

RACIALLY HYBRID AND RACIALLY BLIND: SPANISH AND CATALAN TWENTIETH-
CENTURY CULTURES AND PERCEPTIONS OF THE OTHER

by

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Racially Hybrid and Racially Blind: Spanish and Catalan Twentieth-Century Cultures and Perceptions of the Other

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This dissertation examines three processes of Othering that appeared in Spain and Catalonia over approximately one hundred years, throwing light on the relationships between nation, race, and ethnicity, as well as between ideology, language, and representation. Specifically, this manuscript analyzes how Spanish and Catalan intellectuals envision their national identities and their perceptions of the Other in their works. The corpus consists of representative written and audiovisual texts of three periods—the first decades of the twentieth century, the 1960s modernization process, and the recent past. As such, in Chapter Two, the *Meditaciones del Quijote* (1914) by Ortega i Gasset and *La nacionalitat catalana* (1906) by Enric Prat de la Riba, respectively, defined the Spanish and Catalan national ideal on the grounds of hybridity to counteract European discourses of racial purity; and *El negro que tenía el alma blanca* (1922) by Alberto Insúa and *Llibertat!* (1901) by Santiago Rusiñol, together with *Notas marruecas de un soldado* (1923) by Ernesto Giménez Caballero and *Quatre gotes de sang: Dietari d'un català al Marroc* (1936), showcase the existence of hegemonic perceptions of racial difference in the early twentieth century. Then, Chapter Three analyzes the film *La piel quemada* (1967) by Josep Maria Forn and the novel *Últimas tardes con Teresa* (1966) by Juan Marsé to elucidate the interplay between the authors' situation within society and their uses of language. Both artists formulated narratives that incorporated Southern Spanish migrants into the national

ideal, but they did so from opposing points of view corresponding with their positions within Catalan national culture. Finally, Chapter Four interprets another novel, *Hija del camino* (2019) by Lucía Asué Mbomío Rubio, and another film, *Lo nunca visto* (2019) by Marina Seresesky, to assess their representations of blackness. The analyses showcase the novel as an empowering and inclusive depiction of racial difference and the film as a replication of stereotypes that reinforce the status quo of the nation-state. Based on these portrayals of Otherness, this project foregrounds prominent discourses of Otherness in each national context and the influence of language and representation on ideology.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: THE PROCESS OF OTHERING IN TWENTIETH CENTURY SPAIN AND CATALONIA

Recalling her childhood, Desireé Bela-Lobedde notes, “Nací a finales de 1978 en Barcelona. Sí, soy española aunque, por el color de mi piel, muchos dirían, dicen, que soy de cualquier otra parte” (12). Her statement illustrates the intertwined relationship between notions of nation and race, one of the multiple ways in which the sociopolitical structure of the nation-state fixes difference to define itself: what this dissertation calls the process of Othering. Bela-Lobedde’s darker skin color is foreign to what people conceive of as Spanish, suggesting that the national ideal aspires to a particular conceptualization of whiteness: one that not only simply rejects blackness but also is able to find different ways of typifying difference (even if phenotypical differences are absent) and establishing racial and ethnic hierarchies. The cultural representations of the Other, as well as their negotiations within the national culture, are the focus of this dissertation. By examining different portrayals of racial and ethnic differences in twentieth-century Spanish and Catalan cultures, I seek to explain how cultural capital operates within the social fabric and conveys hegemonic or counter-hegemonic representations of Otherness, and to describe how different means of expression imagine the Other within the nation.

With respect to this, the dissertation understands that the notion of the Other has multiple expressions but frequently reproduces discourses that establish hierarchical relationships between subjects; that is, between those who conform to the national ideal and those who do not

and are outside of it. As William E. Connolly states, “The definition of difference is a requirement built into the logics of identity, and the construction of otherness is a temptation that readily insinuates itself into that logic” (9). The political scientist also suggests that once difference is established, it impersonates the source of evil and becomes a threat to identity, which justifies the exclusion from collectivity of those who are different, in other words, the Other (12). These statements suggest that national identities reify and consolidate themselves by defining and supporting a notion of difference. To put it differently, they accomplish the process of Othering and in so doing fabricate a monolithic image of difference to define and assert their identity. These considerations show that “Identity and difference are bound together:” they share an unbreakable link in which one cannot exist without the other, complicating the task of transcending difference and Otherness (Connolly 44). In short, Connolly argues that national identities undergo reification processes in which identity and difference are antagonists but dependent: the latter bolsters the former as it personifies a threat to the nation. This is the particular phenomenon addressed in the corpus of this dissertation; the texts represent a variety of conceptualizations of Otherness that sometimes reify and support, and at other times subvert and transform hegemonic racial discourses but that always exemplify the unbreakable relationship between identity and difference.

Taking a post-structuralist perspective, the corpus showcases that cultural artifacts exist as entities within discourse, and that they are therefore affected by it and its agents, i.e., members of society. As such, the dissertation provides a thorough analysis of how the selected artifacts represent hegemonic racial and ethnic hierarchies, elucidating that cultural capital intervenes in the consolidation or rejection of exclusionary ideologies. However, conceptualizations of the Other are contingent on temporal and geographical specificities, as academic research has shown

time and again. For instance, in the context of Latin America, the articles collected in *Imperial Subjects: Race and Identity in Colonial Latin America* (2009) display the relationship between colonial ideology and the identities of imperial subjects (Iberian settlers, Native Americans, African slaves, and their multiethnic offspring) and conclude that “studying social categories is inherently diachronic (and historical) rather than synchronic (and static)” (Fisher and O’Hara 12). The collection points out that the notion of Otherness is contextual and varies widely depending on time and space; that is why this dissertation chooses three different processes of Othering that appeared in Spanish and Catalan national cultures during a time span of approximately one hundred years, showing the specificities of each period. Moreover, the project emphasizes the ideological function of cultural products by employing a multidisciplinary corpus that encompasses different means of expression and genres, such as films, novels, plays, and essays. My purpose is to bring to the fore the different ways in which literature and cinema construct notions of race, ethnicity, and nation and the multiple manners in which these terms are expressed and negotiated in both, Spanish and Catalan national cultures. Thus, to appropriately investigate the intersections between these concepts, first it is necessary to provide the historical and cultural framework of this dissertation.

The Spanish nation-state is characterized by its Southern location within the geopolitical context of Europe and its multifaceted linguistic landscape—as illustrated by the four official languages in the territory: Castilian, Galician, Basque, and Catalan. While Spain is embedded socially, politically, and economically in the European Union, the peninsula has nonetheless been traditionally perceived as an exoticized territory. Scholars assert that Northern European intellectuals have considered the Iberian Peninsula (and specially Spain) negatively, as an underdeveloped and incompletely civilized territory, establishing a hierarchical relationship

between North and South. For instance, José L. Venegas, taking Edward W. Said's postcolonial theory, discloses how Spanish national discourse, influenced by European Romanticism, exoticized the South (the region of Andalusia) to construct a paradoxical national identity: one that embraces an Orientalist perception of itself but continues colonizing and "orientalizing" other nations (15). The author maps out this Orientalist twofold narrative and shows that it pervades Spanish cultural production throughout the period, from the late nineteenth century to the democratic era. Similarly, Susan Martin-Márquez—who has studied cultural representations of Africa and Africans throughout approximately the same time frame as Venegas—identifies a discursive thread that shifts according to the necessities of each historical moment and invokes the medieval past of the peninsula to define national identity (4). Martin-Márquez finally concludes that "Spain is a nation that is at once Orientalized and Orientalizing. The dynamic resembles a Möbius strip, calling into question the possibility of any location 'outside' Orientalist discourse" (9). The scholar evokes the mathematical symbol of the infinite to illustrate the inescapable situation of Spanish national identity: ensnared in an Orientalist vicious cycle. Both critics point to the particular circumstance of the Iberian Peninsula within the context of Europe: one in which Spain internalizes the inferior perception of other European countries and projects it within its own territory, triggering a self-orientalization process that internally divides societies into geographical binaries of North and South or rural and urban. To put it simply, the Iberian Peninsula is simultaneously "orientalized" and "orientalizing," and this circumstance affects all the national identities within the territory. Therefore, Spanish and Catalan national identities clearly adopt a twofold contradictory strategy for defining themselves and securing their status within the geopolitical imperial arena of the West. On the one hand, they replicate hegemonic conceptualizations of ethnic and racial differences. On the other hand,

they reject the Northern European ideal of racial purity and convey support for the idea of racial hybridity to cope with their internalized inferiority complex. These critical studies are fundamental for the present dissertation not only because they share similar objects of study, theoretical frameworks, and historical contexts; but also, because their findings are evident in some of the primary texts, contributing to these academic debates by providing contemporary instances in which Spanish and Catalan identities negotiate with twofold and contradictory perceptions of self and Other. The geographical framework of the dissertation takes into consideration the concrete peculiarities of the territory and participates in further illustrating how national discourses play out with notions of Otherness in Spain and Catalonia.

Another factor that makes the Spanish nation-state a unique context is that it encompasses multiple linguistic territories that have developed nationalist sentiments throughout history, especially from the nineteenth century onwards. This linguistic diversity and multifaceted regional identity are defining elements of the nation-state's history, and the emergence of multiple nationalist sentiments in the four different linguistic areas is a relatively recent (and uneven) phenomenon. Still, these national identities have co-existed in relative peace, though the undeniable political hegemony of Spain asserted itself during the events of the 2017 referendum for independence in Catalonia.¹ Thankfully, the linguistic diversity of the Spanish nation-state is a reality that has finally been acknowledged at least in some academic debates, as the recent volume *Modern Literatures in Spain* (2023) co-authored by Jo Labanyi and Luisa Elena Delgado illustrates. The goal of the text is “to offer a cultural history that is attentive to the way ‘Spanish literature’ has been constructed historically and came to refer solely to

¹ On October 1st, the Catalan government held a referendum for independence without the legal backing of the Spanish nation-state, which responded with a violent and punitive operation deploying forces and aggressively attacking the population in the voting polls. The political conflict finally resulted in the trial and incarceration of some political leaders and civil activists.

literature in Castilian . . . [to] call into question geographic and linguistic definitions of the nation . . . [and] to rethink literary periodization” (Labanyi and Delgado 1-2). That is why, Labanyi’s and Delgado’s volume considers the geographical particularities of the Spanish nation-state and includes content about four literary traditions that correspond with the official languages in Spain, and in doing so, presents a more comprehensive approach to the portrayal of its cultural diversity. In this sense, this dissertation adopts the same epistemological stance towards the study of Spanish culture but, unlike Labanyi and Delgado, it is unable to address such a wide geographical and linguistic scope due to space and time constraints; so, this dissertation narrows consideration of the linguistic diversity of Spain and presents only one other cultural context besides the hegemonic Spanish: Catalonia. Though the topic is narrowed, this dissertation still strives to consider the geographical particularities of the Spanish nation-state and to provide a more comprehensive commentary on cultural representations of Otherness: one that acknowledges the realities of Spanish and Catalan identities and shows how notions of nation and Otherness are conveyed and what characteristics define them.

Moreover, the process of Othering is contingent on time, and the Spanish nation-state, together with its sub-national identities, have endured profound political, economic, and social transformations throughout the last one hundred years. This dissertation considers these transformative processes and presents a transhistorical analysis that displays how Spanish and Catalan national cultures imagined the Other within the nation in three concrete historical contexts: the first three decades of the century, which were characterized by sociopolitical instability; the accelerated, yet uneven modernization process of the 1950s and 1960s; and the era ending in the present day. The decision to focus on three different timeframes stems from my interests in providing a panoramic view of the century and investigating how the idea of the

nation developed and what representations of Otherness contributed to shape it. As readers will discover, this dissertation demonstrates that the twentieth century in Spain and Catalonia was a time of almost frenetic change, and those changes impacted racial, ethnic, and national discourses, which had to be restated and accommodated to rapidly shifting circumstances again and again. The close readings presented in the corpus illustrate how cultural productions instill preconceptions of nation and Otherness, at times consolidating, at times challenging them, but always demonstrating that cultural capital is a vehicle for the transmission of ideology. Moreover, the transhistorical and multicultural approach of this dissertation provides more detailed descriptions of both national contexts, displaying how the possession or lack of national sovereignty influences the conceptualization of the nation and the Other. In short, this manuscript considers the geographical and temporal particularities of Spain and Catalonia to elucidate how Otherness is represented and negotiated by different media at different times.

Accordingly, the corpus of the dissertation is composed of written and cinematic texts that are representative of each historical moment; it overviews the colonial legacies of early twentieth century Spain, the internal migrations within the Spanish nation-state, and its current relationship with Otherness in a globalized heterogenous society. First, Chapter Two evaluates cultural products from the first three decades of the century, a century that was, if anything, convulsive and full of social, political, and economic transformations. For the Spanish nation-state, this historical period was crucial for the national identity because the country lost a huge portion of its colonial power in 1898. The chapter addresses this era and this identity crisis, and it does so with two canonical texts from Spain and Catalonia: respectively, *Meditaciones del Quijote* (1914) by José Ortega y Gasset and *La nacionalitat catalana* (1906) by Enric Prat de la Riba. These two political essays defined the national ideals, and the chapter interprets the racial

discourses they convey in the descriptions of the nation, showing that neither the Spanish nor the Catalan national culture advocates for racial purity.

Moreover, the second chapter includes four other primary texts that are representations of the Other in the context of Spain's post-imperial legacies and colonial war in Morocco. Alberto Insúa's novel *El negro que tenía el alma blanca* (1922) and Santiago Rusiñol's play *Llibertat!* (1901) depict racialized protagonists that come from the American colonies; and *Notas marruecas de un soldado* (1923) by Ernesto Giménez Caballero and *Quatre gotes de sang: Diari d'un català al Marroc* (1936) by Josep Maria Prous i Vila—two diaries of the Rif War (1921-1926), a military conflict between France, Spain, and Morocco—represent Spanish and Catalan colonial enterprises in North Africa. I selected these primary texts because, when considered together, they allow me to present a broad description of both national contexts, and they are excellent examples of the racial discourses that proliferated in cultural spheres during the early twentieth century.

Then, the dissertation moves forward in time to the middle of the century and narrows down the focus solely to the territory of Catalonia to study a particular process of Othering within the Spanish nation-state. In the late 1950s, when the country was emerging from its international isolation, some regions in Spain endured a rapid modernization process that has been known as the period of *desarrollismo*. The arrival of modernity provoked economic, political, and social transformations, one of the most visible being the migratory movements from rural Spain to those developing regions. These intra-national migrations triggered a social clash mostly defined by the difference in economic status; but in those territories with languages other than Spanish, such as Catalonia, the conflict was experienced differently, intersecting with the idea of ethnicity. I choose this timeframe and the Catalan case, in particular, because this

geographical context displays the junction between nation and ethnicity more visibly at the historical moment when the Spanish nation-state secured its geopolitical relation to Europe. Interestingly, this process of Othering stands out because it advocates for assimilation, so much so that Southern Spanish migrants have become an integral part of the national ideal, as the primary texts in Chapter Three will illustrate. The film *La piel quemada* (1967) by Josep Maria Forn and the novel *Últimas tardes con Teresa* (1966) by Juan Marsé are two paradigmatic examples of this social conflict. Even today they have long-lasting recognition and relevance for Catalan national culture because they contribute to reinserting Southern Spanish migrants into the Catalan national ideal. These primary texts illuminate the unfolding of the conflict of the “xarnego,” providing two opposing yet compelling perspectives and elucidating the negotiations between national discourse and ethnic differences.

Finally, Chapter Four studies a third process of Othering within the territory of the Spanish nation-state and delves into contemporary Spain to assess how blackness is currently represented in film and literature. The decision to choose this timeframe stems from my interest both in shedding light on how racial discourses and national ideologies evolve and change and in evaluating the discourses of race in the Spanish cultural sphere today. This period of time is characterized by a heterogeneous society with access to a globalized culture, and, by focusing solely on Spain, the chapter balances the content of the dissertation, giving equal space to both national cultures. In this case, the corpus is the novel *Hija del camino* (2019) written by Lucía Asué Mbomío Rubio and the film *Lo nunca visto* (2019) directed by Marina Seresesky, two cultural products that are relevant for their representations of Otherness. I chose them because they explore relevant and contentious topics in present day Spain—particularly, racist social practices, de-population of rural areas, and migratory movements. In addition, they are

embedded in similar cultural contexts and share anti-racist motivations but convey opposing racial discourses, one empowering and another stereotyping, illustrating how culture might sustain or transform ideologies.

With this framework and motivations, the dissertation participates in different academic debates in the field of Iberian Cultural Studies, more specifically in the critical line of inquiry that examines the construction of national identities. In the Spanish context, some studies focus on describing the symbols and discourses that shape national imaginaries, but they sometimes overlook the interactions between the notion of nation and perceptions of the Other. For instance, *Metaphors of Spain: Representations of Spanish National Identity* (2017) written by Javier Moreno-Luzón is a collection of essays that explores Spanish mass culture artifacts (such as sports, bullfighting, or music, to mention a few) and analyzes a set of symbols that map the imaginary of national sentiments. However, this study is based on the idea that Spanish identity develops in isolation, i.e. it only examines national symbols generated within the nation-state and disregards the role that other factors such as gender, race, or colonial power play in the constitution of national ideals. Luckily, the monumental collection of essays *Spanish Cultural Studies, an Introduction: The Struggle for Modernity* (1995) unpacks modernization and modernity in relation with notions of nation, gender, and class. The collection demonstrates how the gender- and class-specific construction of ‘modernity’ forms a major example of the way we successively construct and reconstruct national values, reinforcing them through cultural practice (Graham and Labanyi 11). Although the volume focuses mainly on gender and class, the editors acknowledge the crucial role that race or ethnicity play in the constitution of notions of modernity and nation. They argue that, in comparison with Latin American Studies, Spanish

Cultural Studies lacks research on issues of racial and ethnic differences and nation-building processes, and they note:

If contemporary Spain has not produced an equivalent body of theory, this is possibly because race is an issue still only reluctantly acknowledged, and because the cultural heterogeneity legitimized by regional autonomy has tended to lead to a converse stress on the construction of homogeneous local cultural identities. It is perhaps a measure of the success of Francoist political indoctrination that ‘others’ still tend to be seen as existing without rather than within (Graham and Labanyi 4-5).

They acknowledge that, together with class and gender, race is a crucial concept that intervenes in the construction of national identities; and they suggest that Spanish regional heterogeneity (a narrative emphasized during the Francoist era) served as an excuse for ignoring the interplay between nation and race. However, the volume focuses on defining the hegemonic national identity of Spain and the gender and class components that shape it; and the present dissertation complements this debate by providing an illustration of how the process of Othering intervenes in the construction of the national identity, with all of its attendant ramifications.

