³ Eight Cuban medical students were executed by the voluntarios in November 1871.¹⁰⁴ As I mentioned in the Introduction, the Cuerpo de Voluntarios, financed by the wealthy anti-independence factions in Cuba, was a para-military group made up of civilians, most of them of peninsular origin, who acted as a force independent from the political parties and authorities. They took part in some of the most brutal killings, such as the indiscriminate

¹⁰² See the classic work by Valdés-Domínguez.

¹⁰³ Rodríguez Puértolas, “Cuba en la Última Serie de Episodios Nacionales de Galdós.”

¹⁰⁴ José Martí wrote “Sangre de Inocentes” in 1887 about this event.

slaughter of the audience in the Villanueva Theater (1869), an event that frightened several reformists into exile. They also effectively brought to a halt the talks between Cuban insurgents and General Augusto, which were intended to broker a peaceful resolution to the conflict. And in general, they served some of the most reactionary and conservative interests in both Cuba and Spain and opposed any liberalization of colonial policy. It is not clear that Botín participated in the financing of the voluntarios. However, the novel places him within the group of wealthy financiers who underwrote, and whose interests were served by, the voluntarios. And more generally, the novel connects Botín's businesses with the fight against pro-independence groups.

Isidora's situation is compared to that of the colonies also with regard to her relationship with Botín. In fact, remembering Pez's comment, Isidora claims to be the avenger of the 'licenciados de Cuba' when she finally abandons Botín. Isidora's rebellion against him occurs upon her return from the Romería, when she encounters a very upset Botín. On the surface, he is terribly disappointed because Isidora has disobeyed him by going to the Romería of San Isidro with her uncle, brother and son. Isidora dresses in the typical folkloric costume of the Madrilean lower classes and exhibits herself at the Romería.¹⁰⁵ This display of her charms does not please Botín. However, the real reason for his anger lies in the fact that Isidora has been cheating on him with Joaquín Pez, and moreover, supporting Pez with his money.

Sinnigen's interpretation of Isidora as representing Spain in the hands of the colonial lobby, which I discussed above, extends to Isidora's rebellion. He interprets this passage as expressing the pueblo's reaction against the power and influence of the colonial lobby. Isidora, in dressing as pueblo, reconnects with its vitality, which is needed to act against the oppressive class. If, as a bourgeois woman, she was dependent on Botín's wealth, now, as pueblo, she feels entitled to reclaim her freedom.

La fiesta popular propicia la sublevación: hay unos profundos impulsos liberadores en el pueblo que la burguesía no puede desarraigar. 'Soy la vengadora de Cuba' le espeta Isidora al capitalista y diputado. La rebelión de una mantenida es emblemática del deseo popular de romper con un

¹⁰⁵ Of course, Isidora is not enjoying pure independence since her 'freedom' also depends on Botín's money, for she spends much of the time purchasing things for herself and her family. "Si hubieran dejado a Isidora hacer su gusto, habría comprado lo menos dos docenas de botijos, uno de cada forma. Pero no compró más que cuatro. De todas las fruslerías hizo acopio, y los bolsillos de la pandilla llenáronse de avellanas, piñones, garbanzos torrados, pastelillos y cuanto Dios y la tía Javiera criaron. Nunca como entonces le saltó el dinero en el bolsillo y le escoció en las manos, pidiéndole, por extraño modo, que lo gastase. Lo gastaba a manos llenas, y si hubiera llevado mil duros, los habría liquidado también. A los pobres sin número les daba lo que salía en la mano. A todos los cojos, estropeados, seres contrahechos y lastimosos, les arrojaba una moneda. Por último, se le antojó también pitar, y compró el más largo, el más floreado y sonoro de los pitos posibles. Mariano y la doncella también pitaron" (*La Desheredada* 356).

sistema que desfalca, explota y mediante una guerra imperialista provoca estragos en dos sociedades. (Sinnigen 72)

One can go beyond Sinnigen's interpretation by focusing on Isidora's self-identification with the licenciados de Cuba and on what her performance as pueblo illuminates about her own subjugated situation.

The fact that Isidora's pueblo costume is merely performance indicates that she herself retains some distance from the pueblo. As I mentioned earlier, her relationship with Botín parodies marriage. The kind of commitment and loss of freedom a middle-class woman suffered in marriage is replayed from a distancing and ironic perspective. Such distance is also present in her performance as the avenger of the licenciados de Cuba, as is evident from the great differences between her and those killed by the voluntarios. The interaction of these three comparisons and the distancing with which each occurs again imply a complex relationship of discourses of class, sexuality, and imperialism.

The novel distances Isidora from her role as 'mujer del pueblo' by tinting the entire episode with sarcastic and comic tones—in the use of free indirect style—from Isidora's dressing up, through her behavior and feelings in the Romería, to her return to Botín.

El vestirse de mujer de pueblo, lejos de ofender el orgullo de Isidora, encajaba bien dentro de él, porque era en verdad cosa bonita y graciosa que una gran dama tuviera el antojo de disfrazarse para presenciar más a su gusto las fiestas y divertimientos del pueblo. ... No le faltaba nada, ni el mantón de Manila, ni el pañuelo de seda en la cabeza. (*La Desheredada* 356)

Because of the performative nature of what is occurring, there is, in Brecht's terms, a *Verfremdungseffekt*, a defamiliarization and distancing with regard to what is being played out. This performance, emphasized by exaggeration and irony in the description of Isidora as pueblo, helps to underline the fact that she is not pueblo. She is also projecting a stereotypical version of the pueblo, from the point of view of a bourgeois woman who believes herself to be part of the aristocracy.

By dressing as pueblo, Isidora is able to enjoy a certain kind of freedom reserved for lower classes, but which is ordinarily denied to a bourgeois woman. At issue here are what Sinnigen describes as 'los impulsos liberadores del pueblo que la burguesía no puede desarraigar.' These 'impulsos' bring out a contrast between the situation of a pueblo woman and Isidora's subjugation as a bourgeois woman who needs to pretend to be pueblo in order to feel free. We saw this distinction in *La Tribuna* with regard to Amparo (working class) and Josefina (bourgeois): the personal freedom enjoyed by the former is denied to the latter.

Of course, Isidora is not married to Botín, and so in certain respects has more freedom, for example, than Botín's wife. Isidora, as a middle-class mistress, does not face the legal

constraints that a married woman would face. She is legally free to revolt against him and liberate herself from him. At the same time, by committing her sexuality exclusively to Botín, she is reproducing and mimicking a wife's confining commitment to her husband in the form of the loss of independence and freedom. This is reminiscent of Homi Bhabha's concept of mimicry, which he applies to the colonial re-interpretation of imposed metropolitan discourses (*The Location of Culture* 107). Here the dominant discourse is marriage as a kind of contract in which each partner in principle enjoys exclusive rights to the other's sexuality. From the marginalized point of view of Isidora, aspects of marriage are reproduced at a purely economic level, revealing, in an ironic way, although more acutely, a husband's ownership of his wife and the exchange that takes place in marriage between women's sexuality and men's money—it was not acceptable for bourgeois women to earn money. Isidora's position as Botín's mistress exemplifies the loss of freedom that normally accompanies marriage.

La prisionera del Sático no podía resistir ya el anhelo de expansión, de correr libremente, de ser dueña de sí misma un día entero, y, principalmente de darse el gusto de la desobediencia. Haciéndole rabiarse gozaba más que divirtiéndose ella. Ya se aplacaría el tirano, pronunciando un par de buenos sermones, y si no se aplacaba, mejor. Estaba cansada de tan grande y molesto estafermo, y bien podía suceder que no haciendo caso de sus insufribles exigencias llegase a dominarle y someterle. Para fundar este imperio convenía un golpe de Estado. (*La Desheredada* 354)

A congruence between colonial and gender discourses also helps us understand the scene in which Isidora decides to leave Botín. She finds him sitting in his armchair smoking anxiously. And he accuses her of misusing the money he has been giving her. “Bonito uso hace usted de mi dinero,” he tells her. “Pasó adelante y le [a Botín] halló sentado en una butaca, fumando ... estaba pálido con cierta hinchazón en las serosidades de su cara lobulosa” (*La Desheredada* 357). Recall that Sinnigen interprets this scene as the Spanish government paying off the interest on its loans. It is important to take into account the kind of power that Isidora acquires when standing naked in front of Botín. If her clothes represent Botín's money, Isidora's body posits a threat to his power. This scene can be understood as symbolically representing the kind of control that the dominated colony can nevertheless exert over the metropolis, as we saw also in Chapter Three in the description of Amparo's sexuality. The tobacco infusing Amparo's clothing, together with her racially tinged sexuality, have a ‘deranging’ effect on Baltasar's mind.