Besides identifying factors that define Spanish national identity, the dissertation also enters into another academic debate in the field of Iberian Cultural Studies—one that examines how the hegemonic Spanish conceptualization of nation overlaps with imperial power and hierarchical racialization. This line of inquiry is synthesized in Antonio Feros’ argument that Spain based its national ideal on two discursive strategies: “remembrance and forgetting, collective memory and selective oblivion. Remembrance was necessary to appreciate the common achievements and ideologies . . . oblivion to forget or reinterpret everything that had once been divisive” (233). In my opinion, Feros’ epistemological paradigm defines the

overarching analytical approaches undertaken by some scholars in this field. For instance, the research conducted by Lisa Surwillo illuminates one of the potentially darkest, yet purposefully obliterated parts of the Spanish colonial period, the figure of the slave trafficker. The author analyzes manifold cultural representations—canonical authors such as Benito Pérez Galdós or Pío Baroja, or touristic sites such as the “Ruta del Indiano” or the monuments dedicated to the “Marqués de Comillas”—and declares that: “the traces of the slaving past in peninsular life have been, by and large, swept aside in a variation on the pacto de silencio that has set the tone for contemporary Spain’s relationship to the past” (Surwillo 194). In short, Surwillo’s cultural analysis reveals that the selective oblivion of the Spanish national ideal consists of gaslighting its imperial past, particularly its role in slave-trafficking. If Surwillo comments on Feros’ obliterated memories of Spanish history, Alda Blanco investigates those that are remembered and extolled in society’s collective memory. The scholar examines how imperial ideology is fundamental in the constitution of the national ideal by analyzing a set of texts, objects, and cultural practices. These case studies underline “la centralidad del imperio, de la identidad imperial de la nación y la existencia de una conciencia imperial en la España decimonónica y de principios del siglo XX” (Blanco 17). The critic displays that the colonial ideologies and imperial consciousness were an essential part of Spanish national identity throughout the nineteenth century despite the fact that Spain lost most of its colonial power between 1824 and 1898 (Blanco 21). Surwillo’s and Blanco’s investigations are groundbreaking and constructive in the effort to understand the ideological foundations that shape the nation-building process of Spain. The dissertation tackles this academic debate by illustrating: 1) the definition of the nation is tied to notions of Otherness that vary and change depending on the historical context; 2) cultural productions not only reflect, but also intervene in this process by subverting or reinforcing it. By interpreting different

representations of the Other within two national contexts (Spain and Catalonia), the dissertation shows the historical specificities of both territories and aims to provide a detailed description of three processes of Othering.

Finally, this dissertation engages in the academic debate concerning the interactions between national identities and racial constructions. The scholarship on these topics suggests that the Spanish case is unique, especially in comparison with other Western post-colonial societies: unlike Northern European countries, Spanish national identity never associates itself with ideas of racial purity, but it nonetheless shows dependency upon an abstract (and malleable) notion of whiteness and produces an image of the Other as inferior. One literary study that supports this statement is *Colonialism and Race in Luso-Hispanic Literature* (2006), by Jerome C. Branche, that analyzes a corpus of nineteenth-century literary texts in Spain and Latin America and notes:

The discursive construction of race in the modern period involves a basic duality. On the one hand, it entails the essentialization of an originally multiethnic Occidental identity into a singular and superior whiteness, and on the other, there is the corresponding negative projection of the Other through hyperbole (12-13).

For Branche, the paradoxical circumstance of the Spanish national ideal is that it defines itself as hybrid, even “impure,” but always desires an abstraction of whiteness and projects exaggerated perceptions of racial and ethnic differences. The present manuscript expands this debate by providing different examples in which Spanish and/or Catalan cultural spheres present Branche’s racial binary: some of the selected primary texts project negative or hyperbolic representations of race and ethnicity, while others advocate for a multiethnic identity, support the integration of the Other or accommodate racial and ethnic stereotypes.

Similarly, another academic study that delves into the intersections between national identities and racial constructs is Joshua Goode's *Impurity of Blood: Defining Race in Spain 1870-1930* (2009). Goode presents a thorough investigation of the dominant discourses among Spanish anthropologists to show the articulations of racial ideologies in society by providing examples from military recruitment policies, criminal anthropology, and political agendas. Goode highlights that the Spanish identity shares many commonalities with its European counterparts but is adapted to the historical and social contexts of the country (14); and he attests that hybridity and fusion played an essential role in the definition of race, and that this conceptualization may acquire positive or negative interpretations because it is contingent to social, political, or economic interests (210-213). The conclusions of this investigation suggest that the foundations of racial ideology in Spain are hybridity and fusion, but they can be interpreted positively or negatively depending on the political, social, and economical context.

This malleability in the racial discourse is reflected in the primary texts of the dissertation. Some of them present a positive, though nuanced, view of hybridity, and others gravitate towards a formulaic (if not negative) representation of Otherness. For instance, the two political essays in Chapter Two (*Meditaciones del Quijote* and *La nacionalitat catalana*) illustrate that Spanish and Catalan national discourses are grounded on an identity that advocates for hybridity and assimilation, respectively, instead of racial purity. In other words, Spain, due to its national identity crisis, sought to re-assert its geopolitical value through a discourse that was based on a conceptualization of race as essentially hybrid to counter-act hegemonic white supremacist ideologies in Northern Europe; whereas, Catalonia, which never enjoyed sovereignty, promoted the virtues of assimilation through language acquisition and deemed itself to be morally superior. However, the other four literary texts in the chapter also demonstrate the

presence of hegemonic discourses of race, specifically those outlined by post-colonial theory. Specifically, the narrative voices in the two diaries of the Rif War (1921-1926) display similarities with the Orientalist author described by Said, and the novel *El negro que tenía el alma blanca* and the play *Llibertat!* replicate Fanon's psychoanalytic description of the colonized subject. Additionally, *La piel quemada* and *Últimas tardes con Teresa*, the two canonical texts of the third chapter, accommodated the Other within the nation from two opposing, yet equally compelling perspectives. Forn's film promotes assimilation and preaches the national ideal to the local audience, who, like him, were witnessing the social clash provoked by the arrival of Southern migrants. In contrast, Marsé cleverly critiques Catalan upper-classes but creates an archetype of the migrants that inserts them into the nation's imagination. Finally, Chapter Four analyzes *Hija del camino* and *Lo nunca visto* and shows that there is an immense gap between their representations of the Other: the novel conveys a compelling narrative capable of criticizing Spanish racism and simultaneously empowering racialized subjects, but the film presents a more simplistic and stereotyped depiction of race and instrumentalizes Otherness to reinforce the status quo. Therefore, the dissertation contributes to the academic debates that observe the relationship between race and nation in two ways: first, it provides more examples that reflect the polarized duality of Spanish identity, and, secondly, it expands consideration of the identitarian paradigm through the addition of the region of Catalonia.

With respect to the theoretical framework of this dissertation, each chapter applies a different critical epistemology that articulates my arguments about representations of the Other. As such, Chapter Two employs post-colonial theory, specifically Franz Fanon's and Edward W. Said's ideas about the colonized subject and the Orient; the third chapter applies post-structuralist ideas from Roland Barthes and Stuart Hall, and the fourth one relies on Hall's

theorizations again, as well as on José Esteban Muñoz's terminology, specifically disidentification and queer futurity. Each of these theoretical frameworks illuminates how the primary texts represent notions of nation, race, and ethnicity and serves to analyze the historical factors that impacted the discourses represented in these cultural productions. Still, the overarching theoretical foundations of the dissertation are grounded in the post-structuralist paradigm that reveals the intertwined relationship between ideology and language and recognizes the ways in which discourse intervenes in these interactions. The literary and cinematic analyses of the primary texts explore what Stuart Hall, in the essay "The White of their Eyes: Racist Ideologies and the Media," describes as "inferential racism:" "those apparently naturalized representations of events and situations relating to race, whether 'factual' or 'fictional,' which have racist premises and propositions inscribed in them as a set of unquestioned assumptions" (105). Hall's term serves to describe what the following chapters accomplish: identifying what representations of race, ethnicity and nation have been naturalized in Spanish and Catalan cultures, thus becoming invisible to their societies.

Yet, if the close-readings of the primary texts sometimes unveil Hall's "inferential racism," the overarching approach of the dissertation relies on other post-structuralists ideas and Marxist theories (105). The purpose is to reveal the interplay between language and ideology and to examine the factors that are crucial in the interactions between these two societal forces. In the aforementioned essay, Hall also affirms that "Language and ideology are not the same . . . But language, broadly conceived, is by definition the principal medium in which we find different ideological discourses elaborated" (100). The Cultural Studies theorist points to the interplay between ideology and language and argues that the latter elaborates and reproduces the former, hinting at the role that representation plays in the transmission and consolidation of ideas and

beliefs. Moreover, Hall sets forth three considerations to fully understand how ideology functions:

First, ideologies do not consist of isolated and separate concepts, but in the articulation of different elements into a distinctive set or chain of meanings . . . Second, ideological statements are made by individuals: but ideologies are not the product of individual consciousness or intention. Rather, we formulate our intentions *within ideology* . . . Third, ideologies ‘work’ by constructing for their subjects (individual and collective) positions of identification and knowledge which allow them to ‘utter’ ideological truths as if they were their authentic author (100-101).

In other words, ideologies are related to the particular reality surrounding them; they do not result from any particular individual but exist and underlie everyone’s consciousness; and they function as “constructors” of identity and knowledge, of the reality that we hold to be true. These three considerations, as well as Hall’s understanding of language and ideology, guide the critical readings of the dissertation to showcase how the corpus reflects different ideological stances on nation, race, and ethnicity. The following chapters delve into particular representations of the Other that appeared in Spain and Catalonia to unveil how these two national cultures have expressed different ideologies about Otherness throughout the twentieth century. In this sense, the post-structuralist approach adopted in this dissertation is also embedded in a Marxist understanding of the interplay between ideology and language, one that considers cultural capital as an active agent in the constitution and transformations of ideologies. Louis Althusser argues that these interactions are effected by what he calls “Ideological State Apparatuses:” public or private institutions through which the state indoctrinates society with its political ideology, discourse, or intentions (1341). The theorist lists religion, education, family, legislation, politics,

culture, and media as the most prominent of these, and affirms that: they “function massively and predominantly by *ideology*, but they also function secondarily by repression, even if ultimately, but only ultimately, this is very attenuated and concealed, even symbolic” (Althusser 1341-1342). Althusser points to the social, political, and economic institutions that support hegemonic ideologies, and he argues that these apparatuses instill ideologies in multiple ways, some obvious and others more subtle, even symbolical. However, the Marxist theorist interprets the influence that culture has on ideologies as solely operating to support hegemony, disregarding the opposite that cultural products might challenge the status quo. In this sense, this dissertation considers both perspectives and identifies whether or not each text in the corpus sustains or subverts hegemonic ideologies.

Following this premise, the next chapters provide three different examples of how written and audiovisual languages articulate or debunk racial, ethnic, and national ideologies in twentieth-century Spain and Catalonia. The dissertation elucidates the interplay between these terms at different times, proving that the process of Othering (on the grounds on either race or ethnicity) recurrently appears in the construction of national ideals and can be challenged or reinforced by cultural productions. For instance, Chapter Two showcases the contradictory nature of Spanish and Catalan national identities, which advocate for racial hybridity and mixture but maintain a hierarchical understanding of difference. Similarly, the fourth chapter in this dissertation analyzes two case studies that render opposite representations of the Other: *Hija del camino* effectively denounces Spanish racism and empowers racialized subjectivities, and *Lo nunca visto* replicates hegemonic racial discourses and produces an opportunistic and self-satisfying notion of Otherness. In other words, the ideas of race, ethnicity, and nation are at the core of all the chapters, which ultimately display the multiple ways in which these terms intersect

and construct national identities and the notion of the Other. The analyses presented in this dissertation illuminate that cultural products function as ideological apparatuses, shaping society's hegemonic or counter-hegemonic perceptions of the Other. In sum, the dissertation employs these post-structuralist and Marxist theorizations to examine what representations of race, ethnicity and nation have been naturalized in Spanish and Catalan cultures and what interactions occur between ideology and language. The present manuscript considers and interprets the primary texts as active and constructive components of two ideological apparatuses, those of Spanish and Catalan national cultures, and showcases how they represent and reify expressions of Otherness.

Taking these academic debates and theoretical considerations as starting points, the transhistorical approach of the chapters, as well as the multidisciplinary nature of the corpus, display what factors impact the representation of Otherness in cultural artifacts. The primary texts selected for this dissertation comprise two means of expression, written and audiovisual language, and their critical analyses shed light on the discursive possibilities of each medium. More precisely, the following three chapters elucidate how Spanish and Catalan national cultures have represented the Other and how cultural productions negotiate with this abstract notion of difference. Firstly, Chapter Two, "Race and Nation in Spanish and Catalan Nationalism between 1898 and 1936," focuses on the first third of the twentieth century and sets forth the foundational ideas of the nation and hegemonic perceptions of the Other that dominated the cultural spheres of Spain and Catalonia. To do so, the chapter employs two political essays—*Meditaciones del Quijote* (1914) by José Ortega i Gasset and *La nacionalitat catalana* (1906) by Enric Prat de la Riba—to show that Spanish and Catalan national ideals disregard discourses of racial purity (as opposed to what other Northern European nations did) and were grounded on racial hybridity

and assimilation, respectively. The chapter illustrates prominently the influence of the aforementioned “bidirectional orientalization” of the Spanish nation-state identified by Venegas and Martin-Márquez. This “orientalized and orientaling” process is determinant of how both national identities, Spanish and Catalan, relate to and interact with whiteness and explains why neither of them makes a plea for racial purity.

Moreover, Chapter Two demonstrates, that, despite professing ideas that are apparently more inclusive, hegemonic perceptions of the Other pervaded both societies, since some cultural artifacts reproduced hegemonic racial discourses identified by post-colonial theory. The play *Llibertat!* (1901) by Santiago Rusiñol, and the novel *El negro que tenía el alma blanca* (1922) by Alberto Insúa replicated at face value Frantz Fanon’s psychological reading of the colonized subject; both narratives revolve around two racialized protagonists that exhibit a desire for assimilation and whiteness epitomized in the love of a white woman. Additionally, *Notas marruecas de un soldado* (1923) by Ernesto Giménez Caballero and *Quatre gotes de sang: Dietari d'un català al Marroc* (1936) by Josep Maria Prous i Vila—the two diaries of the Rif War (1921-1926)—share many traits with Said’s Orientalist author. Specifically, both narrative voices speak from presumed objective and detached positions, assert their racial superiority while maintaining an ambivalent stance towards the Orient, and exhibit underlying motivations that have more to do with the situation in the peninsula than with race. Therefore, Chapter Two outlines the foundational ideas of Spanish and Catalan national identities, showing how they negotiate with their inferiority complex with respect to Europe, and reveals, despite this circumstance, the presence of hegemonic perceptions of Otherness in both societies. The selection of this corpus stems from the necessity to establish a broad depiction of what national and racial discourses dominated Spain and Catalonia in the early twentieth century; the primary

texts in the chapter exemplify this wide-ranging historical context because they address issues of nation and race and are written by well-known authors and intellectuals from Spanish and Catalan cultural spheres.

After providing an overview of Spanish and Catalan national identities and representations of the Other, Chapter Three—entitled “Josep Maria Forn and Juan Marsé: Two Subject-Positions Articulating 1960s Catalan National Identity”—moves forward in time and focuses on Catalonia. It explores the rampant modernization process endured by the region throughout the mid-twentieth century and the particular process of Othering provoked by the arrival of migrants from rural Spain, who supplied the labor that made modernization possible. The critical readings of the film *La piel quemada* (1967) and the novel *Últimas tardes con Teresa* (1966) investigate how the authors’ situatedness within the national culture influences the representation of Otherness. From a sensitive and empathetic perspective, Forn constructs a didactic cinematic narrative that justifies the motivations for migrating, advocates for assimilation, and outlines the hegemonic national ideal and its requirements. Along these lines, but from the opposing point of view, Marsé assembles a sharp and sarcastic criticism of Catalan upper-middle classes and composes a charming and moving archetype of the migrant that eventually became part of the national collective memory. The filmmaker and the novelist maximize the discursive possibilities of written and audiovisual language to construct two iconic, yet opposite narratives that nonetheless end up inscribing Southern migrants in the Catalan national ideal. The post-structuralist analysis of the primary texts shows how the authors’ loci of enunciation (i.e. their concrete situation within the Catalan national culture) impact their signifying practices (i.e. their use of literary and cinematic language). The dissertation chooses these two cultural artifacts not only because their representations of the Other left indelible

marks on society's collective imagination and indeed became a part of the Catalan national ideal; but also, because both authors, Forn and Marsé, were highly-regarded intellectuals of Catalan culture throughout their careers.

Then, Chapter Four, "Contemporary Cultural Representations of Blackness in Spain: *Hija del camino* (2019) and *Lo nunca visto* (2019)," changes the temporal and geographical scenario again, focusing on contemporary Spain. The chapter analyzes the novel *Hija del camino* (2019) by Lucía Asué Mbomío Rubio and the film *Lo nunca visto* (2019) by Marina Seresesky to examine the narratives' strengths and limitations when representing Otherness, specifically blackness. These two case studies are useful to elucidate how cultural artifacts have the ability to subvert or reinforce ideologies of race and nation no matter the original motivations of the text. By applying theoretical concepts from Queer Theory and post-structuralism, Chapter Four displays in which ways cultural products may support or question the status quo. The chapter demonstrates that the novel successfully empowers racialized subjects and challenges Spanish racism, whereas the film replicates hegemonic racist discourses and reifies the racial hierarchy. Specifically, the analyses prove that the novel criticizes and may serve to change the racial paradigm in Spanish society, but the film fails to debunk racist stereotypes and instead instrumentalizes migrants and rearticulates a contemporary racial hierarchy.

Finally, the Conclusion, "Racially Hybrid and Racially Blind," presents a brief synthesis of the dissertation's main arguments and outlines possible lines of research revealed by this investigation. For instance, following the findings in Chapter Two, one of these might be the further development of how Spanish and Catalan national ideals articulate their racial identity throughout the century. Another line of inquiry might broaden the analysis of cultural representations of blackness and/or the Orient in early twentieth century with more studies on

similar texts, such as other publications depicting the Rif War. Along these lines, future research might also delve deeper into the relationship between the author's loci of enunciation and signifying practices and explore how different artists portray processes of Othering, expanding the arguments posed in Chapter Three. Another line of inquiry might consider the representation of the Other in contemporary Catalan cultural artifacts, complementing the findings put forward in Chapter Four. All in all, the dissertation provides a panoramic, transhistorical, and diverse analysis of two national cultures on the Iberian Peninsula to highlight their geographical and temporal specificities while demonstrating that the process of Othering is inherent to the social organization of these two nations.

CHAPTER II

RACE AND NATION IN SPANISH AND CATALAN NATIONALISM BETWEEN 1898 AND
1936

This chapter explores the relationship between race and nation in the Iberian Peninsula during the early-twentieth century. It shows that Spanish and Catalan nationalisms projected hierarchical conceptualizations of race on Otherness while upholding narratives of racial hybridity to validate the integration of both nations into the Western geopolitical landscape. At that time, Europe had witnessed the emergence of scientific fields such as eugenics and phrenology, and influential thinkers such as Houston Stuart Chamberlain pushed forward white-supremacist and antisemitic narratives.² The topic of race pervaded the public arena of European societies, and the idea of racial purity was at its prime. The Iberian Peninsula was never alien to the scientific discourses of race that flourished in Europe throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; peninsular anthropologists, scientists and criminologists of this period developed their own racial theories.³ This body of knowledge has been studied by Joshua Goode, who investigates how positive and negative conceptualizations of race were conveyed by Spanish anthropologists from the 1870s to 1930. He notes, “anthropologists in Spain attempted to

² Houston Stuart Chamberlain was a Germanophile philosopher that advocated for the superiority of the so-called Aryan race and whose political thought cast great impact on German nationalism, particularly on Adolf Hitler’s National Socialist movement (“Houston Stewart Chamberlain”). His works encompass studies on Richard Wagner, Kant, or Goethe, in which he emphasized Germany’s heroism and its role in World War I, but perhaps Chamberlain’s most influential writing is *Die Grundlagen des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts* (1899): a biased interpretation of European culture that exhibits his white-supremacism and anti-semitism (“Houston Stewart Chamberlain”).

³ To mention some examples from anthropology: Ángel Pulido Fernández (1852-1932), Manuel Antón Ferrándiz (1849-1929), Telésforo Aranzadi Unamuno (1860-1945), and Luís Hoyos Sáinz (1868-1951); from medicine Federico Olóriz Aguilera (1855-1912), José María Esquerdo Zaragoza (1842-1912), and Felipe Ovilo Canales (1850-1909); and from criminology and law, Rafael Salillas y Panzano (1854-1923), Pedro Dorado Montero (1861-1919), and Constancio Bernaldo de Quirós (1873-1959).

demonstrate that the power of admixtures actually superseded those of racial purity and attempted to assert . . . that the Spanish people were a racial alloy, a fusion of many others, and all the stronger for the mixture” (Goode 34). Goode implies that, instead of advocating for racial purity, as other European nationalisms did, Spanish narratives embraced hybridity to reinforce national unity. His findings show how the Iberian Peninsula reacted to the discussions about race that proliferated in Europe around the turn of the century. Goode finally concludes that hybridity and fusion played an essential role in the definition of race, and that this conceptualization may acquire positive or negative interpretations depending on social, political, or economic interests (210-213). His research suggests that the national ideals in the Iberian Peninsula ran counter to the tide of other European nationalist discourses by embracing hybridity as their racial identity; even so they manipulated the idea of race at their will to benefit from it.

Along these lines, Jerome Branche’s study of the Luso-Hispanic literary canon reaches similar conclusions. In *Colonialism and Race in Luso-Hispanic Literature*, Branche not only points out that race is an essential theme of national discourses (4); but he also identifies a twofold narrative in this context, one that essentializes “an originally multiethnic Occidental identity into a singular and superior whiteness,” and another one that projects a negative and antagonistic image “of the Other through hyperbole” (12-13). This study suggests that this inconsistent duality of narratives contributed to the racial blind spots in Spanish and Catalan societies and that notions of ethnic, geographic, and racial difference intertwine with the construction of national identities in the Iberian Peninsula. Drawing from Goode’s and Branche’s findings, this study affirms that racial and national ideals are mutually dependent and contingent on the needs of the historical time; it further proves that Peninsular national ideals were constructed through an ambiguous racial double standard: on the one hand, they envision a

positive understanding of hybridity to justify their Europeanness, and on the other, they deploy negative conceptualizations of race that mirror other Western ideologies and degrade other ethnic, racial, and geographical communities.

By illustrating how this contradictory paradigm of race and nation manifests in a wide range of literary and political texts from the first three decades of the twentieth century, this chapter demonstrates the pervasiveness of this racial paradox. Moreover, the chapter expands this discussion by observing the cultural production in Spain and Catalonia, to unveil whether or not these two different nationalist contexts reproduce similar constructions of race and nation. The ultimate goal is to show that these Peninsular national ideals projected a double-standard narrative on themselves and on others. On the one hand, these nationalist imaginaries reproduced hegemonic Western hierarchies of race when representing others, in particular Moroccans and black people. On the other hand, Spanish and Catalan nationalisms justified their Europeanness through a narrative of racial hybridity in order to overcome an inferiority complex caused by the way European hegemonic racial narratives perceived the Iberian Peninsula. These ideological constructions resulted from a particular socio-political context and will be developed in the following sections of this chapter. I argue that these racial and national conceptualizations constitute the foundational and contradictory paradigm that shaped Spanish and Catalan nationalism throughout the twentieth century and continues to exacerbate what I would call their racial blindness.

In order to prove this paradoxical racial narrative, the chapter is divided into two sections that study primary texts from both territories, Spain and Catalonia, to show that each social context reproduced similar discourses of race when representing the Other and itself. The first section explores the representation of the Other, particularly black people and Muslims, in

literary productions; while the second analyzes the self-perception of two key intellectual figures in Spain and Catalonia at the beginning of the twentieth century. In the first section, the main sources are paired according to the racialized collective they represent; accordingly, the novel *El negro que tenía el alma blanca* (1922) by Alberto Insúa and the play *Llibertat!* (1901) by Santiago Rusiñol show how these authors portrayed black people, while *Notas marruecas de un soldado* (1923) by Ernesto Giménez Caballero and *Quatre gotes de sang: Dietari d'un català al Marroc* (1936) by Josep Maria Prous i Vila show how these authors represented Moroccans. This section aims to illustrate that both national imaginaries display a hierarchical conceptualization of race that asserts Spanish and Catalan superiority through the hegemonic racist discourses of the Western world: a subordination of black individuals and a quasi-orientalization of North-African subjects. The texts illustrate this idea in different ways. While the play and the novel reproduce paradigmatic racial tropes from the Western world, despite their anti-racist intentions, the diaries about Morocco present a more complex racial narrative by replicating certain traits of hegemonic Orientalism, and at the same time presenting an ambivalent power relationship with the Orient. Finally, the second section of the chapter delves into the self-perception of Spanish and Catalan nationalisms by analyzing two essays: *Meditaciones del Quijote* (1914), José Ortega y Gasset's essay on Spanish identity, and *La nacionalitat catalana* (1906), Enric Prat de la Riba's influential political pamphlet. The analysis of these texts will show how Spanish and Catalan nationalisms pushed forward narratives of racial hybridity to define their identities, assert their Europeanness, and regain the prestige lost after the so-called Disaster of 1898. All in all, this selection of written texts constitutes a glimpse into the racial and nationalist narratives that marked the Spanish and Catalan cultural spheres at the beginning of the twentieth century.

However, the historical contextualization of Spain and Catalonia in the early twentieth century is rather complex, because these territories endured similar social, economic, and political transformations but constituted two different types of nationalism. According to Michael Keating, the contemporary idea of the nation-state is a “product of the modern era” and “represents the coincidence in space of a number of principles of social and economic organization,” which provide collective identity, territorial security, and common policymaking (691). By the turn of the twentieth century, the case of Spain is a paradigmatic example of this definition; in contrast, Catalonia cannot be defined as such because it never achieved full sovereignty and was always subordinated or associated to other empires or nations;⁴ yet, Catalan nationalist sentiments flourished and expanded throughout the modern era, becoming what Keating calls a “sub-state nationalism:” these nationalist sentiments may emerge under one nation-state “[w]here there is a pre-existing territorial fault line . . . and territorial communities form the basis for collective action” (692). To put it simply, a territorial fault line, such as sharing a common language, may foster social unity and collectivity which, in turn, may demand recognition and autonomy from the dominant nation-state. This definition perfectly matches the case of Catalan society and is crucial to understanding its intentions and stage of development at the beginning of the century. Therefore, Spanish and Catalan nationalisms are opposites in essence because the former represents a constituted nation-state, while the latter lacks autonomy and sovereignty, i.e. an example of Keating’s “sub-state nationalism” or what this chapter calls

⁴ In *Catalan Nationalism: Past and Present*, the historian Albert Balcells presents a synthesized, yet illustrative history of Catalonia from its origins in the Middle Ages to the democratic era at the end of the twentieth century. This historical chronology justifies the relevance of stateless nations in Europe and explains that a crucial element in the formation of a nation is “[t]he relationship between culture and politics” (*Catalan Nationalism* 1-2); it also recounts the different alliances and political transformations in Catalonia throughout history: from its association with the Carolingian empire in the early Middle Ages, to the constitution of the Catalan-Aragonese monarchy, to its affiliation to the Empire of the Spanish Crown in the sixteenth century, to the loss of its political autonomy in the eighteenth century.

“peripheral” or a “stateless” nationalism. Interestingly, this difference between Spain and Catalonia means that there are certain nuances between their nationalist discourses, such as defining their identities and objectives, but the two nationalisms still present a fundamental similarity in their racial narratives, especially in their perception of the Other. Yet, these nuances foster a better understanding of the impact that the historical transformations of the early twentieth century had on both territories.

The historical period that concerns this chapter is particularly complex in the Iberian Peninsula due to the political and social transformations occurring inside and outside the territory. Throughout the nineteenth century, Spanish colonies in the Americas and Asia progressively obtained their independence, weakening the nation’s status as a Western empire; the epitome of this decolonization process is the Spanish-American War (1898) in which Spain lost Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Philippines, and Guam. As Sebastian Balfour puts it, this military humiliation triggered “a severe post-imperial crisis among sections of Spanish society, one that had been delayed since the early nineteenth century. Spain’s political system, its national character, and Spanish nationhood itself now began to be widely questioned” (*The End of 49*). Along these lines, Mary Vincent describes the Disaster of 1898—a term used by many historians, intellectuals, and pundits—as a “national humiliation” and argues that it laid bare “the ‘problem’ of Spain. A distinct psychological mood of cultural introspection” that caused a visible impact in the political and social realms (94). In short, the 1898 defeat represents Spanish loss of power and authority within the European geopolitical landscape even though this conflict did not end the Spanish colonial enterprise (which actively continued in other territories, particularly in North and Sub-Saharan Africa, until the 1970s).⁵ The impact of this event was ubiquitous in the

⁵ The Spanish colonial enterprise continued in different African territories: Spanish Morocco, which became independent in 1956 (Torres García 184, Stucki 6); Tarfaya, which was part of the Spanish

political and cultural realm of Spanish society. However, as we will see in the second section of this chapter, Spanish and Catalan nationalisms adopted different stances when addressing this crisis: the former had to irretrievably accept and digest the defeat, while the latter, since it was beginning to flourish and lacked a sovereign state, took advantage of the situation. Of course, the socio-political context of the Iberian Peninsula at the beginning of the twentieth century was not solely marked by the events that occurred overseas; rather, there were internal factors that also defined the historical context of this period.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Spanish nation-state faced a series of internal economic, social, and political challenges: its uneven modernization, together with the emergence of an organized working-class, caused a profound disenchantment with the political system that accompanied the Restoration (1874-1923).⁶ Besides the conflicts overseas, the nineteenth century left the territory of the Iberian Peninsula unbalanced. In contrast with other European countries, Spain was modernized only partially: rural areas remained anchored in the post feudalist system known as *caciquismo*, while certain territories, such as Catalonia, the Basque Country or the capital, Madrid, reached certain level of industrial and commercial development (Vincent 86). Still, thanks to modernization, urban areas witnessed the rapid emergence of an effectively organized working class. Influenced by Marxist and anarchist

southern protectorate until 1958 (Bengoechea and Correale 36); Ifni, an enclave in the South-Atlantic coast that became Moroccan territory in 1969 (Torres García 185, Bengoechea and Correale 37); Equatorial Guinea, which was a province of Spain until 1963, when it acquired the status of autonomy and became formally independent in 1968 (Ndongo-Bydyogo 109, 133); and Western Sahara, which was occupied by Morocco (and, for a short period of time, Mauritania) after the withdrawal of Spanish troops in 1975, following the Green March, a political move in which approximately 350,000 Moroccan civilians crossed the Western Saharan border and occupied the territory claiming its annexation for Morocco (Sampedro 18-19).

⁶ The Restoration began in 1874 with the end of the First Spanish Republic and finished with the coup d'état and installation of the dictatorship of the general Primo de Rivera. The political system consisted of the reinstatement of the Bourbonic Crown, particularly the king Alfonso XII, and the governance of a parliament whose liberal and conservative parties shared and alternated their power.

ideologies, the proletariat and the labor unions organized strikes, occupations, and revolts to demand better working and life conditions, generating a mood of political unrest that defined local and national politics; or as Chris Ealham puts it when referring to the city of Barcelona, “the defense of law and order was the *sine qua non* of successful government” (19). This situation resulted in an omnipresent political unrest that culminated in Barcelona during what has been known as the Tragic Week of 1909;⁷ the reaction of the leader of the Catalan cultural movement known as *Noucentisme*, Eugeni D’Ors, to this uprising, epitomizes the discomfort of the elite classes: “ningú d’ells [el proletariat, majoritàriament immigrant] sabia llegir. I ningú d’ells sabia rentar-se. I ningú d’ells tenia un ofici determinat. I tots ells tenien una navalla, i, si no la tenien encara, l’adquirien pel camí” (99). The writer’s scorn towards newly arrived immigrants brings to the foreground the exclusionary reactions of the ruling classes, particularly in Catalonia, but also in Spain, where the leading bourgeoisie was forced to reconcile the antagonism between rural and urban populations. In short, the transformation of urban society aggravated the exclusionary narratives about race, ethnicity, and geographical difference. All in all, the unfinished modernization process, together with the political unrest generated by the emergence of an organized proletariat not only situated Spain and Catalonia at the crossroad of incorporating this new social class into the social fabric; but also fueled the widespread disenchantment with the political system of the Restoration.

This political unrest, together with the loss of 1898, laid bare the failure of the Restoration, which alternated power between conservative and liberal political parties from 1880s until Miguel Primo de Rivera’s Dictatorship in 1923. The disenchantment with politics in

⁷ The Tragic Week was a violent confrontation of anarchists, socialists, republicans, and the Spanish army triggered when Antonio Maura, president of Spain, called-up reserve troops to fight in Morocco, one of the remaining Spanish colonial enterprises.

the period that concerns this chapter can be found in intellectuals and pundits on both sides of the aisle. For instance, Manuel Azaña—who was a prominent liberal leader of the time, prime minister and president during the Second Republic—appears disappointed with the political system of the Restoration, when noting: “esas clases llamadas directoras no se contentan con su actual usurpación, sino que han tratado siempre de conservarla para mañana y han matado todo impulso generoso sembrando el escepticismo y la desconfianza en el corazón del pueblo” (31). Nevertheless, reactionary voices about the Restoration can also be found on the other end of the political spectrum. For instance, Ramiro de Maeztu in 1923—once the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera was established—evaluated the Restoration as a corrupted political system in the following terms: “[no] se intentó, ni se quiso, interesar en los llamados partidos gobernantes a las multitudes que desertaban de las filas republicanas y carlistas. La corrupción no necesitaba ni talentos, ni pueblo, ni ‘élite’, ni mayoría. Quedó sola, para poder corromper todo el resto” (28-29). Both excerpts illustrate that by the beginning of the twentieth century, political disenchantment pervaded the ideological landscape in the Iberian Peninsula. In fact, this generalized discomfort is prominently evident in the primary texts, especially in the diaries about the Rif War (1921-1926), namely, *Notas marruecas de un soldado* and *Quatre gotes de sang: Dietari d'un català al Marroc*, and also in Ortega’s and Prat’s nationalist arguments. This discomfort not only presented a gloomy sociopolitical context for the nationalisms in the Iberian Peninsula; it also exacerbated the exclusionary racist ideologies in Spain and Catalonia.

Blackness and Orientalism: Spanish and Catalan Perceptions of the Other

In his autobiography, the minister Malcom X recalled his upbringing in the American mid-West and noted, “even though we might be *with* [white people], we weren’t considered *of* them. Even

though they appeared to have opened the door, it was still closed. Thus, they never did really see *me*” (Haley and Malcom 32-33). Despite the differences in context, his experience epitomizes the first part of the racial paradox in Spain and Catalonia: their nationalist imaginaries perceived the Other through hegemonic racial discourses. This section focuses on this topic and demonstrates that, at the beginning of the twentieth century, Spanish and Catalan societies were unable to see the Other beyond stereotypes; rather, they reproduced a racial ideology that correlates with hegemonic discourses and replicates tropes similar to other European countries. In particular, they exert a dehumanization of black people and a quasi-Orientalist perception of North-Africans. To illustrate this point, the analysis is grounded on two foundational postcolonial theories: Frantz Fanon’s ideas on blackness and Edward Said’s interpretation of the Orient.

These theoretical approaches define the grouping of the primary texts and the structure of this section. Accordingly, Fanon’s ideas about blackness are used to analyze the first two primary texts—the novel *El negro que tenía el alma blanca* (1922) by Alberto Insúa and the theatre play *Llibertat!* (1901) by Santiago Rusiñol. Even though neither the genre nor the setting of these are the same, both literary works fit in this section because their main characters are racialized subjects. Moreover, their underlying messages aim to denounce racism in Spanish and Catalan societies, but these texts illustrate how the authors perceived blackness, providing a glimpse into the hegemonic racial ideology of the time. Then, I employ Said’s Orientalism to analyze *Notas marruecas de un soldado* (1923) by Ernesto Giménez Caballero and *Quatre gotes de sang: Dietari d'un català al Marroc* (1936) by Josep Maria Prous i Vila.⁸ These texts are ideal for the purposes of this section because they share genre and setting. Both authors were soldiers

⁸ From this point onwards *Notas marruecas* and *Quatre gotes*, respectively.

in the Rif War and captured their experiences in the format of personal diaries. Moreover, these accounts of the war represent, respectively, how these Spanish and Catalan authors perceived North-African subjects, Moroccans in particular. In short, these four literary products share enough commonalities to be matched and read through the prism of Fanon's and Said's racial theories and provide examples of the racial narratives that were disseminated in Spain and Catalonia. The paragraphs that follow delve into the first pair of texts, contextualizing Insúa's and Rusiñol's careers and literary pieces and studying how they reflect Fanon's ideas on blackness. Then, the section focuses on the representation of Moroccans during the Rif War: introducing the authors and the texts and analyzing them through Said's Orientalist epistemology.