According to such an interpretation the sexual and the economic are informing one another. The cigar or cigarette—we are not told what Botín is smoking—represents both a presence and an absence associated with the fetish: on the one hand it expresses Botín's economic power over Isidora, linked to his wealth from the colonies. On the other hand, this economic power is a way of hiding and compensating for a deficiency: his lack of sexual appeal and strength. The allusion to this deficiency is in the reference to “su pie pequeño,” at which he anxiously stares when Isidora, after he commands her to return what he has bought her, undresses in front of him down to her boots (360). Isidora can be

compared to a colony in a metaphorical sense, on the grounds of having ‘natural resources’ that are desired for consumption by the economic powers of the western world, embodied in Botín. In the context of the significance of the fetish as concealing a certain lack, Botín’s consciousness of his small foot in the presence of a naked Isidora symbolizes the natural inferiority of the western capitalist world, and its subsequent dependence on the natural resources of the colonies, which, like Isidora, are being exploited and turned into commodities. Up to this point Botín has been able to control and exploit Isidora’s natural force through the power of capitalism and commerce.

However the metaphorical identification between a middle-class Spanish woman and colonial oppression is far from straightforward and the distance between the two is pointed out in the novel. And as I have already indicated, Isidora’s representation of the pueblo is achieved from the perspective of the artificial aristocratic gaze that she assumes. She is thus already performing the role of the pueblo under a dominant gaze. Similarly, when Isidora reclaims the role of the ‘licenciados de Cuba,’ the novel distances her from colonial reality by pointing to the theatrical and melodramatic tones of that identification. Isidora has just heard talk about the licenciados from Joaquín, who uses that term to signal Botín’s corrupt behavior. She is using the news of the licenciados like a commodity—unaware of its original conditions of production—to further demonize Botín and, in the end, to justify her decision to abandon her only economic supporter. At the same time she is using the news of the execution, an event which drew public criticism in Spain, to shed light on own situation, which was perhaps less visible within her society than that of the licenciados. Here we find another case, like the connection between women’s emancipation and slavery discourses we saw in Chapter Three, in which an episode of colonial exploitation is used by a marginalized population within the metropolis to draw attention to their own subjugated condition.

Interestingly, when Isidora is about to leave Botín, he tries to dissuade her by promising her an ‘estanco,’ that is, the right to sell tobacco—a colonial product tied to the state’s monopoly. Botín’s reaction could be further interpreted as Spain’s late reaction to the possible independence of Cuba and Puerto Rico when it offered them a measure of autonomy to avoid losing them completely.

Estas mujeres locas--murmuró gruñendo--, si comprendieran su interés; si supieran apreciar lo que valen las relaciones con una persona decente... Isidora, aguarda, oye la voz de un amigo. Vuelve en ti, reflexiona, acuérdate de lo que muchas veces te he dicho. ¿Por qué no has de entrar en una vida ordenada? Yo estoy dispuesto a auxiliarte, proporcionándote un estanco... (*La Desheredada* 361)

In any case, it is difficult to establish a fixed and stable relationship between Isidora and colonial exploitation. Isidora is at the crossroads of multiple and even contradictory discourses: she represents the government asking for more money to continue fighting the Cuban rebels; she is suffering and being commodified under Botín’s power and thus can

be placed on the side of the colonies; her comparison to the licenciados is largely ironical; and she benefits from colonial wealth.

Despite the limitations of the comparison between Isidora and the licenciados, she does undergo a kind of social death at the end of the novel, by disappearing into the streets of Madrid as an anonymous prostitute. This ending has divided the critical literature between those who see Isidora's last action as a way of taking ownership of herself, an act of independence and liberation, and those who see it as a final act of degradation and self-destruction. The first interpretation is supported by Isidora's own words: "déjeme a mí, que yo sé lo que tengo que hacer. No dependo de nadie, ¿estamos? Soy dueña de mi voluntad, ¿estamos?" (*La Desheredada* 496). A second interpretation sees her fall into prostitution as a final departure into an unknown world, where she will disappear from view. The words of her relatives and friends that accompany her in the last moments emphasize this aspect of the novel's ending: She is gone, she is gone, José Relimpio screams desperately and melodramatically (*La Desheredada* 501).

The interpretation of Isidora's action should be addressed in connection with a larger debate about prostitution.¹⁰⁶ Is prostitution an expression of women's independence and control over their own bodies, or an expression of their objectification and transformation into a commodity? Even if Isidora owns her means of production, in Marxist terms,

¹⁰⁶ Singer claims that sex workers are "in a better position than most women, especially wives, to determine the time, circumstances, and conditions under which the [sexual] encounter will take place, as well as to be in charge of establishing its limits, temporally and substantively" (54). Others see the body as intimately connected to one's soul, so that selling one's body implies putting one's most intimate being on the market for the best profit, making a commodity of oneself (Pateman 207). The early writings of Marx, in particular the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* of 1844, view prostitution as exemplifying the way the capitalist market exploits the labor force. Marx understands prostitution in terms of a woman becoming a commodity and in parallel to the workers' labor becoming a commodity in the product they manufacture. "In capitalism, labor not only *produces* the commodities that are sold in markets, but labor itself *becomes* a commodity. It is the buying and selling of (the body of) labor as a commodity that the early Marx associates with the defining feature of capitalism. In producing an object (a commodity), the subject (the laborer) invests the object with his essence as the product of his labor becomes congealed within it. In this process the laborer is objectified, but along with objectification comes loss of the object as it is appropriated by someone else (the capitalist), resulting in the laborer's estrangement and alienation (71)" (Van der Veen 39, quoting Marx, *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*). Van der Veen argues that there is a risk in such discussions of essentializing female prostitution and understanding it as devoid of any differentiation along the lines of race and—here especially—class. As she points out, one must distinguish between those who are forced into prostitution and those who choose it of their own accord, and again between those who enrich their 'owners' or managers in brothels, and those who enjoy the profits themselves. Isidora's freedom is comparatively great along both dimensions.

something that in principle should grant her some kind of equality in the market, the terms of that ownership are put into question by her weaker position. The novel thus brings up the question of what kind of freedom is available for those who are in subordinate positions in society. The novel suggests that theirs is a limited freedom that functions within the demands of the market, which is always ruled by those in the most favorable positions. *La Desheredada* has already presented the gender/class based disproportion of power between Isidora on the one hand, and Botín—who can easily find another woman—Joaquín and Melchor on the other. Following the simile between Isidora and the colonies her act of independence can be understood in terms of a colony, like Cuba, becoming independent and passing from Botín's hands to new predators in the 'free' international economic market. Similarly to Isidora, Cuba's weaker position in the international economic system would jeopardize its population's actual control of the island, and put it in the hands of the highest bidder, in this case, the United States.

4. *Cecilia Valdés*: Introduction

I will turn now to a discussion of Villaverde's *Cecilia Valdés* (1882) and focus on one of its main characters, Leonardo Gamboa. The story is set in Cuba during the late 1820s and early 1830s, when Cuba's constitutional rights had recently been abolished and the Capitán General, the highest ranking officer on the island, had become its supreme authority. Leonardo is the son of Cándido Gamboa, a Spanish immigrant and, his wife, Rosa, a native Cuban Creole. Cándido, originally from Málaga, arrived poor in Cuba but was able to amass a great fortune through the slave trade. Leonardo is described as a spoiled and lazy young man who is dedicated to spending his family fortune satisfying all sorts of whims. He falls in love with the mulatta Cecilia Valdés, without knowing that she is his half-sister, the secret daughter of Cándido. The novel ends tragically with José Pimienta, a mulatto secretly in love with Cecilia, assassinating Leonardo at his own wedding (to Isabel Ilincheta, owner of a coffee plantation) and with Cecilia's incarceration in a mental hospital.

Leonardo is portrayed as being more interested in squandering his father's fortune than in fighting for Cuba's independence, even though he resents the Spanish presence on the island. The harsh political repression that took place during the late 1820s, the period of Leonardo's adolescence, helps explain his reluctance to undertake any serious political activity. Indeed, throughout the 19th century, but especially after Cuba's revolutionary years in the 1820s, any manifestation of animosity against Spanish rule was punished with exile and loss of personal property. José María Heredia, Cirilo Villaverde and Domingo del Monte, all of them prominent intellectuals, were notoriously condemned to exile for the rest of their lives. Such measures became especially aggressive in the post

Ten Year War period, when many reformists were forced to leave the island and lost their property.¹⁰⁷

Leonardo occupies an ambiguous position with respect to colonial exploitation, in many ways comparable to Isidora who, as a bourgeois woman, enjoys limited rights. On the one hand he is subject to the colonial regime of the island, a lack of civil liberties, harsh censorship and military control. On the other hand, his lifestyle both depends on and contributes to a circuit of exploitation that, not only causes slavery, but ends up reinforcing the colonial status of Cuba.