The first pair of texts—*El negro que tenía el alma blanca* and *Llibertat!*—are two rare objects of study for choosing a racialized subject as a protagonist. Finding texts from the beginning of the century with this characteristic is a difficult enterprise, even though at the time there was a conceptualization of blackness associated with modernity;⁹ but also, they are excellent case studies for observing the authors' perception of blackness. Both Alberto Insúa and Santiago Rusiñol were members of the bourgeois, enjoyed great success in their artistic careers, and reached a wide public. *El negro que tenía el alma blanca* was published in 1922 and was one of the most successful novels of Alberto Insúa. Not only were there three editions that same year, as well as a second part, published in 1937 and titled *La sombra de Peter Wald*, but also the novel was adapted to film twice in the following years—in 1927 by Benito Perojo and in 1951

⁹ The Iberian Peninsula was not alien to early twentieth-century musical and cultural trends abroad, and avantgarde artists and intellectual pundits were fascinated by figures such as Josephine Baker or jazz music, which became symbols of progress and modernity. For instance, the famous writer Ramon Gómez de la Serna showed his fascination when stating in one of his articles about jazz music: “En el jazz-band está la chacota de la vida moderna, su absurdidad, su incoherencia, su deseo de jolgorio continuo” (47)

by the Argentinian filmmaker Hugo del Carril (Hemingway 502; Woods 62). The author, Insúa, was a Cuban-born journalist whose family emigrated to the Iberian Peninsula in 1898, because of his father's affiliation with Spain (Hemingway 496). He is mostly known for his collaborations with different newspapers of the time, such as *El Liberal*, *Blanco y Negro*, and *La Voz*, among others (Rebollo); but he was also a prolific novelist, publishing thirty-three novels and more than sixty short novels (Hemingway 497). It is a complex matter to situate Insúa within a concrete aesthetical movement since his literary output occurred during an especially creative period rife with numerous aesthetical approaches. Still, Félix Rebollo praises Insúa's style as "elegante, sencillo y ameno" (Rebollo); and, Maurice Hemingway composed a bibliographical essay about the author with useful information for understanding his literary production and artistic evolution. Both critics agree and highlight Insúa's productive career as a journalist and writer, his narrative style, and his alliance with the novecentismo movement (Hemingway 497; Rebollo). Moreover, Santiago Fortuño Llorens praises Insúa's ability to combine a narrative "arraigada en la realidad y en la vida" with elements of the melodramatic novel (19); the critic also qualifies *El negro que tenía el alma blanca* as a naturalist novel because its narrative is characterized by a realistic description of society and a fatalistic moral determinism (25). However, other than Fortuño Llorens' 1998 introduction to the text, none of these studies provide an in-depth analysis of *El negro que tenía el alma blanca*, although its 1927 film adaptation has received some attention.¹⁰ Further, most of this scholarship—with the exception of Eva Woods' interpretation of the novel's film adaptation—completely overlooks the issue of race and avoids explaining how it is represented in the novel. Consequently, one of the purposes

¹⁰ The essay "Ambivalent Stardom and the 'Race' for Modernity in *El negro que tenía el alma blanca*, de Benito Perojo" provides a comprehensive analysis on the novel's film adaptation; here, Eva Woods Peiró argues that the storyline of the film symbolically integrates Spanish racial and colonial history into modernity and reaffirms the racial categorization that defined the national community (74).

of the following analysis (besides observing how Spanish society perceived black people) is to fill this gap and provide an interpretation of the novel that focuses on explaining Insúa's understanding of race.

The second primary text in this section is Santiago Rusiñol's play *Llibertat!*. Its author was an artist as prolific as Insúa, but devoted mostly to literature and painting, instead of journalism. He became one of the leading voices of Catalan Modernism at the beginning of the twentieth century. His literary career encompassed not only several plays, such as *Llibertat!* but also satiric novels, such as *L'auca del senyor Esteve* (1907) or *El català de la Manxa* (1914), which became key texts of the Catalan literary canon (Casacuberta 10; Altisent 443). Regarding his literary work, particularly his novels, scholars focus on his aesthetic and thematic evolution and emphasize his sense of humor and criticism of society. For instance, Marta E. Altisent presents a thematic classification of Rusiñol's parodies and argues that he employs comedy to address popular and contemporary themes in the Catalan fin-de-siècle society, distancing his literary work from the Modernist *art pour l'art* ideal (442-443). Along these lines, Joan Torres-Pou emphasizes Rusiñol's ideological ambiguity, explores the foundations of his sense of humor, and concludes that, ultimately, the contradictions of his literary pieces respond to the same motto: everything in life is relative and constantly changing, so “no hay más remedio que ceder ante la mutabilidad de las cosas” (185). Continuing this line of thought and solely regarding *Llibertat!*, Sosa-Velasco argues that the play, undoubtedly influenced by Henrik Ibsen, “explora un teatre d'idees i temes d'actualitat” in order to challenge “la mediocritat i la incomprensió burgesa de la seva societat” (233). All these studies show that Rusiñol's literary work is characterized by the expression of political and social discontent through satire and humor, an approach that is palpable in *Llibertat!*.

Although racial discrimination is the most salient conflict in the play, none of these interpretations delve into this subject, except for Jeffrey Coleman's essay "The Racial Limitations of Freedom in Santiago Rusiñol's *Llibertat!*." Here, the critic argues that Rusiñol employs the racialized character to denounce the hypocrisy of Catalan political rhetoric, as well as to underline the limited "notion of freedom as a societal ideal" ("The Racial" 1). The essay explains Rusiñol's criticism to Catalan liberalism, which is based on the ideals that stem from the French Revolution: freedom, equality, and brotherhood. Coleman's interpretation is useful in the following analysis because it establishes some foundational ideas about constructions of race that will be further developed in the discussion of *Llibertat!* and *El negro que tenía el alma blanca*. Particularly, the purpose is to expand Coleman's argument by illustrating how Rusiñol grounds the construction of his racialized protagonist, Jaumet, on hegemonic discourses of race, more precisely how the character corresponds to Fanon's analysis of colonized subjects.

As stated above, these two texts perfectly fit in this section because their main characters are black people, and their stories have many points in common. On the one hand, Jaumet "el negro" arrived in Catalonia from America as a child accompanying his owner Don Patriciu, who abandoned him there. He was raised by Pere Anton, the local bartender who treated him like an exemplary adoptive son until he declared his love for Florentina, his adoptive sister. After proposing marriage, Jaumet is rejected by his adoptive family and the town, revealing the blatant racism of Catalan society, and putting into question its utopianism and ideas about freedom. On the other hand, Peter Wald is the artistic name of Pedro Valdés, a black music-hall dancer who becomes famous in Madrid and falls in love with Emma, his dancing partner. Like Jaumet, Peter was raised as a freed enslaved individual in a wealthy Spanish family in America, so he could acquire Western values and assimilate completely into society: his manners and behavior in

private and in public were flawless. Yet, he faced the racism inherent in Spanish society and the rejection of his love for Emma. Therefore, despite the differences between the settings, these characters share a similar, yet undefined past and their stories have enough commonalities to illustrate how these authors perceived black people and challenged racial discrimination. Read through Fanon's theorization, both texts will reveal the dominant biases in Spanish and Catalan societies.

These two literary texts will be analyzed using Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* (1986) to illustrate how black people were perceived in the Iberian Peninsula at the beginning of the twentieth century. Drawing from his experience in the Caribbean and adopting an existentialist perspective, Fanon points out that black men have been denied their own existence, because that existence has only been defined and constructed throughout history by white men; or rather, as he puts it: "I came into the world imbued with the will to find a meaning in things, my spirit filled with the desire to attain to the source of the world, and then I found that I was an object in the midst of other objects" (Fanon 257). The postcolonial thinker asserts that black men, or in a wider sense, black people, are categorized and considered objects, not humans, preventing them from creating their own existence and forcing them to irretrievably occupy the position of the Other. Fanon's explanation about race and its impact on black people's existence lays bare that race is a concept constructed by white men. His exposition clearly states that phenotypical differences, such as skin color, are used to objectivize subjects and establish hierarchical power dynamics. The theoretical framework he establishes will be adapted and applied to the geographical context of the Iberian Peninsula to demonstrate that Spanish and Catalan societies replicate a similar hierarchical understanding of race, one that privileges whiteness.

In fact, the protagonists of *El negro que tenía el alma blanca* and *Llibertat!*, the environments in which they live, and the hardships they endure are glaring examples of Fanon's analysis about the colonized racialized subject. Both Jaumet and Peter display the so-called dependency complex of the colonized subjects—a dependency provoked by their subordination. As a consequence, they long for the love of a white woman in order to ratify their existence in the white men's world; and finally, they become phobogenic objects: they become the symbolic narrative device that triggers the fears and anxieties of the characters of Catalan and Spanish liberal societies in this case. Because these protagonists, Jaumet and Peter, embody and trigger white men's fears and anxieties, they prove that blackness is inescapable and impossible to overcome. Nonetheless, these two literary pieces challenge societal perceptions of race through their protagonists. Therefore, what is interesting in these two primary texts is how they display hegemonic racial discourses even when conveying anti-racist messages.

In his psychoanalysis of the black population in the Caribbean, Fanon debunks the Western belief that the colonized subjects depend on the colonizers, so their complete assimilation into the white-men's world is nothing but impossible. He describes this apprehension as follows: “the white acts in obedience to an authority complex, a leadership complex, while the [colonized] obeys a dependency complex” (Fanon 73). This belief on the dependency complex of the colonized was widely accepted in Western societies and is evident in both primary texts. On the one hand, Insúa hints at it when the third person narrator describes the childhood of Peter and his slave owners: “[sus padres] no habían querido separarse de sus antiguos amos . . . Tanto los Arencibias como los Sorés eran buenos amos. Jamás el síndico de los negros había tenido que elevar una queja . . . El yugo era tan suave . . . ¡Los Arencibias y los Sorés sabían tener esclavos!” (122). On the other hand, Rusiñol displays this dependency with

the colonizer in a conversation in which Pere Anton explains to Jepet the reaction of young Jaumet during the funeral of his owner, Don Patriciu. According to Pere Anton, Jaumet did not want to move from the grave and screamed in desperation for his owner, then Jepet states: “Sí que ho tenia arrelat això de l’esclavitud!” (Rusiñol 518). Both instances refer to the belief that the colonized subjects depend on their masters, even going so far as loving them deeply, as in the case of the young Jaumet, or condoning their enslavement, as in Insúa’s novel.

However, Fanon denies the plausibility of this dependency complex and argues that there is a correlation between the European’s feeling of superiority and the colonized’s inferiority: “*It is the racist who creates his inferior*” (69). Fanon points out that, rather than inherently natural, the subordination of the colonized is triggered by the colonizer and stems from the “inner relationship between consciousness and the social context” (72). To put it simply, the colonized’s desire and efforts towards assimilation are the consequence of the hierarchical and oppressive system of relationships established by the colonizer, rather than an example of a dependency between them. In fact, Fanon understands as logical that, consequently, the colonized “will simply try to make [themselves] white: that is, [they] will compel the white man to acknowledge that [they are] human” (73). In short, the dependency of the colonized results from the material, physical and emotional subordination they are subjected to and triggers their craving for recognition, which they attempt to achieve by emulating the colonizers.

This longing for whiteness, or rather in Fanon’s chapter title, this “so-called dependency complex,” is starkly manifested in the protagonists of the primary texts because both have been completely assimilated into European values and both express their craving for recognition (Fanon 61). In the case of Insúa’s novel, Peter’s assimilation of Western values is portrayed through the description of his physical appearance and his delicate manners: “Bajo su nutria se

advertia el *smoking*: la pechera rígida, las dos perlas impecables. Traía frégoli gris, guantes blancos, escarpines. Verdaderamente *chic, smart*, pero negro . . . Peter, que había saludado a todos con distinción, tuvo una reverencia para la ilustre actriz” (Insúa 92). Similarly, Rusiñol hints at Jaumet’s assimilation in the second act, which is set ten years after his arrival in the Catalan town. Pere Anton explains how he raised Jaumet “enseny[ant]-li de prop les lleis de la democràcia i treure’l de les dames grises . . . [En Jaumet] treballa com . . . com lo que és, i és intel·ligent i honrat, té inculcada l’*ideia* i sap més que tots nosaltres” (Rusiñol 518). These lines show that Pere Anton is proud of his adoptive son, who has assimilated his political and moral values; but it is noteworthy, as Coleman points out, that Pere Anton restrains himself from using the common expression “treballar com un negre,” clearly associated with slavery in the colonies (“The Racial” 6). In fact, Coleman argues that, even though Pere Anton appears to be liberal and accepting in this excerpt, his later statement about freedom raises doubts about whether he considers Jaumet a beast or a man (“The Racial” 6): “Encara el tindria a casa si no fos la meva dèria: llibertat, llibertat sempre, per a bèsties i persones” (Rusiñol 519). Still, both excerpts describe these two racialized characters as completely integrated into European societies: Peter has the appearance and the manners of an upper-class gentleman, while Jaumet has been educated in the Western values of democracy and equality.

Despite their apparent assimilation, both protagonists explicitly display their longing for whiteness throughout the plot; even with the differences between the two of them, both, strongly but naively, believe that their assimilation into the culture can overcome their blackness. For instance, Jaumet thinks that the only thing that prevents him from being absolutely free is his love for Florentina. He acknowledges this to his friend Martinet: “De dia i de nit i a tota hora em diuen que jo sóc lliure, i, t’ho juro, jo ja’n voldria ésser, de lliure, però lliure d’ésser pres, d’ésser

esclau d'ella" (Rusiñol 520). Also, when Florentina tells him that sadness makes him look darker, Jaumet replies "Saps per què? Perquè de dins no en sóc, de negre, i, quan m'entra una alegria, el raig de claror que em porta m'il·lumina tot el cor i se'm transparenta a fora" (Rusiñol 521). These instances, together with the bravery of the protagonist asking for Florentina's hand reveals that, deep inside of him, Jaumet believes that he is as free as any white man. Rusiñol is very conscious of the emotional effect of this characterization, because the firmer Jaumet's belief is, the greater the disappointment will be once he discovers the tragic truth of his existence. Moreover, Peter's longing for whiteness is even more evident. For instance, it is present in Peter's beauty routine, which consists of a series of techniques to soften his facial features, particularly his nose and his lips, as well as to whiten his skin. Regarding this, the narrator notes, "Peter se echaba a reír; pero la sola idea de ese milagro le estremecía de esperanza" (Insúa 105). The miracle is to become white. Along these lines, later in the plot, the narrator describes how eager for whiteness the racialized protagonist is, so much so that it dominates his emotional state: "Estuvo un rato triste, sintiendo la terrible disminución moral, la trágica amargura de los negros cuando sienten el ansia de ser blancos, porque han vivido con ellos, de ellos, y—suprema aspiración del espíritu—no creen tener de negros más que el color" (Insúa 119).

Furthermore, the symbolic device that embodies Jaumet's and Peter's longing for whiteness is their love for a white woman, Florentina and Emma, respectively. Both protagonists seek to be loved by these women to assert and secure their existence in the white-men's world. In this regard, Fanon notes, "I wish to be acknowledged not as *black* but as *white*. Now . . . who but a white woman can do this for me? By loving me she proves that I am worthy of white love. I am loved like a white man" (45). This idea is quite explicit in both texts, since their protagonists endure unrequited love for a white woman. For instance, Jaumet begs Florentina to tell him

whether or not she loves him: “Dic que et suplico que no et riguis més de mi! Tracta’m de salvatge, però no em tractis més de negre . . . T’ho suplico, Florentina: tingue’m amor o tingue’m odi, però no em tinguis compassió. Tracta’m de blanc un moment i mata’m després com un negre!” (Rusiñol 522). Not only does the racialized character beg for a straight answer, but he also explicitly displays his eagerness for whiteness to the extent of self-destruction. Along these lines, Insúa’s narrator delves into Peter’s inner voice, which is even more explicit than Jaumet: “¿Si Emma, en realidad, había conseguido olvidarse de que era negro? . . . ¡Ah! ¡Si Emma le quería, ya no era negro! ¡Si Emma le quería...!” (Insúa 259-260). Both characters associate the love of the white woman with overcoming their blackness. Their unrequited love for Florentina and Emma, respectively, becomes their entrance into the white-men’s world. As a result, these storylines clearly symbolize the protagonists’ eagerness for whiteness, for being completely integrated into society and acknowledged as equal to the white man: if they are loved by a white woman, they will be recognized, included, and accepted as human beings; they will no longer be black.

Additionally, regarding the emotional relationship between the white woman and the racialized subject, Fanon points out that the latter always needs to obtain the authorization of the white man (49). This idea is also present in both texts: Jaumet and Peter, following the social rules, ask Florentina’s and Emma’s fathers for their hands in marriage. In order to move forward with their intentions, they need the patriarchs’ consent. On the one hand, the first reaction of don Mucio, Emma’s father, after Peter declares his love for her is dismissing the issue shielded by the argument that “no es costumbre el matrimonio entre razas” (Insúa 278). Nevertheless, after listening to Peter’s suicidal thoughts prompted by the rejection of his proposal of marriage, don Mucio reconsiders his stance and ponders the economic loss that Peter’s death will entail. He

finally agrees to intercede on behalf of Peter trying to convince Emma, because “Era necesario impedir que se matase, por cálculo y por caridad. Hubiese sido absurdo concluir ‘de aquel modo’ el negocio” (Insúa 279). In this case, the interracial marriage proposal is accepted by the patriarch on economic grounds, rather than because don Mucio is explicitly anti-racist. The benefits he and his daughter will obtain if the relationship moves forward are greater than the obstacles they may face, so complete assimilation through the love of a white woman is only obtained on economic grounds.

On the other hand, Jaumet’s conversation with his adoptive father has a much worse outcome. The rejection of the marriage proposal unveils Pere Anton’s inherent hypocrisy and racism. “I que potser no ho veus, que ets... negre? . . . Allò era la política, i lo que em demanes és sèrio. I vaia, i que no en parlem més; i no et tracto d’altra manera perquè fa temps que et conec” (Rusiñol 527). Pere Anton, who has been constantly advocating for political freedom no matter the color of the skin, now abandons his idealism, repudiates Jaumet and forces his exclusion from the bar and from the town. This is the dramatic turning point in Rusiñol’s play. As Coleman puts it, the racialized protagonist is “unable to obtain positive freedom (freedom *to*) because the self-realization of his manhood, unlinked to his blackness, threatened the racial stability of the town” (“The Racial” 7). Jaumet and his unrequited love for Florentina become the symbolic devices through which the author challenges the liberal values of Catalan society: Pere Anton’s ideals of democracy and freedom for all fall apart once Jaumet demands equality by requesting Florentina’s hand. Therefore, besides triggering the author’s social and political criticism, Jaumet, his love for Florentina and his request for her hand parallel Fanon’s psychoanalysis of the colonized subject. All in all, despite having completely different outcomes, these two scenes are crucial for the anti-racist intentions of the texts, because either they delve

deeply into the topic and associate it with economic factors, as in Insúa's novel, or they catalyze the dramatic conflict, as in the case of Rusiñol's play; but, more importantly, these two scenes prove that Peter and Jaumet accurately reproduce Fanon's description of the colonized subject and serve to demonstrate the impossibility of overcoming blackness except in cases of economic utility.