I read *Cecilia Valdés* as taking part in the 18th century political debate on the relationship between luxury and the common good, and as positioning itself on the side of those arguing that consumerism negatively affects the public good. The connection between the novel's critique of Leonardo and 18th century republican discourses, especially Rousseau's republicanism, is further suggested by Leonardo's desire to acquire an expensive watch made in Geneva. As in Rousseau, consumerism in *Cecilia Valdés* is further associated with a female domestic space and a lack of political agency. By directing the social critique towards Leonardo the novel is placing the political mandate on him, a white male Creole. This reflects the exclusion of women "from the symbolic birth of the nation" (*Insurgent Cuba* 127) that Ferrer has noticed and also the segregation of Afro-Cubans from political agency.

The watch desired by Leonardo embodies mixed and even conflicting views on modernity. On the one hand, it symbolizes a promising idea of progress towards equality and the ideal of a strong work ethic, both of which are at odds with Leonardo's lifestyle. On the other hand, the origins of modernity, represented by the luxurious watch, appear already to contain the seeds of the kinds of exploitative practices on which Leonardo's lifestyle depends. Here I will draw on, but also broaden the scope of, the narrative of modernity presented in Horkheimer's and Adorno's *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, which links the perverse consequences of the Enlightenment, for example the Holocaust of the Second World War, to its roots in European modernity. From this perspective, the expensive mechanical wonder manufactured in Geneva and Cuba's plantation economy, including the slave-trade and slavery, can be thought of as elements of a single, broader narrative of modernity.

5. Private interests versus common good

In *Foundational Fictions*, Doris Sommer argues that many 19th-century Latin American novels were concerned with harmonizing economic private interests with the disinterested love for country. The latter, within the republican ideal, was considered to

¹⁰⁷ Roldán de Montaud points out that those who fought on the Spanish side during the war were given the rebels' property seized by the government (*La Restauración en Cuba: el Fracaso de un Proceso Reformista* 96).

be beyond and even opposed to those individual interests. She focuses on romances depicted in 19th-century Latin-American novels, which she takes to represent allegories of the social structure of the new nations. Far from suggesting a sacrifice of private interests, typical in 18th-century republican French literature,¹⁰⁸ these relationships embody the possibility of harmonizing private interests with the common good: “Latin Americans dared to adjust imported patterns. Balzac’s Chilean disciple [Blest Gana] explicitly accommodates the master to local material in *Martín Rivas*: The French say: l’amour fait rage et l’argent fait marriage, but here love makes both: rage et marriage” (*Foundational Fictions* 36).

Unlike most of the Latin American novels on which Sommer draws, *Cecilia Valdés* offers a failed romance, between Leonardo and Cecilia. Sommer argues that the main reason for this failure lies in the racial segregation of Cuban society, resulting in mistrust and incommunicability among different races. But *Cecilia Valdés*, as I will propose next, also makes an argument along the lines of 18th-century republican theory and strongly suggests an incompatibility between material consumption and the common good.

I begin by focusing on chapters XI and XII and on the relationship between Cuba’s common good and Leonardo’s luxurious lifestyle. The novel harshly criticizes the Spanish military occupation and especially the political figure of the Capitán General. As I will show, there are passages in which the narrative voice remembers with nostalgia and frustration those failed revolutionary attempts to free the island from Spanish rule in the early 1820s. Another main target of the novel is the slave trade which kept Cuba under Spanish domination. The Spanish military presence was needed to counteract the British patrols looking to capture ships coming from Africa. Also, the slave trade continued to increase the number of slaves in the island, who were, especially after the Haitian revolution, regarded by the white plantation owners as a potential threat. The Spanish military was perceived as a necessary protection against possible insurgencies.

Chapter XI begins with a moral and political critique of Leonardo and the generation of the thirties against the backdrop of a narration of the main historical events from 1808 until the suppression of constitutional rights in 1824.

De la generación que procuramos pintar ahora bajo el punto de vista político-moral y de la que eran muestra genuina Leonardo Gamboa y sus compañeros de estudios, debemos repetir que alcanzaba nociones muy superficiales sobre la situación de la patria en el mundo de las ideas y de los principios. (*Cecilia Valdés* 165)

The harsh repression and censorship following the revolutionary years of the 1820s has politically numbed Leonardo. The Spanish authorities have succeeded in silencing and erasing from collective memory the insurgencies and attempts at revolution in the 1810s

¹⁰⁸ See Margaret Cohen, *The Sentimental Education of the Novel*.

and 1820s. Furthermore, it was considered a punishable crime to talk about politics in general.

Delito grave era tratar de política en público y en privado. ...Quedaban además confusas si ya no tristes reminiscencias de las pasadas conspiraciones. De la del año 12 sobrevivía tan solo el nombre de Aponte ... Como rumor no más había corrido que le gobierno de Washington se había opuesto a la invasión de Cuba y Puerto Rico por las tropas de México y Colombia ... El lector habanero conocedor de la juventud de la época que procuramos describir nos creará fácilmente si le decimos que Gamboa no se cuidaba de la política, y por más que le ocurriese alguna vez que Cuba gemía esclava, no le pasaba por la mente siquiera entonces, que él o alguno otro cubano debía poner los medios para libertarla. (*Cecilia Valdés* 167)

The narrator refers to the *trienio liberal*, the three year period (1820-3) during which the Spanish liberals were able to implement the 1812 Constitution in Cuba, allowing civil liberties such as political freedom, freedom of association and freedom of speech on the island. These liberties came to an end in 1824, with the imposition of harsh censorship in Spain and especially in Cuba. Political publications and political discussion in any form were strictly banned. The freedom enjoyed by Cuba during the *trienio liberal*, the narrator complains, disappeared like a dream to such an extent that, some years later, it seemed as if it had never happened. The lack of possibility of participation in public discussion, which Habermas considers essential to the construction of the modern bourgeois sphere, then shaped Leonardo's generation, that of the 1830s. Even though they opposed the Spanish presence in Cuba, the narrator tells us, it would never occur to them to fight it.

The historical digression, occupying the first pages of the chapter, takes place when Leonardo is on his way home from the University. It is prompted by his anger upon seeing a Spanish soldier flirting with his sister Antonia. His animosity exemplifies his general resentment towards the Spanish military occupation of the island.

“No cabía, por tanto, que le hiciera buena sangre el que un militar le soplase la hermana querida, antes fueron tan vivos los celos que experimentó, como profundo era el odio que le inspiraba el hombre en su doble carácter de soldado y de español” (*Cecilia Valdés* 164).

Once Leonardo enters his house the historical narration is brought to an end. Leonardo shows his anger against the Spanish military only after his father is gone. His mother reproaches him and argues that the family will pay a high price for his hatred of the Spaniards: “ese odio tuyo a los españoles todavía ha de costarnos caro” (175). She points out the negative economic consequences of attacking the Spaniards. After this explosion of rage, Leonardo soon calms down and becomes engrossed in his sisters' conversation about fashion.

The novel thus presents a spatial separation between the narrator's description of the political and historical situation of Cuba, which is set outside the domestic realm, while Leonardo is on his way back from school, and the narration of the Gamboa children's interest in luxury and fashion, which occurs inside the Gamboa house and in the absence of their father. These two moments and spaces and their associations to different genders reflect distinct preoccupations: the one occurring in the public space of the street is associated, through the narration of the historical revolutions, with Cuba's common good. The domestic space is concerned with fashion, luxury and consumerism, features associated with private interests. Cuba's common good—its independence—and the Gamboa family's private interests are separated into two distinct gendered social spaces: the female home and the masculine public space of the street. This separation represents the relationship and yet incompatibility between the private and common interests.

The distinction between, and compatibility of, public good and consumerism or private interests became major topics of debate among 18th century philosophers such as Hume, Mandeville and Rousseau. The latter emerged as the most notorious representative in the crusade against the first two, who argued that the consumption of luxury items would have beneficial consequences for the republic.¹⁰⁹ The quantity of material wealth acquired by western societies at that time triggered warning signs about the effects of luxury on society (Malcolm ix and x).

The relevance of this distinction between these two kinds of interests can be further supported by the presence of the luxurious watch that Leonardo asks his mother to buy him after his sisters have left the house to go shopping. In the context of the 'reloj ginebrino,' Rousseau acquires a special significance, since he was from Geneva and his father was a watch maker. Rousseau saw Geneva, and in particular the part of the city based on an artisan economy, as the ideal city that could embody his republican values, and safeguard the common good against consumerist desires for greater luxury. Basically Rousseau attacked luxury, arguing that it would subvert the unity of the republican state.¹¹⁰

Already in the 16th century, Geneva implemented strict laws against the possession of luxury items. In fact the rise of the artisan watch industry was linked to those laws, since

¹⁰⁹ Mandeville was the first to come up with the polemical thesis that consumption was beneficial for society. He saw good consequences for society of traditional vices: "each passion has its particular effect: pride leads to employment, for much labor is needed to produce the goods which will satisfy it; avarice, on the other hand encourages wealth and thereby makes men devote their energy to prosperity. Mandeville does make an important proviso in this picture of the free-running 'economy of the appetites' by insisting upon the existence of a just and harmonious framework of law within which the operation of the passions may take place" (Malcolm 23).

¹¹⁰ See Helena Rosenblatt's *Rousseau and Geneva, from the First Discourse to the Social Contract 1749-1762*.

watches, due to their functionality, were the only 'expensive' and therefore luxurious objects allowed to be worn. The practical side of the watch justified its use. Leonardo makes a similar argument to his mother, though he does not need the watch. He is rather using the watch as a fashion item. Thus his desire for the watch is the consequence of 'vanity' and 'amour-propre,' in Rousseau's terms, resulting in the distinction between real being and mere appearance (être and paraître). As an example of the competitive aspect of fashion, Leonardo and his sisters comment on other 'fashionistas' in Havana, and ridicule one of them, Juanito Junco, for the enormous hat he is wearing, which makes him appear taller than he really is. "¿Reparaste en el sombrero? La copa tropezaba con las ramas de los árboles de la alameda con ser Juanito Junco un chiquirritín. --El cobartín es lo que no me peta --dijo Leonardo-- Es tan alto que no deja juego al pescuezo. No lo usaré jamás" (*Cecilia Valdés* 178).

Havana's youth embody the corrosive effects of luxury and consumption. We find another instance of this in a scene during the ball at the Philharmonic, where Leonardo and his friends are happily dancing and enjoying themselves in a luxurious atmosphere. Meneses, one of Leonardo's friends, notices the portrait of the absolutist Spanish King Fernando VII, who appears to be looking at the happy crowd with a deep sense of disdain.

Meneses que rara vez bailaba y Solfa que no bailaba nunca, se quedaron de espectadores en el medio del salón observando el último con sonrisa amarga, que mientras aquella loca juventud gozaba a sus anchas los placeres del momento el más estúpido y brutal de los reyes de España parecía contemplarla con aire de profundo desprecio desde el dosel donde se veía pintada su imagen odiosa. (*Cecilia Valdés* 230)

The novel is thus pointing to the white Creoles', and in particular to Leonardo's, frivolity and consumerism as at least partly responsible for maintaining Cuba's colonial situation. First, Leonardo is not willing to give up his luxurious lifestyle to sacrifice for the common good of Cuba. Second, consumerism weakens him, bringing him closer to a feminine type and erasing the masculine qualities needed for patriotic battle.

In fact, Rousseau further connected the self-centeredness and disunity that was the result of too much luxury with a kind of feminization of men, making them both morally and physically unsuitable for state duty. For example in *Lettre à D'Alembert*, where Rousseau criticizes the theater for corrupting the citizens, he comments on the great ability of women to corrupt men, especially by feminizing them. Instead of making men strong and self-sufficient, cohabitation weakens them. Indeed, he describes with horror the feminizing effects of women on men he saw during his last trip to Geneva: "À mon dernier voyage à Genève, j'ai déjà vu plusieurs de ces jeunes demoiselles en justaucorps, les dents blanches, la main potelée, la voix flûtée, un joli parasol vert à la main, contrefaite assez maladroitement les hommes" (213).

Republican values are presented within a masculine model, as opposed to a feminine desire for luxury. Similarly, Leonardo's contact with his mother and sisters has emasculating effects: the conversation about fashion makes him forget about his political duties. The image of a feminized Leonardo recurs throughout the novel by reference to his mother's spoiling attitude. Cándido complains to Rosa that her parenting is weakening Leonardo, and proposes to send him to a war ship in order to counteract her emasculating influence and toughen him up.

A parallel contrast is set up between Leonardo and his fiancée, Isabel Ilincheta, who embodies positive republican values: she is honest and frugal, treats her slaves with compassion, works hard in her small coffee plantation, and sacrifices herself for the sake of her family's well being. These positive characteristics are reflected in the masculinization of her body and appearance.

No había nada de redondez femenil, y, por supuesto, ni de voluptuosidad, ya lo hemos indicado, en las formas de Isabel. Y la razón era obvia: el ejercicio a caballo, su diversión favorita en el campo; el nadar frecuentemente en el río de San Andrés y en el de San Juan de Contreras, donde todos los años pasaba la temporada de baños; las caminatas casi diarias en el cafetal de su padre y en los de los vecinos, su exposición frecuente a las intemperies por gusto y por razón de su vida activa, habían robustecido y desarrollado su constitución física al punto de hacerle perder las formas suaves y redondas de las jóvenes de su edad y estado. Para que nada faltase al aire varonil y resuelto de su persona, debe añadirse que sombreaba su boca expresiva un bozo oscuro y sedoso, al cual sólo faltaba una tonsura frecuente para convertirse en bigote negro y poblado. (*Cecilia Valdés* 233)

The obstacle for her, however, is that, as a woman, she cannot participate in public life.

6. Patricide

What role does Leonardo's father play in this discussion of luxury's effeminizing and weakening effects on his son? In the scene I will discuss, Leonardo clearly shows antipathy towards his father, who represents Spain, and makes an attempt, albeit figuratively, to usurp his father's role within the family. Leonardo resents the fact that Cándido is constantly limiting his freedom and controlling his movements. But he also despises his father because he associates him with Spain and the colonial status of the island. At a geo-political level, this scene plays out in terms of the possibility of Cuban independence through the agency of the white male Creole class. The mandate for patricide becomes symbolic of a way of breaking dependence on Spain. At this level, Leonardo faces a patriotic mandate of patricide.

In the end there is no patricide, but Leonardo himself is killed by the mulatto José Pimienta, who is secretly in love with Cecilia. Cecilia has heard that Leonardo is marrying Isabel Ilincheta, and asks José to kill the bride. Pimienta either does not hear or pretends not to hear and kills Leonardo instead. This killing is not just motivated by jealousy, but also expresses class antagonism between white and mulatto groups. José Pimienta has previously complained bitterly about the privileges that the white creoles enjoy (*Cecilia Valdés* 206).

In the novel, José Pimienta appears as the mulatto double of Leonardo. Not only are they in love with the same woman, but, as the narrative voice explicitly tells us, they have the same build. The tailor Uribe, for whom Pimienta works, always asks him to try on clothes for Leonardo to see if they are the right size (*Cecilia Valdés* 205). The novel could be pointing to a secret kinship between Pimienta and Leonardo (parallel to that between Leonardo and Cecilia). But even if there is no blood relation between them, their similarities suggest a fraternal tie, which invokes the idea of a Cuban identity based on brotherhood. And it is precisely Leonardo's lifestyle, which contributes not just to slavery but also to free mulattos' racial resentment, which ends up causing his death by the hand of his 'brother.' Fratricide substitutes for patricide.

Returning to the Genevan watch, the scene in which Leonardo asks his mother for money to buy the watch takes place after the daily family lunch, once Leonardo's sisters and father have left the house. Rosa Gamboa asks Leonardo why he did not ask his father to purchase the watch, since it would require his father's money to do so. She is obviously alluding to the fact that Leonardo has been waiting for his father to leave, preferring to ask his mother. Leonardo knows that his father will not buy him the watch, since he still has the English watch that he received less than a year ago. The conversation between Rosa and Leonardo occurs in a private, intimate space, when the two are alone in the house. There are clear incestuous and oedipal overtones in the relationship between mother and son in this scene. In order to win over his mother, Leonardo acts flirtatiously with her, while she in turn is enchanted by her son's charms. Leonardo is represented here as symbolically occupying his father's position. The intimacy and oedipal overtones of the encounter suggest the original relationship between mother and child in Freudian terms.

Leonardo insults his father by calling him "conde del barracón," alluding to the slave trade as the means by which his father wishes to buy a title of nobility. Leonardo also brings up the theory of natural law that states that all men are born free. Obviously he is using the slave trade to attack his father, in a way similar to Isidora's reference to the licenciados to demonize Botín.

At the same time, Leonardo cannot extricate himself from dependence on his father; the father is needed in order to provide the money to satisfy Leonardo's wishes. The domestic space, in principle reserved for mother and son, is invaded by the father, as the needed supplier of wealth to satisfy Leonardo's desire. This invasion also implies the entrance of the slave trade and slavery. In fact, Leonardo not only needs his father, he

needs the slave trade to continue his lifestyle, as Rosa Gamboa explains to him, establishing an economic connection between the watch and slavery. “¿Quién provee al lujo en que vives? ¿Quién trabaja para que tú goces y te diviertas? ... Cándido en sociedad con D. Pedro Blanco, suele traer todavía negros de África” (*Cecilia Valdés* 187).