Throughout their storylines, both texts present their protagonists as the embodiment of white men's fears and anxieties, becoming phobogenic objects. These literary works seek to demonstrate that, despite their assimilation, Peter's and Jaumet's race is inescapable. Fanon states that "the Negro phobogenesis" results from the racialized subject's cultural situation: "there is a constellation of postulates, a series of propositions that slowly and subtly . . . work their way into one's mind and shape one's view of the world of the group to which one belongs" (117-118). In other words, Fanon argues that the demonization and the subordination of racialized individuals is a direct consequence of their representation in the cultural production. The fear they stimulate in white men is apparent in both texts. In the case of *Llibertat!*, not only is this visible in Pere Anton's rejection, but also it is anticipated in a conversation between Jaumet and Martinet, his only friend and the voice of reason in the plot ("The Racial" 6-7). In the scene, the latter differentiates between being a "*negrito*" or a "*negre*," between young and adult Jaumet, noting that as a child people had no reason to be afraid of him, but, as a grown-up, "et voldran... de lluny, perquè, vist de massa prop, [a les persones] els espantaries les criatures i els espantaries a ells" (Rusiñol 520). As Coleman points out, this excerpt illustrates that adult Jaumet "poses a phobogenic reality to Catalan society due to his intelligence and his physical capability," a reality that is materialized when he expresses his love for Florentina ("The Racial" 7). To put it simply, Jaumet is the catalyst of Rusiñol's social criticism, a denunciation of the

double-standards and the “racial limitations of freedom,” to use Coleman’s essay title, in Catalan liberal society. What is more, by embodying this threat to the town’s stability, Jaumet, once again, becomes a paradigmatic example of Fanon’s aforementioned “Negro phobogenesis” (“The Racial” 117).

Along these lines, in Insúa’s novel, the phobia triggered by Peter’s skin color is expressed through the voices of many secondary characters in the story; but here we only focus on Emma’s perception because she symbolizes the whiteness that the racialized protagonist attempts to achieve. Her first comment about Peter is strikingly racist: “A mí los negros me dan asco y me parecen demonios” (Insúa 87); and her fear of blackness is so strong that she even has nightmares in which Peter chases and catches her with “unas manos enormes y *calientes*” (Insúa 98, my emphasis). This blatant rejection of blackness corresponds to the author’s intentions with respect to the development of the plot because Emma’s perception of Peter will evolve from absolute disdain to a fraternal bond, to inexplicable and unexpressed love, but only after the death of the protagonist. During the last moments of Peter’s life, the narrator notes, “cada vez que [ella] intentaba decirle: ‘Basta; te quiero’, una fuerza cruel e implacable, pero salida de sus propias entrañas, venía a cerrarle, como dos dedos de plomo, la boca” (Insúa 291). The novelist symbolically instills his anti-racist message in the storyline, trying to suggest that if Emma, who embodies whiteness, is able to have feelings for Peter, then the white men’s world might be able to change. Yet, Emma only acknowledges these feelings after Peter is dead, which, together with the disappearance of Jaumet in Rusiñol’s play points to the same resolution: blackness is insurmountable. In other words, by depicting the characters’ interracial love as impossible, both texts drew attention to Spanish and Catalan society’s inherent racism and pushed forward the idea that blackness should be naturalized by white people and integrated into the social fabric.

In fact, despite their antiracist intentions, both texts convey the idea that racial differences are impossible to overcome, and, to make things worse, both authors compel the racialized characters to not only acknowledge, but also condone this futility. Fanon puts it this way: “I will quite simply try to make myself white . . . [But] you cannot do it, because in your depths there is a dependency complex” (73). Jaumet and Peter manifest their complete disillusionment with the assimilation they sought; they conclude that, no matter what they do, society will never relinquish its prejudices against their blackness. Jaumet exposes these two ideas in two different scenes. His disappointment is most prominent in the conversation he holds with Pere Anton:

m’haveu enganyat sempre. M’haveu ensenyat la fe per a després fer-me-la perdre;
 m’haveu fet tenir il·lusions; m’haveu predicat sense creure; m’haveu omplert les orelles
 de paraules sense solta; m’haveu atordit de progrés, embafat de llibertat, d’oratòria, de
 discursos, de fraternitat mentida (Rusiñol 527).

The protagonist censures Pere Anton for his hypocrisy in making Jaumet believe that he was as free as any other white man, acknowledging the failure of assimilation. This bold and forceful statement supports Rusiñol’s criticism of liberal and democratic values in Catalan society. Particularly, he challenges the notions of freedom, equality, brotherhood and, ultimately, people’s participation in politics, the ideals that stemmed from the French revolution. In addition, the protagonist fully understands that his blackness is impossible to overcome in his final conversation with Florentina after declaring his love for her, when he states: “Ja t’entenc. És aquest color. El dol que porto de sempre és la paret maleïda que t’atura de volguer-me. Ah, si poguessis passar-la, aquesta barrera negra!” (Rusiñol 176). Jaumet’s conclusion is definitive: even when there is love and affection between people, vanquishing racial differences is more than complicated, it is inconceivable.

Along these lines, the narrative voice in Insúa's novel also points to the same conclusions, when explaining the protagonist's fears to confess his love to Emma:

lo único que le detenía frente a Emma . . . [era] el ver en sus ojos y en su boca reflejados la repugnancia y el pavor que le inspiraba su piel. ¡Su piel! Tan poca cosa era el obstáculo invencible. ¡Su piel! Menos de un milímetro de substancia oscura bastaba para aislar a un ser de otro ser, a una raza de otra raza, a un mundo de otro mundo. Era imposible que Emma admitiese junto a la suya aquella piel (265-266)

The excerpt not only lays bare Peter's longing for whiteness through the love of a white woman, but also explicitly states and assumes the impossibility of overcoming blackness. Further in the narrative, even the narrator describes Peter's efforts for assimilation as a "lucha estéril" and avows: "Era un crimen civilizar a los negros, blanquearles el espíritu, mientras no existiese un modo de blanquearles la piel. No había ser más triste, ni más infeliz, ni más ridículo que el negro que pensaba como un blanco" (Insúa 386). Similarly to Rusiñol, Insúa constructs a narrative that challenges the myths and beliefs around race; but if the former conveys this anti-racism in order to attack liberal ideologies, the latter does so in order to denounce that "civilizing" the Other offers nothing but false hope.

The construction of Jaumet and Peter corresponds in many ways with Fanon's psychoanalysis of racialized subjects. The protagonists glaringly display a dependency complex and yearn for whiteness not only through their characterization, but also through their love for a white woman. They embody the fears and anxieties of white men when seeking patriarchal authorization for their love only to realize that their blackness cannot be overcome. Still, the protagonists reach this conclusion in different ways. While Jaumet, completely convinced of his integration, makes public his love for Florentina and comes to the realization that he will never

be accepted into Catalan society because his blackness is insurmountable, unveiling the deceitful ideals with which he was raised; Peter's disappointment does not come from realizing that he is not integrated; rather, he longs for becoming white because this is the only conceivable way to be assimilated into the social fabric, reproducing at face value Fanon's description of the racialized subject. Despite following these two different paths, the common narrative features between both stories suggest that, even though the texts aim to denounce the inherent racism in Spanish and Catalan society, they reproduce hegemonic racial tropes when describing black people: they represent an experience of blackness that was imagined and written by white people.

In sum, both authors, Insúa and Rusiñol, conceived these two stories to challenge the societies they lived in, and they created two racialized protagonists to make their criticisms evident: on the one hand, Jaumet serves to lay bare the hypocrisy of Catalan liberal values, on the other, Peter works to point out the need for naturalizing and integrating black people into society, more precisely into modernity. Therefore, both authors achieve their objectives, and their texts can be interpreted as denunciations against racism in Spain and Catalonia; yet Jaumet's and Peter's rites of passage ultimately are nothing, but two representations of blackness conceived by and for white people. They provide a glimpse of how blackness was seen and understood during the first decades of the twentieth century. While these texts represent one of the major racial narratives that dominated in the Iberian Peninsula, the second dominant narrative is exemplified in *Notas marruecas* and *Quatre gotes*, which showcase a quasi-Orientalist gaze of North-Africans.

Similarly, if the protagonists in Insúa's novel and Rusiñol's play are glaring examples of Fanon's portrayal of colonized subjects, *Notas marruecas* and *Quatre gotes* are good case studies

for observing how Said's Orientalism can shed light on the context of the Iberian Peninsula. These two diaries belong to a larger literary trend that recounted the Spanish colonial enterprise in North-Africa at the beginning of the century—the Rif War (1921-1926), a failed attempt to regain certain imperial power and boost the national identity, whose origins can be traced back to the Hispano-Moroccan War (1859-1860). The conflict resulted from establishment of the Spanish protectorate in 1912, whose objective was to control the Northern area of Morocco, an assignment that proved to be difficult for Spain, since the Riffian's resistance was notable and had devastating consequences for the colonial army, such as the defeat of Annual in 1921 (Torres 61, López 14-15). The Rif War finally ended in 1927 with an official statement issued by the general Sanjurjo (López 7). The conflict had a terrible outcome for Spain not only because the human toll paid in the battles, but also because it bolstered the disenchantment with politics among the public opinion, as well as the army.

In fact, as Balfour argues, the development of this colonial intervention fueled the dissatisfaction of the military with the State and, ultimately, these troops joined Francisco Franco's Nationalist uprising in 1936, becoming "its backbone throughout the Civil War" (*Deadly Embrace* 315). Without a doubt, this military conflict had a profound impact on Spanish society, prompting the emergence of a remarkable number of depictions in the literary realm: not only novels such as *Imán* (1930) by Ramón J. Sender, *El bloqueo* (1928) by José Díaz Fernández, or *La ruta* (1943) by Arturo Barea, which was written in exile and is the second part of the trilogy *La forja de un rebelde*; but also many memoirs compiled in the form of diaries like *Hores africanes* (1936) de Josep Maria Casas i Homs, and *Impresiones del Rif* (1916) by José Zulueta y Gomis, to mention some examples.¹¹ Among all of this cultural production, this chapter chooses

¹¹ To discover more texts of this type in the Catalan context, one can review the essay titled "Viatges de catalans al món arabomusulmà o catalans en terra de moros. Un inventari provisional fins el 2006" by

Notas marruecas and *Quatre gotes* because their authors, Giménez and Prous, are paradigmatic examples of Spanish and Catalan nationalism, respectively.

Moreover, *Notas marruecas* and *Quatre gotes* not only share setting and genre, but also represent two opposing ideological poles. On the one hand, Giménez is a complex, yet illustrative figure of the early twentieth-century Spanish intellectuals because of his involvement in the development of the avant-garde and his indispensable role in the introduction of fascism in Spain (Selva 198). Born in 1899 in Madrid, he studied Spanish Literature and Philosophy and worked at the University of Strasburg thanks to his friendship with Américo Castro (Vázquez 43, Tandy 32). His career as a university professor in Germany ended in 1921 when he was drafted for the military service and sent to Morocco to fight in the ongoing Rif War (Tandy 33). After his two-year participation, Giménez burst onto the literary scene with the publication of *Notas marruecas*, which soon, due to its harsh criticism of the Spanish state and institutions, was confiscated and triggered the author's eight-month imprisonment (Tandy 58).¹²

However, after receiving a pardon, Giménez career as a vanguardist author and cultural promoter started to bloom, reaching its prime when he founded “La Gaceta Literaria” in 1927. The publication aimed to “abraz[ar] toda la actividad intelectual de España” and establish cultural connections between the different peninsular regions and Latin America (Tandy 38-39). Well-known Spanish intellectuals and writers—such as Gregorio Marañón (1887-1960), to mention one example—regularly contributed to the literary journal (Tandy 38-39). As Lucy Tandy notes, Giménez's motivations with the journal stemmed from “el deseo de una amistad y

Francesc Espinet i Burunat. It provides a comprehensive historical record of Catalan authors that portrayed Morocco and other Muslim countries.

¹² After the publication of *Notas marruecas*, a Spanish military court accused Giménez of “insultos al ejército e incitación a la sedición,” but a court-martial absolved him once the dictator Primo de Rivera seized power in 1923 (Selva 200-201).

mutuo entendimiento y cooperación hacia un fin: la unidad ibérica” (41). Following the trend of other European literary journals but keeping a peculiar and personal evolution, *La Gaceta Literaria* became “la revista más importante del vanguardismo español” (*Falange y literatura* 21, Hernando 13).

Besides founding and directing the journal, one of the major contributions of Giménez in this period was the “Carteles literarios,” an alternative visual literary review based on collages clearly influenced by surrealism and dadaism (Selva 203). Moreover, he organized the first Spanish cine-club—where *A Chien Andalou* (1929), the famous surrealist film shot by Luis Buñuel and Salvador Dalí, was screened—and opened a shop in the center of Madrid which sold Spanish traditional craftwork along with contemporary art, such as Bauhaus furniture and rationalist architectonic projects (“Ernesto Giménez” xvi). All this work made Gecé—the pseudonym he employed for his cultural reviews—one of the leading figures of the Spanish avant-garde (Selva 201). As a fervent Spanish nationalist, Giménez was deeply concerned with the country’s backwardness and believed that the sole solution for a true regeneration was the cultural revolution brought by the avant-garde; or rather, as Mainer posits: “fue uno de los creadores del *nacionalismo literario liberal* y, en tal sentido, el nacionalizador de la vanguardia” (“Ernesto Giménez” xv).

Moreover, Giménez’s work in this journal shows that his political ideology began as a “celebración de la transformación moderna del espacio público,” but progressively became more conservative during the 1920s (Huerta 580)—so much so that, undoubtedly influenced by futurism, Giménez found the solution to Spain’s regeneration in early fascist ideology and conveyed its adaptation to the Peninsula in the article entitled “En torno al casticismo de Italia” (1929), which is considered “el primer manifiesto intelectual del fascismo hispano” (Selva 205).

This obsession for Spain's regeneration, for "conciliar modernidad y tradición, conservadurismo y revolución, vértigo y certeza," dominated his political thought, as well as his literary career and led him to "invent[arse] el fascismo español" ("Ernesto Giménez" xvi). These alliances may lead to pigeonholing Giménez's work as fascist propaganda, but if anything, they show the cultural and ideological effervescence of the early twentieth century and prove that he was a reflection of the time. His will for regenerating the nation drove his career and is also prominent in his recounting of the Rif War.

On the other hand, Prous was a fervent defender of republicanism and Catalan sovereignty, a progressive intellectual, and a poet and journalist who, at the end of his career, followed the aesthetic principles of Noucentisme, a Catalan cultural movement lead by Eugeni D'Ors (Prologue 9-10). Born in 1899 in Reus, a city in the province of Tarragona, Prous was a self-taught writer deeply involved in the avant-garde movement and boosted the cultural life of his hometown by collaborating with different local journals such as *Llaç* (1919), *La columna de foc* (1918-1920), *Boira* (1922), or *Reus 1973* (1923) (Anguera 181, Corretger 9). According to Pere Anguera Nolla, his first collections of poems—*Infantaments* (1923) and *La lluna dins el llac* (1924)—display his unique style filled with "fina ironia" that recalls the poetry of Josep M^a de Sagarra or Josep Carner (Anguera 181-182). Moreover, Montserrat Corretger points out that Prous' aesthetics evolved from "la tradició estètica i ideològica modernista" to "produccions de caràcter futurista" to ascribing to Noucentisme ("Josep Maria" 180-182). All in all, these studies show that Prous navigated the literary spheres of the avant-garde, and his production evolved accordingly with the social, cultural, and political transformations of Catalonia at that time.

In 1920, he was called up for military service in Barcelona, where he had the opportunity to be in touch with the cultural and literary spheres of the city and become a close friend of the

poet Joan Salvat-Papasseit, with whom he exchanged regular correspondence (Navais 72-73). A year later, in the summer of 1921, Prous arrived to Morocco to fight in the Rif War right after the famous Disaster of Annual, the biggest defeat of the Spanish army (Navais 78-79). From his experience in war, Prous published his most well-known literary pieces: the diary *Quatre gotes* and a collection of poems titled *Notas marruecas. Elegies de la guerra* (1931) (Anguera 182). Both texts appeared in the 1930s and show his political ideology in opposition to Spanish militarism and monarchy, and in favor of social justice, republicanism, and Catalonia's independence ("Josep Maria" 191-192). Finally, after fighting in the Spanish Civil War, Prous was exiled in 1938 in Montpellier and later in Perpignan, where he continued writing poetry and finally died in 1978 longing for a Catalan sovereign state (Anguera 181-182). Therefore, similarly to Giménez, Prous is a glaring example of an early-twentieth century intellectual: he was caught up in the effervescent vanguardist cultural sphere and developed his literary career linking aesthetical innovation with political ideology and aiming to transform society through art. Still, what sets *Notas marruecas* and *Quatre gotes* apart is the authors' political stances, which have defined the academic inquiry about them.

Most of the scholarship about *Notas marruecas* and its author is included in a line of inquiry that reflects on the representation of the Rif War in Spanish literary production. Some of these studies point out the gendered component of these narratives;¹³ while others provide a comprehensive understanding of the rhetorical strategies and political intentions of canonical

¹³ For instance, Gemma Torres' research shows how different depictions of this military conflict in the press and literature bolster Spanish national identity through masculine archetypes of vigor and virility, illustrating the gender component of these cultural productions (81); or Helena Miguélez-Carballeira's comparative study of the political essays written by Ortega y Gasset, Jaume Vicens Vives, and Giménez demonstrates that "twentieth-century discourses about Spain's internal national conflicts may have been characterised by a competitive play of imperial manhood models" (125).

authors who depicted this military conflict.¹⁴ These studies explain the nuances of Giménez's political thought and lay bare the underlying colonial nation-building intentions and gendered components of the Rif War; their findings are illuminating for better comprehending early twentieth century Spain, but they are too broad for decisively contributing to this chapter.