Cándido is not only the male provider but brings with him the violence of colonial exploitation, which is necessary to satisfy Leonardo’s passion for consumer goods. In fact, Leonardo, like Isidora, is not manifesting a sincere concern for the slaves—as becomes especially clear in the novel’s descriptions of his violent treatment of them. In Cándido’s absence, Leonardo and his mother are in a consuming, feminized space, for which Cándido needs to provide.

The situation is especially humiliating for Leonardo given the weakened position of Spain. Cándido Gamboa is himself subjected to laws imposed by a third country, Great Britain. In the novel we read that, due to a treaty signed by Fernando VII and Great Britain, Spain agreed to end the slave trade. However this treaty was not enforced by the Spanish authorities. The novel tells us that British ships are constantly patrolling Spanish waters to capture any cargo from Africa. In fact, Cándido’s ship is stopped by the British authorities to be inspected. His power is undermined by his having to comply with the treaty with Britain. Cándido thus exhibits the comparative impotence of Spain as a colonial power with respect to other European nations. Indeed, throughout the novel, Spaniards are depicted as rude, uneducated, and far from the cultural models that the sophisticated Gamboa children want to emulate.¹¹¹

Leonardo proves incapable of fulfilling the symbolic mandate needed to accomplish Cuba’s independence from Spain. By focusing the critique on Leonardo, the novel sets this political mandate upon a white male Creole, thus revealing a certain perspective on who should lead the revolt. It also suggests that wealthy white Creoles need to make severe changes and sacrifices for independence to succeed. As I mentioned in the

¹¹¹ In a telling scene, the Gamboas’ butler, from Gijón, Asturias, is asked if he can be trusted to pick up the genuine Genevan watch. He replies: “No se me alcanza mucho, que digamos, pero en Gijón donde yo nací y me crié, hay más de una relojería; y un tío mío, hermano de mi madre, que en paz descansa, tenía en la uña, como quien dice, el mecanismo de los relojes” (191). For Leonardo, Geneva—and not Gijón—has a symbolic value. He repeats the name of the city that he sees as a guarantee of the watch’s quality: “Son magníficos ... ginebrinos ... Yo no he visto nunca un reloj de repetición y mucho menos ginebrino; ... los legítimos ginebrinos son otras cosas, casi todos salen buenos, exactos” (185). Cándido Gamboa is described as “con escasa o ninguna cultura, había venido todavía joven a Cuba desde las serranías de Ronda ... como hombre ignorante y rudo” (171). The Spanish military presence on the island is described by Leonardo as follows: “tiene por casa pabellones; por criados, asistentes rudos y desvergonzados; por diversión las palizas y las carreras de banqueta que les pegan a los soldados; por música el tambor de diana” (176).

Introduction, the Ten Year War never reached the Western part of the island, where Havana is located. Historians agree that the greater dependence of this part of the island on the sugar industry and slave labor is the main reason why the white Creoles living there rejected the revolution.

In any case, Leonardo is unable to carry out the political mission by committing a patricide and occupying his father's place. This is first of all because of his need for the paternal figure. Second, Leonardo is represented as weakened and feminized by his mother's coddling and his idle consumption of luxury items. In fact, he does not even dare to ask his father for money for a new watch, let alone break with him.

Leonardo's action differs from Isidora's insofar as she actually leaves Botín. In Cuba the wealthy Creoles started to react against Spain in the 1870s. Villaverde's novel is set in the 1830s, when the social establishment had not yet come to arms against the metropolis. However, as I mentioned, Isidora's rebellion, which occurs in the 1870s, when there were already social revolts within the metropolis and political revolts in Cuba, can be interpreted as emblematic of colonial independence. Recall the ambiguity of her final revolt and fall into prostitution, which, while a kind of social death, might also be seen as a way to secure some measure of freedom for herself. Still, her being a woman and thus occupying a disadvantaged social position, jeopardizes and ultimately questions the autonomy and independence that she seeks by breaking up with Botín. As I mentioned, although Cuban independence brought autonomy from Spanish rule, Cuba remained subject to the desires of greater economic powers, such as the United States, and could not yet enjoy full political agency.

7. Geneva, capitalism and the slave-trade

As I mentioned, Leonardo Gamboa does not need a watch to keep track of time. He is supported by the work of slaves and the money his father has made in the slave trade, allowing him an idle life. His desire for a watch made in Geneva thus points to a contrast between what the watch represents—progress and hard work—and Leonardo's idle unproductiveness and consumption. In the course of this Section I will further explore the connections between Leonardo's desire and European modernity and liberalism. Of special interest will be the dual significance of the watch in connection to the slave-based economy, for it symbolizes both an ideal of social equality opposed to slave-based societies, but also carries overtones of modern capitalism, which itself led to exploitation and global repression. Horkheimer and Adorno discuss the Second World War Holocaust as one of the expressions of the development of the Enlightenment. I will discuss the slave trade and slavery in relation to the narrative of modernity as older forms of massive displacement of populations onto labor camps.

The fact that the watch is from Geneva, as I mentioned, invites connections to the republican values of that city, and specifically to Rousseau. Geneva was a Calvinist city represented by artisans, with ideals of equality and the excellence of daily work. So

understood, the watch represents a rejection of consumption and the desire for luxury, forces that drive Leonardo and are seen as destructive of the public good.

The watch also represents a certain idea of modern temporality. Leonardo wants the watch in part because it is the very latest model with the latest mechanical improvements. And the importation of the watch is placed in a context of having to acquire the latest novelties coming from Europe. The Gamboas' attitude towards fashion evinces a general concept of modern temporality of progress and constant change. When Antonia and Adela are talking about Mme. Pitaux they mention the latest novelties she has brought with her from Paris. Similarly Leonardo says that the Swiss watch is the latest one to have arrived in Habana, directly from Switzerland. There is even a mention of French magazines, periodically published, with the latest fashion designs that Havana's tailors copy to keep up with current productions. Commenting on some 'fashionistas' of Havana, Leonardo's sisters say: "El (Federico) además recibe todos los periódicos de modas de París por todos los paquetes del Havre" (*Cecilia Valdés* 179). Walter Benjamin also refers to the importance of the periodical publications in informing consumers of the latest novelties: "the newspapers marched shoulder to shoulder with the *magasins de nouveauté*. The press organized the market of spiritual values upon which at first a boom developed" (85). We might then see the import of the watch as a way of importing 'time' to keep up with progress.

While desiring the watch, Leonardo does not incorporate the values that are associated with it, that is, those of an urban working bourgeoisie. The bourgeois model aims, in principle, at a more egalitarian type of society, in which mobility is achievable through hard work, while the plantation economy resembles an aristocratic economic model based on inflexible social distinctions. Note also that, according to certain theoretical models (to which I will soon suggest alternatives), such as those of Karl Marx and Adam Smith, a slave-based economy belongs to a prior, feudal stage of economic development, not to a genuine capitalist system.

In Marxist terms we can say that Leonardo wishes to import a commodity that has become divorced from its original conditions of production. Roberto Schwarz has in fact analyzed 19th-century Brazilian literature's importation of French and British cultural forms and their corresponding ideologies into Brazil, a country with a society very different from those of Europe. In sum, cultural productions representing European societies became displaced from their point of cultural origin. As Schwarz notes: "the Europeanizing sectors of Brazilian society did participate in bourgeois civilization, though in a peculiar fashion, at somewhat of a distance, which made them invoke the authority of that civilization and refuse to obey it, alternatively and indefinitely" (*A Master on the Periphery of Capitalism* 25).

So far I have treated the kind of society represented by the Genevan watch and the ideals of Leonardo as diametrically opposed. But it is interesting also to rethink the connections between them from the point of view of a more contemporary narrative of modernity. While Leonardo's desire for the watch highlights differences between a plantation

economy and the republican model, it also links them together on the basis of a shared spirit of capitalism, a general sense of efficiency, maximization of profit, control over labor production and exploitation of humans. In this regard, the Genevan economic model, represented in the production of watches, can be thought of as exemplifying a certain narrative of modernity associated with domination, control and standardization.

Thus framed, the watch fits certain theories that trace the development of capitalist modernity from its promising origins to its often horrific consequences. The views of Weber, Horkheimer and Adorno suggest close connections between the economic structure that produces the watch in Geneva and the colonial economy of Cuba. This Chapter is not the place to discuss the prioritization of Northern Europe as the origin of modernity, though it is clear that in the novel emblems of modernity come to Cuba from countries such as Great Britain and France, not Spain.

Adorno and Horkheimer, in *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, established the desire to control and dominate as the basic spirit of modernity, which developed from a wish to know/control unknown Nature to the subjugation of other human beings and ultimately one's self. Not only Nature but also social urban life was understood in terms of the mechanical clock; moreover the clock was materially necessary and instrumental for coordinating and synchronizing activities in a modern, integrated capitalist society. Georg Simmel remarked that if clocks were to fail, the whole dynamic of a modern city would collapse, since its activities depend on temporal synchronization.¹¹² The control exerted by this synchronization brings to mind Foucault's concept of discipline in *Discipline and Punish*, by which compliant individuals were created in Europe during the 18th and 19th centuries.

Weber specifically linked the monitoring of time to the efficiency and productivity of republican Calvinist Geneva (71 and 104). According to him the efficiency required by the Calvinist work ethic obliged workers to make the most out of the hours dedicated to work.¹¹³ Also, mechanical clocks participate in what Weber defined as the

¹¹² "If all clocks and watches in Berlin would suddenly go wrong in different ways, even if only by one hour, all economic life and communication of the city would be disrupted for a long time" ("The Metropolis and Mental Life" 413).

¹¹³ Max Weber linked the origins of capitalism to the beginning of Protestantism, more specifically Calvinism. He focused especially on the extraordinary importance of small businesses for capitalism's development. In the beginning of *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, he quotes at length Benjamin Franklin speaking about the ethical significance of daily work and its economic productivity. For Franklin, money earned is an expression of good professional virtues, such as honesty, punctuality, and consciousness, and provides the working person with an extraordinary sense of dignity so that "he shall stand before kings." Weber quotes Franklin: "remember that *time* is money. He that can earn ten shillings a day by his labor, and goes abroad, or sits idle, one half of that day, though he spends but sixpence during his diversion or idleness, ought not to reckon *that* the only expense; he has really spent, or rather thrown away, five shillings

‘disenchantment of modernity,’ that is, the loss of reality’s magic and spontaneity, a consequence of the modern, over-controlling rational mind. Clocks measure reality in quantifiable ways, homogenizing it and eliding its qualitative and distinctive dimensions. As the modern watch becomes more accurate and less prone to failure, it quantifies more individual behavior more effectively under the same measure.

Horkheimer and Adorno also understand modernity in terms of control. Science, according to them, replaced mythical narrations in the attempt to explain the unknown, working towards the ultimate goal of mastering the natural world. In fact, mechanical clocks became the model for a modern understanding of Nature. The invention of the pendulum-based clock has been attributed—controversially—to Galileo. Descartes, in his reaction against Aristotelian metaphysics, understood the *res extensa*, the material part of the universe, as a machine explainable by mechanical laws. Nature was described by Newton as a big clock—set in motion by God—whose pieces are integrated in a whole and interacting with one another in perfect order and harmony.

Returning to the novel, Leonardo’s desire for a Swiss watch initiates a narrative of capitalist exchange value. The watch made in Geneva and the slave trade, to which Rosa connects it, become integrated in a circuit of capitalist exchange. Numbers that measure how much the watch costs, the economic profit of the slave-trade, how much money his father initially had, and so on, become essential elements of the narration, and provide the unifying framework in the manner of a large clock whose many pieces work together as an organized system. The conversation about the watch opens up a discussion about transactions, numbers, and equivalences of different realities interconnected by their exchange value.

Yo aporté al matrimonio unos doscientos mil pesos que no es ni la cuarta parte de nuestro caudal hoy día. El aumento ese gran aumento se debe a los afanes y economías de tu padre ... Tenía un taller de maderas del Norte, tejami, ladrillos ... tenía asimismo por allí, donde ahora se ha fabricado la casa del colegio de Buena Vista, un barracón... (*Cecilia Valdés* 187)

Another conversation between Leonardo and his mother about the slave-trade occurs during the ball at the Philharmonic, when she tells him about the profitability of the slave trade, despite its risks:

¿Los riesgos? No son mucho comparadas con las ganancias que se obtienen. El costo total de la expedición del bergantín, por ejemplo, según me dijo tu padre no ha pasado de 30,000 pesos, y como la empresa es de varios, su cuota fue de algunos miles de pesos solamente. Ahora si se

besides” (Weber 14). In republican Calvinist Geneva watches were meant to be a useful tool to help monitor the time spent at work and excel at good professional virtues.

salva la expedición, ¿cuánto no le tocará?...Saca la cuenta. (*Cecilia Valdés* 256)

When his ship carrying slaves to Cuba has been captured by British patrols, Cándido decides to dress the slaves in order to make it appear as if they are coming from Puerto Rico rather than Africa. But for that he needs to procure hundreds of pieces of clothing. Slaves are considered mere numbers that are included or eliminated for pure convenience.

Probable es que [el baratillo de Suarez Argudí] no tenga cuanto se necesite, 400 mudas; pero él puede contemplar el número en toros baratillos de los paisanos. Mas en caso de que ni así se consigan todas, 300, 250, 200, las que puedan ... En número fijo [de esclavos] a bordo no se sabe todavía. Las escotillas están clavadas y dice el Capitán Carricarte que, aunque embarcó sobre 500 con el largo viaje y la atroz caza que le han dado los ingleses, se le han muerto algunos y tenido que echar al agua ... muchos vamos. (*Cecilia Valdés* 267)

Numerical exactness in how much something costs, how much will be lost, how much can be recovered, how many pieces of underwear are needed, how much profit will be gained, and so on, is the unifying and homogenizing element of the global capitalist circuit narrated by Rosa Gamboa.

Recently, scholars of Latin American literature and culture have emphasized that the slave-based economy was a capitalist form of production, albeit an idiosyncratic one. Schwarz underlines the capitalist dimension of 19th-century Brazilian society, writing that Brazil “was not to Europe as feudalism was to capitalism. On the contrary, we were a function of European capitalism and moreover had never been feudal” (*Misplaced Ideas* 23). While Schwarz gives some priority to European forms of capitalism, Fischer and Pratt, among others, hold that the Caribbean form of capitalism anteceded the evolution of European capitalism; certain forms of capitalism appeared in the Antillean islands much earlier and with higher intensity than in Europe. In particular, Fischer has argued that “the Caribbean was never a remote area on the margins of the known world, outside modernity and beyond the reach of modernization. Far from being a remnant of traditional pre-capitalist practices, slavery in the Caribbean was one of the first and most brutal appearances of modernity.” She mentions some examples of incipient modernity common to the plantation economy: the “first mass migrations driven by capitalist development and the need for a work force” and the “rationalization of the labor processes” (12). Along the same lines, Pratt points to the modernity of mass production on plantations (36).

Ortiz, in *Contrapunteo del Azúcar y del Tabaco* argues that sugar production is the capitalist form of production in 19th-century Cuba, as opposed to the growing of tobacco. The *ingenios* were plantations organized towards mass production of sugar for which great financial investments were needed to acquire machinery and slaves before the land

could become profitable. Banks, in turn, profited a great deal by making loans to finance investments in sugar production (*Contrapunteo* 47).

Rebecca Scott has argued against those who see the slave-based plantation in opposition to more technologically advanced enterprises and thus consider it a pre-modern form of production. She shows that in Cuba slavery was the most profitable way of growing sugar cane, otherwise slaves would not have been imported. The sugar plantations, being monocultures, required a great labor force for part but not all of the year, in accordance with the growing season. Workers thus had to be *tied* to the property to be available in great numbers when required. The essential importance of slavery for sugar production became obvious when the abolitionist threat gained strength in the 1860s. Plantation owners argued that the end of slavery would constitute the end of sugar production. Scott also observes that slavery was compatible with the use of machinery and technology on plantations. She states that some of the arguments opposing slavery to modernization depended on the racist view that slaves could not deal with complex machinery or, in its more sophisticated form, that “only free labor was compatible with mechanization” (26). She concludes that “It is thus difficult to see how in an industry such as sugar the juxtaposition of advanced technology and a subjugated work force can be seen as in itself, contradictory and bound to lead to crisis” (28).

These scholars of Latin American culture and history have shed light on the capitalist and modern dimensions of the plantation economy and the slave trade. They argue against the traditional view that slavery is a vestige of an earlier stage of economic development and incompatible with technological advances. They also show that plantations, the so-called ‘factories in the field,’ were early examples of the standardization and commoditization of human beings, of mass production, and of division of labor. Moreover, the transit of slaves from Africa to the Caribbean was one of the first instances of massive displacement of humans to satisfy labor demand. Finally, from an economic point of view, the fact that plantations required large loans created a need for, and strengthened, capitalist financial institutions.