Similarly, those studies that solely revolve around *Notas marruecas* primarily focus on explaining Giménez's rhetoric and ideology, continuing the traditional line of inquiry devoted to the representation of the Rif War, but they avoid delving into how Orientalism plays out in the text. One of these scholars is Gustavo Nanclares, who analyzes Giménez's description of Tetouan and points out how he emphasizes the Latinity of the city to support and justify Spanish colonialism in Morocco (69). However, Nanclares overlooks Said's idea of Orientalism when arguing that the author creates a parallel between Spain and Africa, but that "esta *africanización* en Gecé es solo estética, un prurito exótico levemente orientalizante," (80). The critic assumes that Giménez's gaze is slightly (but not completely) Orientalist because of his concern with establishing connections between Africa and Spain. Another scholar that interprets *Notas marruecas* is José Manuel Goñi Pérez, who evaluates its rhetoric and concludes that, rather than an example of militaristic literature, the diary is an ideological manifesto that strives to incite social revolution and regenerate nationalistic values in Spain (156). Therefore, these articles adopt a formalist perspective that discloses Giménez's discursive strategies to build his ideological argument in favor of reconstructing Spain's national identity. Since these scholars

¹⁴ For example, Ignacio Vázquez Moliní observes the historical veracity of some representations of the war by analyzing Giménez's diary, as well as other canonical literary products: *El Blocao* (1928), *Imán* (1930), *La ruta* (1940), and *Historia del cautivo* (1962) by Juan Antonio Gaya Nuño. The author concludes that these literary products share ideological, rhetorical, and aesthetic features and constitute an excellent complement for historical research about the Rif War (Vázquez 600). Along these lines, Enrique Miralles adds that the rhetorical strategies deployed in some of these depictions of the war align with the authors' political objectives, focusing on the aforementioned canonical works, as well as *Tras el águila del César* (1923) by Luys Santa Marina (120).

prioritize a domestic national focus, their findings provide a comprehensive understanding of the author's preoccupations about the nation. However, the representation of Moroccans and the unfolding of Orientalism are either overlooked, as in the case of Nanclares, or superficially mentioned, as happens with Goñi Pérez, who states: "Nuestro orientalismo no fue tal . . . Las capas culturales hispano-sefardíes . . . así como los elementos históricos de la España musulmana, convierten al orientalismo doméstico en un orientalismo sin parangón en Europa" (177-178). While Goñi Pérez acknowledges the presence of an Orientalist perspective, he draws a distinction between Spain and other Western traditions. This differentiation from hegemonic Orientalism is the paradigm on which the critic grounds his political analysis of Giménez's rhetoric and is essential for interpreting the diary since it defines his place of enunciation and the particularities of his Orientalist gaze.

Still, the two studies that comprehensively explain what differentiates Spanish Orientalism from European are Daniela Flesler's *The Return of the Moor: Spanish Responses to Contemporary Moroccan Immigration* (2008), and Elisabeth Bolorinos' *Spanish National Identity, Colonial Power, and the Portrayal of Muslims and Jews During the Rif War (1909-27)* (2021). The former provides a compelling insight on the construction of the "Moor" within the Spanish collective imagination by presenting a multi-disciplinary analysis of texts, such as novels, films, essays, folkloric traditions, and journalism. Flesler notes that Spain's racist attitudes towards Moroccan immigrants are grounded in "the presumed incompatibility of different cultures, lifestyles, and traditions," rather than in a biological hierarchy, in order to "endors[e] a conceptualization of the nation as a stable, homogeneous, and isolated cultural identity" (5). Flesler concludes that the figure of the "Moor" has become the "chimera of an ancient enemy against which Spain has formed itself as a nation" (195). Because this symbolic

figure plays such a crucial role in the assemblage of national identity, Moroccan immigrants (or Muslims in a wider sense) embody the unresolved existential anxieties of Spain: “its own regional, ethnic, cultural, religious, and linguistic internal heterogeneity, the management of its internal others, and its position of ‘difference’ and inferiority in a more developed and modernized Europe” (Flesler 197). To put it simply, the most prominent particularity of Spain’s perception of Muslims is profoundly entangled with the foundations of national identity and arouses its most sensitive issues. This dynamic inevitably supports Spanish difference from other European traditions and evidently affects its Orientalist gaze, as Bolorinos’ study demonstrates.

This exhaustive study not only analyzes the cultural production in the period of the Rif War, but also provides a compelling analysis of *Notas marruecas*. The critic explores “the anxieties about colonial power and national identity” and examines the representation of “the Moor” and “the Jew,” providing a persuasive explanation of how Spanish Orientalism differentiates from other European traditions.¹⁵ For Bolorinos, Spanish Orientalism challenges how colonial relationships are usually understood because, instead of exercising strength, it displays “vulnerability rather than power,” by presenting the colonizer “as insecure and threatened rather than as self-assertive and secure” (179-180). The analysis illuminates what sets Spain’s construction of the Orient apart from other European nations: in the Spanish case, the power dynamics between colonizers and colonized are more ambivalent, even oppositional to those in other European nations. In sum, Flesler demonstrates that Muslims awaken sensitive issues in Spanish society because they become the symbolic paradoxical figure that threatens the nation’s unity and homogeneity while bolstering its identity. Bolorinos illuminates the

¹⁵ Bolorinos constructs her argument analyzing cultural products from different means of expression, such as literature, journalism, and photography, and from opposing ideological stances, including, besides Giménez’s diary, Barea’s canonical novel, to mention the most prominent example.

differences between Spanish and hegemonic forms of European Orientalism by pointing out the ambivalent power relationship between Spain and Morocco. Therefore, what is left to explain is which traditional Orientalist traits can be found in Spanish perceptions of Muslims, or rather how Spaniards such as Giménez exerted an Orientalist gaze.

In contrast with the amount of research devoted to Giménez, Prous' prolific career has received less critical attention; still, these studies mostly focus on Prous' Catalan nationalism and anti-warlike message but overlook his Orientalist gaze. For instance, Montserrat Corretger—who, in 2003, wrote the prologue included in the edition of *Quatre gotes* employed in this chapter—describes his life as a fight “per ser i per entendre, d'arrel nietzscheana, que el dugué a una actitud combativa i coratjosa en tots els ordres de la vida” (Prologue 11). She also maps out his ideological and aesthetical evolution and concludes that he personifies “una de les antítesis més difícils d'explicar” in this historical moment: “el respecte a la tradició . . . i l'esperit revolucionari” (“Josep Maria” 177-179). Regarding his memories of the war, Corretger highlights Prous's “voluntat pedagògica, moralitzadora i fins profètica, en especial aplicada a posicionaments polítics, republicans i catalanistes” (Prologue 27). The critic also points out the historical value of the diary and argues that Prous' political criticism stems from comparing “la situació dels catalans i la dels àrabs” in relation to Spain (Prologue 26); she concludes that the text is a thoughtful reflection about war with a “visió lírica del desert i de la cultura àrab” (Prologue 29). However, Joan Navais i Icart argues that there is nothing unusual in the identification with Moroccans, rather it became “un símbol propagandista antiespanyol” for radical Catalan secessionists: they took political advantage of the negative developments of the conflict and Spain's military weakness (71). These findings suggest that the motivation for identifying with Moroccans had little to do with anti-colonialism and anti-war sentiment; rather,

it was employed to support the political agenda of Catalan nationalism. This idea begs a question regarding *Quatre gotes*: was Prous' motivation truly committed to anti-warmongering or to conveying a symbolic illustration of his political views? What is more, does the Catalan Orientalist gaze share the same traits as the Spanish one? Therefore, without denying the historical value of the text and Prous' peculiar identification with Moroccans, the following pages will show that his portrait of the Muslim world stands out not only for its lyricism, but also for displaying hegemonic Orientalist traits.

In 1978, drawing from British and French colonial literature and influenced by post-structuralism, Said employed the term Orientalism to describe “a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between ‘the Orient’ and (most of the time) ‘the Occident’” (*Orientalism* 2); in short, Orientalism is a system of thought through which the West defined, represented, and understood the Orient, a pervasive modern epistemology that affects all layers of knowledge, arts, science, politics, and institutions to establish, justify, and maintain Western superiority and domination. Regarding racial ideology, Said notes:

Race theory, ideas about primitive origins and primitive classifications, modern decadence, the progress of civilization, the destiny of the white (or Aryan) races, the need for colonial territories—all these were elements in the peculiar amalgam of science, politics, and culture, whose drift, almost without exception, was always to raise Europe or a European race to dominion over non-European portions of mankind (*Orientalism* 232).

His argument points out that race is a social construction and that the notions generated by the West serves to validate its superiority by generating vast amounts of knowledge that, after all, is a series of myths, ideas, and assumptions about the Other. What is more, Orientalism suggests

that, while race is a social construct, racism is the system of thought and exclusion that stems from it and has an impact on all levels of society: politics, economics, culture, and education. Said's argument employs as primary texts canonical figures from British and French literature—such as Richard Francis Burton and Gustave Flaubert, respectively, to mention the most prominent examples.

However, as Bolorinos points out, hegemonic Orientalism establishes a power relationship in which the West exerts strength and domination over the Orient, but her research demonstrates that Spanish Orientalism presents different power dynamics between both territories (180). In fact, Said acknowledges this discrepancy between his epistemology and the Spanish one in a 2002 Spanish translation of his masterpiece when noting:

La simbiosis entre España y el islam nos proporciona un maravilloso modelo alternativo al crudo reduccionismo de lo que se ha dado en llamar “el choque de civilizaciones” . . . que no transmite la verdad de cómo las civilizaciones y culturas se solapan, confluyen y se nutren unas a otras (Prologue 10)

Therefore, while Bolorinos explains what differentiates Spanish Orientalism, and *Notas marruecas* in particular, from other European nations, the following analysis sheds light on what hegemonic Orientalist traits are most prominent in Giménez's and Proux' accounts of the Rif War.¹⁶

¹⁶ In fact, besides Bolorinos, other scholars have explored the particularities of Spanish non-hegemonic orientalism, proving that the relationships and power dynamics between colonizer and colonized are multiple and variable. One example of this research is *Colonial al-Andalus: Spain and the Making of Modern Moroccan Culture* (2018) by Eric Calderwood, whose varied close textual analysis and broad cultural framing show that “Morocco's Andalusí identity is not a medieval legacy but is, instead, a modern invention that emerged from the colonial encounter between Spain and Morocco in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries” (8). Another compelling study that explores the workings of Orientalism in the context of Spain and Morocco is *Memories of the Maghreb: Transnational Identities in Spanish Cultural Production* (2012) by Adolfo Campoy-Cubillo. Campoy-Cubillo presents a close reading of contemporary Spanish cultural production through a historicist perspective to establish “the genealogy of the identitarian

Notas marruecas is structured in three parts: “Notas de campamento,” “Notas de Tetuán,” and “Notas de otros lugares.” As the titles suggest, they are composed by short chapters that mainly depict spaces and people, rather than describing battles and warfare. The first part starts *in media res* with the narrator disembarking in Morocco and includes descriptions of daily life in the military camp, his convalescence at the hospital, and his temporary visit to the Peninsula, ending with his return to the military conflict. With the exception of the chapter called “Tiritos,” which ironically refers to the shotguns of a battle, there is little war-related action happening in this part; rather, it focuses on the soldiers’ daily lives with entries devoted to the canteen, the daily routines, the convoys, or the hospital, to mention a few examples, as well as criticizing the precarious and corrupted state of the Spanish army through irony. Similarly, the episodes in the second part mostly describe the inhabitants and spaces of Tetouan, highlighting its religious diversity with four entries devoted to the Jewish quarter. As Nanclares argues, this section presents the city as hybrid, dual, and transitional, but emphasizes its Latinity to strengthen the historical ties between Morocco and Spain and justify the latter’s colonialism (68-69). Finally, the third section presents short descriptions of other cities—Ceuta, Xauen, Tangier, and Gibraltar, specifically—and closes with a final entry written in Madrid once the narrator finished his military service. Because the chapters have little warfare action and are mostly descriptive, a prominent feature of *Notas marruecas* is its intradiegetic narrative voice, which embodies

discourses developed during Spain’s colonization of North Africa” (10); the study posits that a set of hybrid identities resulted from “Spain’s colonial presence in the Magreb” during the Protectorate, and how, in turn, these national and transnational identitarian discourses continue to inform Spanish contemporary cultural production (Campoy-Cubillo 10). These examples, together with the aforementioned research conducted by Bolorinos and Flesler, not only lay bare the plasticity of the colonizer-colonized binomial, but also evince the fruitfulness of studying Spanish non-hegemonic Orientalism.

Giménez and becomes the protagonist and the “único constructor del texto” (Miralles 116). It is precisely this prominent narrative voice that displays the author’s Orientalist gaze.

Similar to Giménez, *Quatre gotes* is also structured in three main parts enclosed by a prologue and an epilogue set outside of Morocco and tied together by an intradiegetic narrator that represents Prous. Each part is constituted by a series of episodes that are thematically coherent. The first one clearly has the purpose to illustrate the human toll of war, the ruthless and chaotic stupidity of the battle, as well as the deficiencies of the Spanish army intervention, which lacked resources and strategies. The second part focuses on deploying Prous’ political agenda: his republicanism and nationalism. Entries such as “El destacament” or “Les nits en campanya i l’amable record” describe the human toll of war and “¿...?” depicts the violence of the Legión (a colonial division of the Spanish military); while “La caminada” and “Aquelles muntanyes” display the author’s longing for a republican Spain and a sovereign Catalan state. Finally, in the third part of the diary, Prous continues his critique of the lack of resources and the corruption of the Spanish army and reflects on the death and the destruction that comes along with warfare. This section also deploys, more strikingly, Prous’ anti-monarchism with heated dialogues between foot soldiers who question the figure of king and the idea of the fatherland. The diary finally ends with his convalescence at the hospital and his return to Barcelona. In contrast with *Notas marruecas*, the narrator in *Quatre gotes* interacts with many other characters, soldiers, sergeants, and Moroccans, but he remains mostly silent in the dialogues unless there is a one-to-one conversation. Still, his voice is the sole common thread that constructs the narrative, acquiring the same prominence as Giménez’s voice. Moreover, the political views of both authors differ greatly, especially because of Prous’ anti-warfare ideology (which is conspicuous by its absence in *Notas marruecas*), but they share certain traits: both not only strongly criticize

the role of the Spanish army and government, but also employ the texts to display their nationalist views. All in all, these two intradiegetic narrators are the sole constructors of the text and exhibit a similar view of Moroccans, one that shows some commonalities with the Orientalist gaze described by Said.

Among all the features that define hegemonic Orientalist narratives, there are three that stand out in *Notas marruecas* and *Quatre gotes*: firstly, both narrators present themselves as detached eyewitnesses of the Orient; secondly, they display a firm belief in their racial superiority despite the ambivalent relationship they have with the Orient; thirdly, their narratives are dominated by their ulterior motives, which ultimately have more to do with the political situation in the Iberian Peninsula than they have to do with race. According to Said, the Orientalist view “reside[s] in the Orient,” entailing not only “personal experience and personal testimony,” but also “a consciousness set apart from, and unequal with, its surroundings” (*Orientalism* 156-157). These characteristics can be found in the texts of Giménez and Prous. Evidently, both of them wrote about their personal experiences in Morocco, but, interestingly, both put emphasis on assuring the unabridged veracity of the events depicted in the text. For instance, Prous, in the introductory entry to the diary, notes, “he de fer constar que la fantasia i la vanitat no hi han tingut res a veure. [són] Observacions que no disfressen gens la realitat d’aquella guerra” (39). Similarly, Giménez assumes the same impartiality in depicting the event in the last entry of *Notas marruecas*, when he states what his purpose is to compile “lo que no era posible en una epístola familiar o amistosa. No he pretendido interpretar la conciencia del soldado de campaña . . . He tenido gusto en recoger cosas que me han parecido pudieran servir como una modesta contribución a nuestra escasa literatura colonial” (185). However, this pretense of objectivity can be easily questioned as the narratives unfold due to the implausibility

of some scenes, such as the encounter between Prous and the Catalan-Muslim peasant, or Giménez's dream-like entry "Lógica de sueño," in which the narrator recounts some extravagant and bizarre encounters with the inhabitants of Tetouan.

The second most prominent Orientalist feature in *Notas marruecas* and *Quatre gotes* is directly related to race, more precisely how these narrators strongly believe in their racial superiority while they negotiate their ambivalent relationship with the Muslim world. As Flesler and Bolorinos point out, this ambivalence defines Spanish Orientalism, which presents a more ambiguous power relationship with the Orient: instead of constituting a strong-weak binary, it is characterized by vulnerability and ambivalence. Still, this does not prevent the authors from displaying their beliefs in their superiority and hegemonic racial ideologies. The most striking example in Giménez's case is the entry titled "Una cofradía de danza," in which the narrator is bewildered by witnessing a Aïssaoua dance and a Hamacha ritual.¹⁷ The narrator describes the first performance as follows: "apareció una farándula de negros sudaneses, que bailaron una danza simia, de macacos" (Giménez 105). By comparing the dancers with monkeys, Giménez employs another traditional trope of hegemonic racial ideologies. Then, the Hamacha ritual begins, and the narrator describes the performance in the following terms: "¡Qué danza! ¡Qué malestar, que tristeza sentía uno al contemplarla! . . . Aquellos ritmos salvajes y elementales . . . Se les veía brincar embriagados, hiperestésicos, irracionales" (Giménez 106). As the ritual unfolds, the narrator is astonished by the violence of the performance characterizing it as brutal and barbarous sacrifice (Giménez 106); completely disgusted by the scene, he vehemently wants

¹⁷ These two Islamic sects devoted their faith, respectively, to Al-Hadi ben Issa and Sidi Ajmed, and fascinated other European artists besides Giménez, such as Eugène Delacroix and Théophile Gautier, with their practices that frequently involve violence and death as means of spiritual ecstasy (Bolorinos 97-99)

to intervene evoking the civilizing mission of Spanish imperialism: “¿Por qué respetarles? . . . Nosotros hemos sido siempre el pueblo de los frailes, de los interventores evangélicos en las costumbres de los bárbaros” (Giménez 106-107). Regarding this scene, Nanclares notices, even though the narration establishes a parallel between this ritual and bullfighting at the end of the entry, Giménez categorically defends the “imperativo cultural, político, e incluso religioso, por parte de los españoles, de llevar a cabo una misión colonizadora” (Nanclares 80). However, Bolorinos’s in-depth analysis demonstrates that Giménez’s ambiguous fascination with the performance represents a negotiation of Spanish identity, one in which “the ritual belongs not only to North Africa, but also to something ancient that lies beneath the veneer of modern Spanish culture” (100). Albeit the different power dynamics between Spaniards and Moroccans, the vocabulary employed to describe the scene, as well as the summoning of the Spanish colonizing mission, suggest that Giménez firmly believes in his racial superiority. To put it simply, the derogatory descriptions of Moroccans make evident that the narrator’s racial biases are aligned with the hegemonic Orientalist discourses. The encounter with the unknown Hamachi and Aïssaoua traditions displays that the Orient is perceived as a barbaric and sinister space that needs to be conquered and dominated as well as negotiated and assimilated into the Spanish national identity.