I have attempted to tie these works to Horkheimer and Adorno’s idea of modernity’s role in creating global situations of exploitations. From this perspective, we can understand the connections between the slave trade, slavery and the Swiss watch found in *Cecilia Valdés* as doing more than illustrating the commercial transatlantic triangle between Africa, Europe and the Caribbean. They invite us to think of elements such as efficiency, control and standardization, which brought together economies as different as modern European factories and the plantation economy. Thus, the watch as a symbol of modernity embodies distinct and contradictory views on modernity. As Horkheimer and Adorno put it, “the increase in economic productivity which creates the conditions for a more just world also affords the technical apparatus and the social groups controlling it a disproportionate advantage over the rest of the population” (xvii). And, finally, the watch points to another way in which imperial practices did not just emerge in the context of the colonies, but were also fundamental aspects of European modernity.

Conclusion

En 1517 el P. Bartolomé de las Casas tuvo mucha lástima de los indios que se extenuaban en los laboriosos infiernos de las minas de oro antillanas, y propuso al emperador Carlos V la importación de negros que se extenuaran en los laboriosos infiernos de las minas de oro antillanas. A esa curiosa variación de un filántropo debemos infinitos hechos: los blues de Handy, el éxito logrado en París por el pintor doctor oriental D. Pedro Figari, la buena prosa cimarrona del también oriental D. Vicente Rossi, el tamaño mitológico de Abraham Lincoln, los quinientos mil muertos de la Guerra de Secesión, los tres mil trescientos millones gastados en pensiones militares, la estatua del imaginario Falucho, la admisión del verbo linchar en la décimotercera edición del Diccionario de la Academia, el impetuoso film Aleluya, la fornida carga a la bayoneta llevada por Soler al frente de sus Pardos y Morenos en el Cerrito, la gracia de la señorita de Tal, el moreno que asesinó Martín Fierro, la deplorable rumba El Manisero, el napoleonismo arrestado y encalabozado de Toussaint Louverture, la cruz y la serpiente en Haití, la sangre de las cabras degolladas por el machete del papaloi, la habanera madre del tango, el candombe. (Jorge Luis Borges, “El Atroz Redentor Lazarus Morell” 325)

Throughout this work I have provided an interpretation of the literary production of the late 19th century which is based on, and illuminates, the political, economic, and social history of that period in peninsular Spain and the Spanish Caribbean. It has become clear that it is necessary to undertake the interpretation of novelistic production alongside engagement with the historical research, especially in the context of close readings of the texts, where decoding and unpacking allusions to the colonies, especially to slavery and the slave trade, has proven difficult.

Recent historical studies have shown that the contours of economic and political history bring peninsular Spain and the Caribbean territories closer than one might have expected. They have also filled out a rich and intricate web of social and ideological connections between the two sides of the Atlantic, and provided the resources to understand connections between colonialism and imperialism on the one hand, and issues such as social mobility, class divisions, feminism and race relations, which are often studied in confinement to a single geographical space.

I have drawn on the economic circuit as the basic structure connecting both sides of the Atlantic. Tracing that circuit reveals a transatlantic community at once united and in conflict. The complexity of the community has often made it difficult and frustrating to refer to each side of the Atlantic. To refer to ‘Spain,’ ‘Cuba,’ and ‘Puerto Rico’ already suggests thinking of them as independent political entities, which is part of what I am questioning in this work. To address this concern, one might propose considering all the novels, both Caribbean and Spanish, as elements of different within a transatlantic community, especially given that among themselves even the peninsular novels reflect regional, as well as social and cultural differences. On the other hand, the differences in sociopolitical structures on each side of the Atlantic make this regional approach insufficient. Even in the metropolitan novels, references to the overseas territories, through imperial discourses, make it difficult to understand the Spanish Caribbean simply as a distant region of Spain. The option of referring to Cuba and Puerto Rico as colonies, which I have for the most part adopted, is also admittedly unsatisfying. In any case, the difficulty of this issue illuminates the complexity of the relations that I have addressed in this work.

The economic circuit whose reach I have studied has revealed certain dualities of opposed effects: cohesion and division, benefit and exploitation. The economic benefits of the cotton, sugar and tobacco industry in the Greater Caribbean—Francophone, Hispanophone and Anglophone—made possible the largest movements of people, goods and ideas across the continents up to that time. In the case of Spain, Cuba and Puerto Rico, the fusion of people of different cultural and ethnic backgrounds gave rise to great cultural achievements and exchanges. On the other hand the transatlantic circuit involved some of the worst kinds of exploitation known to mankind and maintained a system of racial divisions. The conflicts between unifying and divisive, and between constructive and destructive, effects of the transatlantic network were strongly felt in the Caribbean. Hostos, especially in *La Peregrinación de Bayoán*, takes up these dualities through Bayoán’s ambivalent reflections on Columbus’ arrival in the Americas.

In light of this transatlantic framework, I have re-animated a dialogue stretching across the Atlantic, by juxtaposing novels written by authors of peninsular Spain and the Caribbean. I have attempted to bring to light a larger network than the social reality immediately and directly depicted in the novels. In Chapter Two, for example, images of towers and ships are explored as representing different positions within a transatlantic geopolitical context. Read in that context, *La Regenta* shows that Spain’s Restoration is predicated upon an image of the nation’s imperial past and present. The description of a well-delimited and circumscribed town of Vetusta is ultimately sustained by supranational references which reveal an underlying anxiety and distress at the loss of empire and of the ability to conquer and control. *La Regenta*’s detached and ironic depiction of some of the most prominent themes in Said’s work, such as the sexualization of the colonial, transmits a critical approach to the Restoration’s imperialism. At the same time, the use of an omniscient and stable narrator and ‘his’ voyeuristic gaze over Ana take on some of the imperial aspects subject to critique elsewhere by the narrative voice, as opposed to the ‘de-centered’ narrative approach of *La Peregrinación de Bayoán*. *La*

Regenta's conflictive relationship with the imperial project in the context of this tension between the novel's content and form is something that should, I think, be further explored.

Chapter Two also highlights the presence of a group of Creole reformists in *La Peregrinación de Bayoán*, who were deeply involved in Spanish politics and whose concerns cannot be understood without taking into account the specific political situation in Madrid at the time. Thus, I have taken a Spanish and a Puerto Rican novel, both of which have been canonized as national texts, and proposed that they are best read in a supra-national context. In addition, Bayoán's trip across the Ocean, with stops in Cuba and Santo Domingo, reveals that the transatlantic circuit cannot just be considered as a bilateral relationship between Spain (or Europe more generally) and the Caribbean. The intra-Caribbean circuit in *La Peregrinación*, and in particular, Bayoán's discriminating treatment of Cuba and Puerto Rico with respect to familial relations, reflect socioeconomic differences in how the two islands participated in colonialism.

Chapter Three focuses on two characters who are products of the transatlantic economic circuit, Amparo, and Sofía. Each woman is representative of a subjugated social category and both authors are concerned to counteract such discriminating discourses. Pardo Bazán, herself writing in a male-dominated genre, attempts to unveil the male gaze as constructive of female sexuality, while Morúa Delgado, a Cuban mulatto, tries to expose the groundlessness of racial prejudices. Thus the two authors navigate in interesting ways the problem of how to represent exploited categories within the naturalist novel.

Allusions to Cuba and to a racial other bring out the exploitation of *La Tribuna*'s Amparo. But I also proposed that underlying racialization in *La Tribuna* is an ethnographic discourse which can be found in much European cultural production, thus exhibiting racial discourse in transatlantic circulation. *La Tribuna* reveals that racial discourses did not just exist in slave-based or openly racially segregated societies, but also occurred within the metropolis. *Sofía* is a response to the commonplace ascription of inherent behavioral traits to races. By reading the two novels together, the scope of racialized discourse can be extended from Cuba and the Caribbean to Spain and Europe, creating a shared ideological sphere in which social and intellectual movements on both sides of the Atlantic can be understood symbiotically. An example that has influenced me here is that of Haiti's revolution, which, as Fischer's *Modernity Disavowed* has shown, was crucial to the development of the ideals of equality of the French Revolution, even though its influence on the French discussion of human rights was later disavowed by historians. By treating *Sofía* as in dialogue with *La Tribuna* I wish to bring to mind that Puerto Ricans and Cubans played a decisive role in the development of social and political rights in Spain starting in the 1860s. Vizcarrondo, for example, brought to Spain tools for social activism that he had seen working in the United States in the fight against slavery.

Chapter Four reveals a shared social and economic structure between Spain and Cuba based on the existence of a group of powerful financiers operating trans-nationally, who

exerted great influence over colonial policies and ultimately over the political fate of peninsular Spain and the Spanish Caribbean. Like Leonardo Gamboa in *Cecilia Valdés*, Isidora in *La Desheredada* is financially dependent, through her consumerism, on colonial exploitation and slavery and the transatlantic traffic of goods and slaves. Both novels depict their protagonists critically through the lens of republican social models, which valued restricted consumerism, a frugal lifestyle and daily work. Leonardo's and Isidora's idle consumerism maintains their economic ties with Cándido Gamboa and Sánchez Botín respectively and keeps the transatlantic circuit going. Isidora's taking economic ownership of her body is undermined by the fact that, as a woman, her independence remains limited and her autonomy will now be subject more than ever to the whims of the market. The mode of independence she achieves can be understood as anticipating the future of the Caribbean colonies once they gain independence from Spain, and thereby as a pessimistic response to *Cecilia Valdés*'s dreams of independence.