While Giménez’s superiority is mostly displayed in the stereotypical descriptions of the Other, Proust’s adopts a different strategy and presents traditional tropes of European imperialism, particularly a firm belief in the civilizing mission of colonialism. The narrator constantly questions the mayhem and annihilation produced by warfare, but he firmly believes in a concept of civilization certainly associated with modernity and Western values, leading him to justify the domination of Morocco. “[Moroccans] En nosaltres veuen quelcom més que uns

defensors . . . veuen en nosaltres tots i en els que aniran venint, més que llur seguretat, una nova gran esperança: el trànsit, l'abundància, el comerç i l'oportunitat d'edificar-s'hi unes quantes cases més" (Prou 45). The narrator takes Morocco's backwardness for granted and strongly believes that this land needs to be improved by assimilating (if not imposing) Occidental ideas of progress and civilization. Therefore, the idea of Western civilization, certainly associated with modernity and progress, is crucial for Prou's perspective and dominates his perception of Moroccans, whose underdevelopment requires European intervention. That is why Prou displays more visibly his belief in colonization as a salvation mission, an attitude that recalls hegemonic colonial discourses from the Spanish imperial enterprise in the Americas. The narrator states the purpose of this war: "Diré de com la nostra missió s'assembla a la missió del pastor en plena muntanya, recelós que el llop famolenc oceixi el seus ramats" (141). With this symbolism, Prou speaks as if he were Bartolomé de las Casas in the American colonies. As the Dominican priest did in *Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias* (1552), he compares Moroccans with sheep that must be protected and guided by a shepherd, a more developed civilization, to overcome their savage state. He adopts the same condescending and belittling attitudes of the colonizers, displaying his belief in the superiority of Western civilization. In fact, Prou explicitly confirms this belief when the narrator shows his frustration recalling the destruction caused by the Abd el-Krim's army:

Hom volia *civilitzar* el moros, i els moros han destruït tot el que la civilització els havia dut . . . son uns ganduls, uns *incivilitzats*, uns cafres i bandits que prefereixen el pillatge al treball . . . Què és, doncs, el que volen aquesta gent? Els fem mines, esglésies, trens, ponts, carreteres i camins i en res no veuen l'obra de la civilització, ni el sacrifici que fan els països civilitzats en voler-los redimir (Prou 222, my emphasis).

Therefore, Prous also exhibits his superiority over Moroccans, either by suggesting Europe's developmental and technological dominance or by adopting the hegemonic patronizing attitude exhibited by key figures of the colonization such as Bartolomé de las Casas. His racial ideology is less obvious than Giménez's, but both assert their superiority and are compelled to conquer and dominate the Orient in a civilizing mission.

The last characteristic that defines these two diaries of the Rif War as Orientalist concerns the narrator's underlying intentions. Said outlines three types of "intentional categories" in Orientalist writers, but there is one that perfectly fits these cases of study: "the writer for whom a real or metaphorical trip to the Orient is the fulfillment of some deeply felt and urgent project" (*Orientalism* 157-158). The ulterior motivations in both diaries dominate the narratives and reflect on the political crisis in the Peninsula: Giménez longs to purge Spanish politics and regenerate its national identity while Prous hopes to establish a Republican government and a sovereign Catalonia. Both authors, then, employ their pilgrimage to reflect upon these motifs. Their texts aim to interpret the Orient comprehensively, but they are actually "fed and informed by the[se] project[s]" (*Orientalism* 158). On the one hand, Giménez's underlying intentions spread throughout the whole narration of *Notas marruecas*, which explains why scholars such as Miralles and Goñi have discussed it as an example of political propaganda (120, 155). His objective is to criticize Spanish politics and military and invigorate an annihilated national identity, leading him to set aside the depiction of warfare. He does so by filling the text with subtle sarcasm and pun-intended criticisms, as the entries "Tiritos," "Legionarios," or "Una oficina," illustrate. In the first entry, the narrator recounts a night in which strange noises sounded the alarm, and the battalion fired some gunshots into the darkness but, the next morning the soldiers realized that the imagined attack was nothing but a harmless donkey wandering in

the forest. Similarly, in “Legionarios,” the narrator sarcastically describes the dubious character of this branch of the army—which was mostly composed of outlaws and petty criminals who enrolled in the military to avoid justice—by comparing them to the figure of the “pícaro.” Finally, in “Una oficina,” the description of the precarious state of an office, as well as of the idle and disorganized people who work there serves as a vehicle for Giménez to criticize the political system in Spain and its role in the Rif War.

This ironic tone is evident in the descriptions of military generals and administrative clerks, as well as the rhetorical questions that populate the text; Giménez deploys his criticisms at any moment of the plot, like when he is traveling on the ship “La Giralda:” “Vamos a una marcha lenta, tan lenta, que estamos aún por la mitad, cuando debíamos estar llegando. El marinero de guardia me explica que el yate está hecho una carraca, que necesita lo menos un año de reparación. ¿Qué no necesitará reparación en nuestro país?” (65). This sarcasm and criticism make understandable the judicial problems Giménez had after the publication of *Notas marruecas*. However, even though this disappointment is pervasive throughout the text, Giménez’s vanguardist spirit drives him to seek a radical transformation: to revitalize Spanish national identity and incite a collective political intervention. “¿qué debemos hacer ahora? . . . Nosotros, . . . nosotros que nos jugábamos todo por mantener una unidad nacional . . . Nosotros . . . no nos desunamos ahora . . . Tenemos que intervenir juntos otra vez en algo común . . . Unámonos otra vez compañeros” (Giménez 185-187). With this repetitive use of the first-person plural, the narrator appeals to those privates who fought in the war and survived, suggesting that he believes these experiences were crucial for understanding and improving the Spanish political landscape. His appeal for intervening stems from his firm belief that the future of Spain is in

their hands, the hands of those soldiers who survived the war despite Spanish political and military incompetence.

On the other hand, the narrative voice of *Quatre gotes* comprehends a wider range of underlying motivations; it conveys an anti-warfare message and proposes Proust's political agenda for the Peninsula: a Republican Spain and a sovereign Catalonia. The author's antimilitarism is evident through many of the scenes depicted in the text, but it is most compelling in those moments when he acknowledges and assumes his remorse for participating in the military conflict: "M'averkonyeixo . . . [de] que la meva mà hagi agafat la destrat per abatre les soques d'aquests arbres . . . , les parets d'aquestes cases" (Proust 216). However, this penitence is not the motivation that drives Proust's narrative; rather, his Republicanism and Catalan nationalism become the "urgent project" that Said refers to and that defines the narrator's motives (*Orientalism* 158). The narrator lays out these motives either through his own voice or through those of the characters, usually privates discussing politics in their leisure time. For instance, in a conversation between soldiers, one of them foresees the possibility of a military uprising in the Peninsula and another private replies: "No, això no serà, perquè no trigarem molts anys a tenir República . . . I aquells que ara som ací hem de contribuir a què vingui la República, a enderrocar al rei i el règim i a tenir completa llibertat" (Proust 204). Moreover, the narrator also explicitly shows his longing for a Republican state in one of his reflections: "A Espanya mateix hi ha molts republicans els quals un dia poden proclamar la República, però també aquesta República podrà ésser que sigui ofegada i anihilada pels mateixos espanyols" (Proust 213). In both excerpts, the author's Republicanism is crystal clear, but it is also telling that both instances identify the fragility of such a political system and anticipate the possibility of a military

uprising, especially if one considers the date of publication (1936) and the fatal destiny of the text after 1939.¹⁸

This temporal distance between the publications of *Quatre gotes* and *Notas marruecas* (1923) may undercut the present analysis since Proust's discourse may be read differently depending on when the diary was written: Proust's anticipation of a *coup-de-état* is less prescient if he was writing the text after the advent of the Second Republic in 1931. However, according to Corretger, Proust wrote his diary of the Rif War, as well as his most known collection of poems—*Nopals. Elegies de guerra* (1931)—during his military service (“Josep Maria Proust i Vila” 190; Prologue 8). Whether Corretger here makes a well-founded affirmation or an unfounded assumption about the authors' biography is a question for a different paper. For the purposes of this chapter, this is a concession that is necessary to accept since, regardless of their publication dates, *Quatre gotes* shares many common features with *Notas marruecas*. In fact, if anything, this temporal distance between texts hints at a continuation of this quasi-Orientalist gaze.

Moreover, the last ulterior motive that pervades *Quatre gotes* is the longing for a Catalan independent nation-state. In the text, there are many hints to Proust's nationalism, like when the narrator states: “[Els soldats] Sovint parlen de la triple aliança que projecten bascos, gallecs i catalans allà a la Península. Això pels que som ací la cosa ja sembla un fet” (69). However, the most distinct example occurs in a conversation between the protagonist and a Moroccan peasant at the top of a mountain near the Gurugu, which is located on the North-East coastline of Morocco, relatively close to the border with Algeria. The narrator, after struggling to explain to

¹⁸ According to Corretger, *Quatre gotes* was published around January 1936, “pocs mesos abans d'esclatar la guerra civil” (Prologue 8, 30). Moreover, Francoist dictatorship banned its distribution and ordered its destruction without exceptions (Navas 80, Anguera 182).

the latter why Spain is not his homeland, states: “Nosaltres som d’un país que tampoc no ens deixen ésser el que voldríem. Ens trobem, si fa no fa, amb les mateixes situacions que el vostre. No ens han ‘declarat la guerra’ obertament, però ens tenen l’argolla posada al coll . . . Es ofeguen de totes maneres, moralment i materialment” (Prous 213). Prous, emboldened by his political agenda, constructs a parallel between Morocco and Catalonia, not only diminishing his involvement in the war, but also equating the level of oppression in both societies, which is simply not the case. Regarding this parallel, Corretger identifies it as a rhetorical strategy to illustrate Prous’ nationalist sentiments (Prologue 25-36); but Navais i Icart points out that the comparison was a common theme of Catalan nationalism of the time, a “símbol propagandista antiespanyol” (71). The second argument seems more plausible if one recalls the aforementioned condescending attitude of the narrator, as well as Catalonia’s involvement in the colonial and capitalist enterprise. Therefore, Prous’ identification of the Other is less a self-reflection about race than an expression of his ulterior motives.

Thus, these three key elements—the personal, yet detached recollection of memories, the racial superiority and white-savior complex of the narrators, and the underlying motivations that dominate their narratives—are the most prominent Orientalist traits that can be found in Giménez’s and Prous’ diaries of the Rif War. Due to space constraints, this analysis set aside other elements, such as the feminization of the Orient and the domestication of the exotic, that may be worth exploring in future research. This suggests how the hegemonic Orientalist world view permeated Spanish and Catalan societies, although the power dynamics between them and Moroccans distinguish them from other European nations. Precisely, these differences—the ambivalent and unstable power dynamics between Spain and Morocco pointed out by Flesler and

Bolorinos—stem from the same conflict: European Romanticism “orientalized” the Iberian Peninsula, forcing its nationalisms to negotiate and secure their belonging to the Western world.

***Meditaciones* and *La nacionalitat catalana*: Two Negotiations of Europeanness**

While the previous section showed that two literary products, one from Spain and another from Catalonia, reproduced hegemonic racial narratives when describing the Other, this section explains how Spanish and Catalan national ideals described and understood their own identity in terms of race. To put it simply, this section illustrates how these nationalist imaginaries defined their own racial identity, as represented in the primary texts. To do so, the following analysis of *Meditaciones del Quijote* (1914) and *La nacionalitat catalana* (1906) (from this point onwards, *Meditaciones* and *La nacionalitat*) displays how Ortega and Prat understood their racial identity in the early 1900s and how the idea of race figures in their nationalist arguments. The British anthropologist, Peter Wade, whose work focuses on issues of race in Latin America, stated that racial identity is not only contingent, but also “partial, unstable, contextual, fragmentary” (19). The following interpretation of these primary texts reaches similar conclusions when demonstrating that Spanish and Catalan nationalisms upheld similar discourses of racial hybridity to define their identity and justify, assert, and ultimately secure, their Europeanness: i.e. their authority within the geopolitical imperialist landscape of Europe during the first decades of the twentieth century. Particularly, Ortega’s dissertation about the Germanic and Mediterranean traditions employs racial hybridity with a twofold objective: to reformulate the Spanish national ideal and to propose the authentic European race as hybrid. In doing so, he addresses Spain’s post-1898 identity crisis and responds to Europeans’ pejorative perception of the Peninsula. Similarly, Prat’s argument presents an analogous understanding of race, one that

contemplates racial mixture as the breeding ground of Catalan nationalism but grants greater importance to social interactions than to race in the construction of nationalist sentiments. With this understanding, Prat contends a discourse of racial hybridity that strengthens the differentiation between Spain and Catalonia and asserts their belonging to the Western world.

This analysis contributes to an existing body of work that explores how the Iberian Peninsula was perceived by northern European intellectuals. Scholars who have addressed this issue argue that, thanks to the influence of French and German Romanticism and due to its southern location, the Iberian Peninsula was perceived, employing Said's terminology, as an Oriental territory: underdeveloped and incompletely civilized (Martin-Márquez, Venegas). For instance, in *The Sublime South: Andalusia, Orientalism, and the Making of Modern Spain* (2018), José L. Venegas discloses how Spanish national discourse, influenced by European Romanticism, exoticized the South (the region of Andalusia) to construct a paradoxical national identity: one that embraces an Orientalist perception of itself but continues colonizing and "orientalizing" other nations (15). The author maps out how this Orientalist twofold narrative pervades Spanish cultural production throughout the century, from the late nineteenth century to the democratic era. Venegas demonstrates that this perception of inferiority not only was adopted by other European countries, but also was internalized by Peninsular subjects, triggering a self-orientalization process that internally divided societies into geographical binaries of North and South or urban and rural.

Along the same lines, Susan Martin-Márquez observes cultural representations of Africa and Africans from the nineteenth century to the democratic era and identifies a narrative thread that shifts according to the necessities of each historical moment and invokes the medieval past of the peninsula to define national identity (4). The critic notes, "Spain is a nation that is at once

Orientalized and Orientalizing. The dynamic resembles a Möbius strip, calling into question the possibility of any location ‘outside’ Orientalist discourse” (9). As a result, Venegas’ and Martín-Márquez’s research reinforce the contradictory double-narrative of Spanish and Catalan nationalisms: they conceptualized geographical, ethnical, and racial differences to secure their status within the geopolitical imperial arena of the West, while constructing a national ideal based on racial hybridity to overcome and reconcile their internalized inferiority complexes. If the first section of this chapter delved into the first part of this paradox, the following analysis demonstrates that racial hybridity played an essential role in the construction of Spanish and Catalan identity, as shown in *Meditaciones* and *La nacionalitat*. To put it simply, this section contributes to Venegas’ and Martín-Márquez’s findings by proving that these political writings can be read as two negotiations (or reconciliations) with the Orientalization of the Iberian Peninsula.

The negotiation between Spain and Europe was famously addressed by Ortega, one of the most prominent voices of the Spanish cultural sphere in the early twentieth century.¹⁹ In contrast with other authors of the time, he composed work that is mostly philosophical, rather than literary. He is considered one of the most influential thinkers of the time. It is complex to situate him permanently within an ideological spectrum since the turn of the century is characterized by a manifold of ever-changing political beliefs. Still, Ortega’s work is determined by his will to theorize a national philosophy and praxis that could be easily applied in Spain and help to

¹⁹ Literary critics traditionally classified Ortega as a member of the Generación del 14, but this classification is nowadays surpassed because it obscures the aesthetical complexity and the vast productivity of the period, as well as the work of many other less-known authors, particularly female writers. As one example of this critical inquiry, one can review José-Carlos Mainer’s *Historia de la literatura española, Modernidad y Nacionalismo 1900-1939*, vol. 6 (2010), where the critic contends that this generational categorization created by Jaume Vicens Vives is more a symptom of “autopercepción” than a useful literary classification (7). That is why, the present chapter avoids employing this terminology.

overcome the identity crisis provoked by the loss of 1898. As many other thinkers of the time, Ortega believed that a true regeneration of the nation could be achieved only by an educated elite, as *La España invertebrada* (1921) clearly demonstrates, to mention one example. In fact, as Andrew Dobson notes, “Ortega’s life’s work can be seen as an attempt to Hispanicise the European, and Europeanise the Hispanic,” a statement corroborated by the following analysis of *Meditaciones* (20).

Meditaciones was published in 1914 as part of the collection entitled “Serie II: Ensayos,” which was edited by the writer Juan Ramón Jiménez and was part of the Publicaciones de la Residencia de Estudiantes, a Madrid-based institution that bolstered Spanish *avant-garde* art and culture (De Llera 10, Carpintero 392). The text is a literary and philosophical reflection that seeks to reconcile Spanish culture and tradition with its European neighbors and elaborate the theoretical grounds for regenerating the national ideal. *Meditaciones* is structured in three parts—a presentation addressed to the readers, a “Meditación preliminar”, and a first meditation titled “Breve tratado de la novela”—but, as Ciriaco Morón Arroyo notes, Ortega planned to include two more sections that were never written, “El alcionismo de Cervantes” and “Cómo Cervantes solía ver el mundo” (97). The first section exposes the nationalist nature of the text and justifies the author’s intentions when writing it: “El lector descubrirá . . . los latidos de la preocupación patriótica . . . la obligación de edificar una nueva afirmación. Se entiende de intentarlo. Así nosotros, habiendo negado a España, nos encontramos en el paso honroso de hallar otra” (Ortega 47). In short, Ortega’s purpose is crystal clear: he aims to articulate a new Spanish national ideal that supersedes the identity crisis provoked by the defeat in 1898. Then, the “Meditación preliminar” revolves around what elements define a great culture and proposes to use the figures of Don Quijote and Miguel Cervantes as inspirations to reformulate Spanish

identity (Villacañas 120). Finally, the text abruptly ends with the first meditation, which reflects upon the genre of the novel and declares *El Quijote* the epitome of Ortega's understanding of European culture.

Because of the dense and intricate nature of *Meditaciones*, scholars have adopted many different approaches to its interpretations. Most of them revolve around discerning Ortega's epistemology; and they agree that the text is an exercise of phenomenology that contrasts Northern and Southern European culture, or rather Germanic and Mediterranean, to sketch the continent's identity, aiming to integrate the former to Spanish identity.²⁰ Other lines of inquiry interpret the text by identifying its influences, applying different theoretical frameworks, or discerning Ortega's epistemology. One instance of the first approach is an essay by Helio Carpintero, which connects the last section of *Meditaciones* with György Lukács' Marxist theory about the literary genres; while an instance of the second approach is the work of critics such as Alejandro de Haro Honrubia and José Lasaga Medina, who analyze the text with the theory of love and the figure of the hero, respectively. The last and most controversial debate is devoted to discerning whether or not *Meditaciones* reflects the entire philosophical system developed by Ortega, but there is little agreement among critics. For instance, Lasaga has no doubt in affirming that the text "contiene *in nuce* el proyecto filosófico orteguiano" (214); while De Llera disagrees, arguing that some criticisms explain Ortega's philosophy through *Meditaciones* but sometimes decontextualize it (2). Without denying the relevance of these debates, none of this academic research delves into issues of race; that is why, the attention of the following analysis is centered on revealing Ortega's understanding of his own racial identity,

²⁰ The consensus in this line of inquiry is that Ortega's intention in *Meditaciones* is to solve the post-1898 national identity crisis of Spain by integrating the Germanic tradition to the national ideal (Moron 326, Cerezo 29, Villacañas 73).

and its role in his nationalist argument. This absence of attention toward race in Ortega's work is not the objective of this chapter; but, by addressing this often-ignored topic, we would be able to revisit the philosopher's influential discourse and better comprehend the foundations of the Spanish national culture, which, in turn, will contribute to a reevaluation of the Spanish literary canon that updates it within a more contemporary context.