The close readings that I have undertaken throughout this work have shown that imperialist discourses cannot be understood only in terms of a geopolitical distinction. In particular, class, race, gender and sexuality are seen as modes through which the transatlantic circuit and imperial practices are articulated at various levels. In the use of these categories a different picture of the transatlantic emerges, one with many layers that exhibit discontinuities as often as congruencies. From this perspective, a theme that stretches across several Chapters is the ambiguous participation of characters in relations of power, both benefitting and suffering from exploitation. Instead of comfortably dwelling in clear cut antagonisms I have found it more illuminating and insightful to explore dualities, contradictions and ambiguities of power relations.

Especially revealing in this regard is the identification of the colonial and the feminine in metropolitan novels, in a way that surpasses Said's analysis of this issue. In his interpretation of the portrayal of the colonial as feminine in realist novels, he elides the specific social condition of women, and thus misses an opportunity to establish a dialogue between social formations across geopolitical boundaries. In this regard, I stress that within metropolitan novels, women are described as objects of conquest, as in the case of Ana Ozores in *La Regenta*; their sexuality is described in racial terms, as in the case of Amparo in *La Tribuna*; and they themselves find common ground with the colonial, as in Isidora's self-identification with the licenciados de Cuba. In addition, certain post-colonial theories, which were originally formulated to be applied in colonial spaces, have been especially illuminating when applied to metropolitan novels. Thus, Isidora's relationship with Sánchez Botín takes on new meaning when viewed through the lens of Homi Bhabha's concept of mimicry. At the same time, identifications between metropolitan women and the colony are sometimes questioned: Ana's suffering, like that of Ana María Unzuázu in *Sofía*, cannot be equated to colonial exploitation, and Amparo and Isidora are aloof to it.

In all metropolitan novels I have found a persistent reference to cigars and cigarettes, which brought together theoretical approaches emerging from the psychoanalytic as well as economic perspectives. Furthermore, this commodity embodies not just racial, gender,

sexual and economic discourses, but also reveals the symbiotic interconnectedness of the domestic and the transatlantic in social and political terms throughout the Six Year Revolution and the Restoration. Such interconnectedness was also evident from the Caribbean side in Hostos' conception of his failure to alter Spain's relations with Puerto Rico and Cuba as a failure to achieve a greater degree of freedom within Spain.¹¹⁴

The presence of cigars and cigarettes carries different meanings depending on the social class being portrayed; the relation between the colonial and the female acquires additional nuances when the latter's social class is taken into account. This phenomenon points to a central concern of my work in this study, the de-essentialization of gender, class, race and geopolitical situation when put in relation to one another. Such de-essentialization also occurs, for example, with respect to Bayoán's and Leonardo Gamboa's masculinities, which cannot be dissociated from their inhabiting colonial spaces. By contrast, the male characters in *La Regenta* are depicted in terms of a conquering male discourse that reflects the metropolis' imperialist glory and anxieties. Again, in *La Tribuna*, the depiction of female sexuality in racial terms occurs differently for the working class Amparo, and the bourgeois Josefina, who becomes aroused while playing a gentle, exoticizing Habanera.

Cigar imagery also reveals the duality of the identification between female and colonial, in its function as a fetish in metropolitan novels. As a fetish, a cigar should be understood as both metaphor and metonymy. The metaphoric function of the fetish, its homogenizing capacity, enables the unification and harmonization of quite different realities, for example, the natural richness of Isidora's body and the natural resources of the colonies, both commodified by Sánchez Botín, representing the colonial lobby, or Ana Ozores, like the colonies, longing to be consumed and dominated within the imaginary of Restoration Spain. On the other hand, the metonymic dimension of the cigar, that is, its being part of an economic circuit involving racial exploitation, points to the colonial and slavery as the great absence in that comparison. The cigar fetish is an especially powerful image insofar as it shows the connection between the domestic and the transatlantic, revealing the incompleteness of metropolitan representation, and the need to bring in the colonial to fully comprehend the novels studied here.

My work on Spanish novels' representation of the colonial is just a starting point. Much more needs to be done with respect to all the authors I have been mentioned. I believe that there is in particular a need to trace out and put together in a unified framework Galdós' use of colonial references in his social novels, his *Episodios Nacionales* and his articles in periodicals. An interesting aspect of this research would be to explore the development of Galdós' views on colonial issues as well as his willingness to address these questions in more open terms, as in his late *Episodio Nacional, Amadeo I*.

¹¹⁴ "España tiranizadora de Puerto Rico y Cuba, estaba también tiranizada. Si la metrópoli se libertaba de sus déspotas, ¿no libertaría de su despotismo a las Antillas? Trabajar en España por la libertad, no era trabajar por la libertad de las Antillas?" (*La Peregrinación de Bayoán* 2).

While this work draws heavily on contemporary historical research, the kind of approach I adopt could be expanded and strengthened through archival research on periodicals, from both the Caribbean and Spain. In particular, with respect to the metropolitan novels, one of the goals of this dissertation was to address the gaps of information existing in the novels. Since the ideal reader would presumably be part of the bourgeoisie, he or she would also be informed about colonial issues for the most part through newspapers of the period. Thus, such archival research would provide an additional layer of coded information with which to understand colonial allusions within the novels.¹¹⁵

Also, my work here has focused on the period starting with the lead-up to the 1868 Revolution. But there was, I believe, a similarly symbiotic cultural and ideological development in peninsular Spain and the Caribbean throughout the 19th century, starting in the first decades of the 19th century. Examples are the contacts and conversations between Spanish poets, such as Manuel José Quintana and José Nicasio Gallego, and the Cuban (born in Santo Domingo) Domingo del Monte, who was the creator of the first national cultural movement in Cuba, centered on the question of how literature could contribute to national cohesion. Did Spain's fight for independence against the French invasion influence the creation of Cuban identity in a way comparable to the process of independence of the Latin-American republics in continental America?

The recent and increasing popularity of the colonial topic, not just in reference to Galdós' novels but in 19th-century peninsular literature generally, makes one wonder why it has occurred now. Is it just a late influence of French, British and Latin American post-colonial studies? In the case of Spain, the concern for the colonial aspect of Spain's 19th century had its origins in historiographic challenges to the way Spain's modern history was written during the Franco dictatorship. It is only some years later that peninsular literary studies have begun to adequately address it. Thus, even if these recent developments in peninsular cultural studies have been influenced by British, French and Latin American post-colonial approaches, they also have roots in recent Spanish historiography—a reflection of Spain's recent socio-cultural development, in particular in two communities, Cataluña and Madrid, where the major historical work has been done. What is it about Spain's recent and current political and social situation that has given rise to a renewal of concern for Spain's 19th-century colonialism?

Returning to the question of how to understand Spain and the Caribbean territories, I have attempted to throw some light on the issue of the national divisions of literary traditions, in particular in reference to those countries that were once part of a political

¹¹⁵ Looking at periodicals could also be helpful in addressing the questions of how and why Spanish intellectuals, initially highly critical of slavery, turned to a silent complicity in the first decades of the 19th century. This question remains puzzling to my mind, since the topic of slavery was to a certain extent present in Spanish intellectual life, as the publication of Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda's *Sab* in 1841 shows; the novel was censored in Cuba.

and economic unity; and here one should add the Philippines as well. A post-independence perspective is no doubt partly responsible for the fact that many of the novels I have studied are often treated as belonging to distinct literary traditions. However, why should literary traditions be established from the point of view of the contemporary political situation? Ultimately, the cultural productions of Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines emerged in a political, cultural, economic and social context that could not be understood without appealing to Spain's colonial rule over those territories. Furthermore, even if they are understood as national novels, they take up the question of national status only by actively engaging with their problematic status within a larger transatlantic framework. The literary productions of the former overseas provinces that I have explored, moreover, offer deep insight into what Spain was during the 19th century. Spain's dismissal of the cultural production in the 19th century, which I discussed in relation to Hostos' *La Peregrinación de Bayoán*, will be repeated nowadays if Spanish cultural studies do not take into account what was produced in the overseas territories. To reject the comparative, transatlantic approach, whether from a Caribbean or a peninsular point of view, is ultimately to fail to do justice to a shared history, and to a subsequent literary tradition that cannot be fully addressed within homogenous and nationally based models.

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