In *Meditaciones*, Ortega shows awareness of ideas of racial purity but presents a more complex understanding of race, one that not only distinguishes between what he calls "organic" and "historical" races but also advocates for hybridity to describe his own identity. In the section addressed to the readers, Ortega affirms that "la intimidad de una raza" is manifested in "detalles del paisaje español, del modo de conversar de los labriegos, del giro de las danzas y cantos populares, de los colores y estilos en el traje y en los utensilios, de las peculiaridades del idioma, y, en general, de las manifestaciones" (28-29). The philosopher considers geography, language, folklore, and traditions to be essential components of racial identity, suggesting that his understanding of race entails more complexity than phenotypical differences, such as skin color. In fact, Ortega even goes so far as to affirm that: "Hoy nos faltan por completo los medios para fijar relaciones de causa a efecto entre las razas como constituciones orgánicas, y las razas como maneras de ser históricas, como tendencias intelectuales, emotivas, artísticas, jurídicas, etc." (83-84). Firstly, Ortega defines the concept of race through two distinct categories (organic and historical) and contends that scholarship has not determined the relationship between them. He suggests, with the use of the term "organic," that race is associated to biology and corresponds with physical differences among human beings, while the "historical race" is related to the material, cultural, and social factors that define, in the long run, the racial identity of a collective. Therefore, Ortega understands race as a complex concept in which physical differences play a

relevant, yet no definitory role, since geography, language, and culture serve as more crucial factors. Accordingly, Ortega puts forward his understanding of what he calls the Latin race: “¿con qué seguridad podemos hablar de latinos o mediterráneos? Italia, Francia, España, están anegadas de sangre germánica. Somos *razas esencialmente impuras*; por nuestras venas fluye una trágica contradicción fisiológica. Houston Chamberlain ha podido hablar de las razas caos” (85, my cursive). Here, the writer not only proclaims racial impurity as the authentic race of Latins, but also engages with the debates about race that proliferated around Europe during the early twentieth century by mentioning Houston Stuart Chamberlain (1855-1927). It seems that Ortega, by appropriating Chamberlain’s terminology, was questioning, if not contesting, his ethnonationalism and ideas of purity. All in all, Ortega’s discourse about race dismisses phenotypical traits as defining racial identity; instead, he favors social, cultural, and linguistic factors and conjures up hybridity to describe Southern European countries. This strategical stance is crucial in the philosopher’s argument about race and his attempt to regenerate Spanish national identity.

Accordingly, hybridity becomes an essential idea for Ortega’s meditations. He employs it not only to address Spanish national identity crisis, but also to propose a new understanding of the European race, one that reconciles the differences existing between Northern and Southern Europe. In a domestic context, the philosopher shows his disappointment with the political moment and argues that Spain has lost its dynamism and “cae de golpe en un hondísimo letargo y no ejerce más función vital que la de soñar que vive” (72). For him, the Restoration is a failed political system that created an illusion of vitality but, in reality, withered the nation’s spirit; that is why, he is deeply preoccupied with “salvar la primaria *sustancia de la raza*, el módulo hispánico” (Ortega 120, my emphasis); and he conveys the following solution:

¿Por qué [el español] se olvida de su herencia germánica? Sin ella—no haya duda—
 padecería un destino equívoco . . . No me obliguéis a ser sólo español . . . no azucéis al
 ibero que va en mí . . . contra el blondo germano . . . que alienta en la zona crepuscular de
 mi alma. Yo . . . empujo [a mis hombres interiores] hacia una colaboración.

Para esto es necesario una jerarquía. Y entre las dos claridades es menester que hagamos
 la una [la germánica] eminente (Ortega 109).

For Ortega, the Spanish identity was forged within two traditions, the Germanic and the Mediterranean; but they were in conflict, or rather, Spaniards obliterated the former, so, to reconcile them, Ortega calls for including and granting superiority to the Germanic tradition. With this metaphysical proposal, the writer aims to reconcile the differences between Northern and Southern Europe and overcome Spain's inherited inferiority complex caused by its defeat in 1898 and by long-lasting European orientalization of the Iberian Peninsula. That is why, he notes, "Existe, efectivamente, una diferencia esencial entre la cultura germánica y la latina; aquélla es la cultura de las realidades profundas, y ésta la cultura de la superficies. En rigor, pues, dos dimensiones distintas de la cultura europea integral" (Ortega 78). These words synthesize the key point of Ortega's philosophical epistemology: there are differences between the Northern and Southern European nations, but they are two sides of the same coin. For him, Spain is as European as Germany is, but the two countries differ in the way they approach the world: the former is sensorial, while the latter is reflexive. With this argument, Ortega not only insists that both territories are equally important and challenges the biases and assumptions that Europe casts on the Peninsula; but he also suggests that an integration (a mixture) of both traditions would result in a truly European race. Later, he lays bare this idea: "Representamos en el mapa moral de Europa el extremo predominio de la impresión. El concepto no ha sido nunca

nuestro elemento . . . Yo no propongo ningún abandono, sino todo lo contrario: una integración” (Ortega 113).

Thus, despite its metaphoric and intricate language, *Meditaciones* directly tackles the early-twentieth-century Spanish identity crisis by advocating for the integration of the Germanic tradition into the Spanish national ideal and formulates a conceptualization of the European race based on hybridity. Ortega is able to convey this argument because his understanding of race gives more prominence to ethnic and cultural traits than to physical differences, as his distinction between “organic” and “historical” races points out. All things considered, *Meditaciones* can be interpreted as a response to the derogatory views Europeans had of the Peninsula; its purpose is to re-construct Spanish national identity and to strengthen its ties with Europe by contending the impurity of the European race. To put it simply, *Meditaciones* is a negotiation of authority within the Western geopolitical landscape as much as it is a philosophical dissertation. This is because it proposes racial hybridity not only as the solution to Spanish national identity crisis, but also as the truly essence of the European race. First, Ortega extols hybridity as the most prominent racial feature of Southern European nations and affirms that Europe’s identity results from the mixture of what he calls Germanic and Latin cultures: insinuating that this feature extends throughout the continent. By establishing this racial paradigm, he advocates for the integration of both cultures into the Spanish national identity to resolve the post-1898 crisis and the orientalizing of the Iberian Peninsula. Therefore, even though hybridity and integration are different concepts, Ortega articulates his nationalist argument by exploiting the correlation that exists between them—the two ultimately will coalesce into a singular hybrid identity. Interestingly, this ideological stance is similarly produced in other territories within the Iberian Peninsula, as the case of Prat’s national ideal illustrates.

Prat displays an understanding of race comparable to Ortega's, one that justifies the emergence of Catalan nationalism within a racially hybrid context and contends that race is less decisive than social interactions in the nation-building process. However, he proposes a racial narrative that differentiates Catalonia from Spain and replicates the ideology of European imperialism to ultimately secure the belonging of Spain and Catalonia to the West. Prat was a prominent political leader at the turn of the century: he collaborated in the writing of key nationalist texts, such as the "Bases de Manresa" (1892) and the "Memorial de greuges" (1885) and was one of the founding members of the Lliga Regionalista de Catalunya (Catalan Regionalist League), a political party that advocated for the autonomy of the territory ("¿Qué fue?" 176). He wrote profusely in different newspapers, such as the *Revista Jurídica de Cataluña* and *La Renaixensa*, even becoming the director of *La Veu de Catalunya* in 1899, a publication that became the ideological voice of La Lliga (Balcells, Introduction 27-28). Among all Prat's written production, *La nacionalitat* is considered a foundational text for Catalan nationalism because it is the first of his texts to contend that Catalonia "té tots el atributs d'una nació, o d'una nacionalitat, és a dir, d'una nació imperfecta, sense Estat propi" (Balcells, Introduction 67). Enric Ucelay-Da Cal describes the text as a "justificació patriòtica" that resulted from the political necessity of uniting the opposing ideological extremes that were then current in Catalonia into one single transversal regionalist party, Solidaritat Catalana (15). As a result, Prat's political maneuver enabled this party to successfully win the 1907 elections (Ucelay-Da 15). That is why, *La nacionalitat* is a "pastitx d'urgència" for the electoral campaign of Solidaritat Catalana (Ucelay-Da 8). Moreover, Prat's text can be framed as an intervention in the long-lasting and ubiquitous controversy that was still brewing in the Mediterranean at the time: the clash between Latins and Anglo-Saxons. Lily Livak has studied this controversy in depth and argues that, in

order to overcome the racial, cultural, or social superiority of Nordic European countries, Latin countries “reaccionaron . . . a través de la reafirmación de sus valores o mediante el estudio de su propia historia” (31). This affirmation not only sustains Ortega’s efforts to assert Spain’s Europeanness, but also explains how and why Catalan nationalism flourished in the late nineteenth century. Litvak points out that the failures of Latin countries triggered “una reacción nacionalista. La esperanza de un renacimiento latino cedió paso, para muchos, a la posibilidad de salvación dentro de un ámbito puramente nacional” (49). Therefore, Litvak’s findings suggest that these “national reactions” emboldened intellectuals, such as Prat, who envisioned their national ideals as the solution to their inferiority complex in relation to Northern Europe. These political transformations are evident in Prat’s nationalist argument.

La nacionalitat is structured in ten chapters that mostly recycled the author’s previous literature. For instance, chapters two, three, and four are re-writings of a prologue Prat wrote for *Regionalisme i federalisme* (1905) by Duran i Ventosa, another prominent figure of Catalan nationalism (Balcells, Introduction 66-67, Ucelay-Da 8); moreover, Prat’s public lectures about nation and nationalism at the Ateneu Barcelonès in 1897 became chapters five, six, and seven (Balcells, Introduction 64, Ucelay-Da 8); while the only new material of *La nacionalitat* are the two concluding chapters: “L’imperialisme” and “Acabament” (Balcells, Introduction 69). With its modern and straightforward language, the text accomplishes two political objectives. On the one hand, it explains the evolution of Catalan nationalist sentiments—beginning with their inception in provincialism, to their regionalist phase, to their current nationalist state—and projects Catalan nationalism into the future as the imperial driving force that would regenerate the Iberian Peninsula (Balcells, Introduction 81). On the other hand, by conveying the differences between the concepts of State and Nation, *La nacionalitat* provides a political

justification for Catalan sovereignty, one that, for politicians of the Lliga Regionalista, was “scientifically” based and remains today a key referent for Catalan nationalism (Ucelay-Da 8, Balcells, Introduction 27).

Due to this long-lasting success and influence, *La nacionalitat* has attracted a remarkable amount of critical attention that has concentrated on two lines of analysis: explaining Prat’s rhetorical strategies or his nationalist ideals. Regarding the rhetoric, Alfredo J. Sosa-Velasco reflects upon the use of the terms “nation” and “nationality” and suggests that this differentiation articulates a discourse about the common sentiment of a nation-without-a-state but obscures “los intereses de la burguesía catalana” (“Qué fue?” 176). Another essay that tackles the rhetoric of the text is Jennifer Brady’s “El árbol y la nación: La creación de nacionalidad catalana en dos obras *noucentistes*.” This study analyzes the rhetorical image of the tree in Prat’s political essay and in the *noucentista* novel *La ben plantada* (1911) written by the aforementioned Eugeni d’Ors, concluding that both texts employ this figure as a metaphor of modernization and the future of the Catalan nation. Both studies convincingly demonstrate Prat’s place of enunciation when crafting *La nacionalitat*: he firmly believed that a complete modernization of society, together with a leading bourgeoisie were key elements in the constitution of the Catalan nation. Still, none of this research delves into Prat’s conceptualization of race and its relationship with the nationalist ideal presented in *La nacionalitat*, a crucial topic if one wants to understand Prat’s political views completely, as well as the racial narratives that proliferated in the Iberian Peninsula.

The second line of academic inquiry into *La nacionalitat* focused on explaining Prat’s nationalist ideal and describing how he envisioned Catalan expansionism. One of these is Javier Krauel, whose research explores the role that emotions played in the writings of several fin-de-

siècle thinkers in the Iberian Peninsula, such as Miguel de Unamuno, Ángel Ganivet, or the aforementioned Ramiro de Maeztu (12). Regarding *La nacionalitat*, the critic points out that, in his argument, Prat had a twofold objective in avoiding mention of the colonial interventions of Catalan society: firstly, this omission allows Prat to distinguish Catalan and Spanish imperial traditions and aspirations, situating them in opposing stages of flourishing and decadence, respectively (Krauel 171); consequently, Prat's argument "posited Catalan imperial pride as overcoming Spanish imperial shame," approximating his national ideal to modern empires, such as the United States and Great Britain (Krauel 171). In short, while Spanish intellectuals struggled to overcome the shameful defeat of 1898, Prat took advantage of the situation and envisioned a Catalan nation with the same imperial potential than other European countries.

In fact, this ideal of Catalan imperialism is a crucial element of Prat's national model since it would secure the nation's belonging to the Western world and advance his ultimate project: consolidating a federation of the Iberian nations. As Albert Balcells argues, "L'imperialisme i el colonialisme eren vistos com a exigències de la pertinença a Europa . . . com a imperatius d'europeïtat . . . Prat considera que l'aplicació pràctica de l'expansionisme català era la intervenció catalana en la governació d'Espanya i el projecte de l'iberisme" (Introduction 70). Prat's imperialism was little concerned with embarking on new colonial projects abroad or overseas; rather, as Ucelay-Da posits, it intended to formulate a "projecte regionalitzador per tot Espanya" (30). Therefore, these studies demonstrate that Prat took advantage of Spain's national identity crisis to propose Catalan nationalism as the model that Iberian nations should follow to overcome their inferiority complexes and recuperate the peninsula's authority within Europe; yet, neither of these studies read Prat's nationalist argument

through the lens of race, overlooking the fundamental role this concept plays in his imperialist agenda.

In *La nacionalitat*, Prat references hegemonic European discourses about race but proposes an understanding of the concept that, similar to Ortega's, differentiates between "anthropological" and "historical" races to explain the emergence of Catalan nationalism within a hybrid society. The politician's awareness of hegemonic racial discourses is evident when he notes:

S'esguarda a la primeria l'home exterior . . . tots els detalls etnogràfics que donen la visió exacta, però externa només dels homes i les races . . . quan la fisiologia feia tan admirables progressos, i l'estudi de l'organisme havia engendrat les extremitats del sistema d'en Gall i dels frenòlegs, era impossible que no es donessin els investigadors a amidar les dimensions del crani i fixar-ne la configuració, a precisar l'angle encefàlic, a determinar l'alçada i les altres circumstàncies de l'ossada de les races (Prat 146-147)

Prat displays his knowledge of the current European trends in racial discourses by mentioning the scientist Franz Joseph Gall (1758-1828) and considering reasonable the emergence of pseudosciences, such as phrenology. Even though he understands the growing scientific interest in determining differences among human beings, what he calls "el gran corrent antropològic," he criticizes this field for observing only the exterior of individuals (Prat 147). For Prat, the problem is that the dominant discourses conflated race and nationality, creating the misleading belief that "*la nacionalitat és una raça*" (147); this conflation results from not distinguishing between anthropological and historical races: "*la confusió de la raça històrica, o varietat de l'espècie de les societats, amb la raça antropològica, o varietat dels individus de l'espècie humana, presos isoladament, d'un a un, deslligats de tot vincle de societat*" (Prat 147). By insisting on this

distinction, Prat suggests that race should be defined not only by phenotypical differences, but also geographical and social factors, providing him with the opportunity to explain the emergence of Catalan nationalism without necessarily advocating for racial purity.

In fact, Prat points out that history manifests “alguna cosa més que les investigacions antropològiques, i . . . observaren els pensadors i historiaris les varietats socials o de civilització o cultura, les races històriques, les grans individualitats col·lectives o *nacionalitats*” (147). In other words, Prat maintains that phenotypical differences are insufficient for describing the racial identity completely, since there are examples of “historical races” that evolved from hybrid societies into diverse nationalities, hinting at the particular case of the Iberian Peninsula. With this paradigm, Prat includes race as an influencing factor in the construction of a nationality, but grants it little importance; after all, nationalist sentiments exist even in racially-hybrid societies:

I és que l’home neix membre d’una raça, rep l’herència els caràcters que un treball de segles ha acumulat . . . La raça, doncs, és altre element importantíssim . . . Però la raça no és nacionalitat, per més que en sigui factor importantíssim . . . I en totes les nacionalitats d’ara, poc observador s’ha d’èsser per a no haver-se adonat que hi ha de tot: testes semítiques, caps de bola, tipus germànics, cranis allargats, matisos dels ulls, de la pell i dels cabells, de totes menes (Prat 152)

Prat recognizes race as a defining element of human beings but affirms that there is neither causality nor correlation between racial identity and nationalist sentiments; he avoids defining Catalan nationalism within a framework of racial purity. Therefore, like Ortega’s theory of mixed European race, Prat’s racial categorization allows him to both question the associations between the terms race and nation and to prompt a discourse that envisions hybridity as the ideal context for the emergence of nationalisms.

According to this understanding, the role of race in Prat's nation-building process is as relevant as other elements, such as geography and language, but is less decisive than social interactions, which are able to supersede any other factor. "L'èsser i l'essència del poble estan, no en les races ni les llegües, sinó en les ànimes. La nacionalitat és, doncs, un *Volkgeist*, un esperit social o públic . . . no hem de fer més que agrupar-los [aquests elements] en unitat sistemàtica, i tindrem la fórmula ideològica de la nacionalitat" (Prat 151). Undoubtedly influenced by German Idealism, Prat suggests that national sentiments arise from conflating these elements: geography, race, language, and social or public spirit; but only the latter is essential in the constitution of the national ideal. To put it simply, his nationalist argument establishes causality between these four elements: once they are simultaneously combined, the idea of the nationality will inevitably spark. However, what is this social or public spirit for Prat? According to the author, it is the "natural" result of living within a particular community, because society "constitueix en l'ànima mateixa dels homes un tros d'ànima social, son esperit individual queda orgànicament soldat per sempre més amb l'ànima col·lectiva . . . [la societat] els lliga i forma de tots una unitat superior, un ser col·lectiu informat per un mateix esperit" (Prat 143). The politician, again, establishes a causality between living in a community and feeling national spirit: the former will unfurl into the latter. Therefore, for Prat, the national spirit emerges through those other elements (geography, race, and language), but most prominently through civic engagement, which becomes the glue of the national sentiment.

In fact, Prat was so convinced of the inherent potential of society in the nation-building process that he even contemplates the possibility of assimilating nationalist sentiments when individuals are foreign to the other defining factors. For Prat, "el poble" is "un principi espiritual . . . que s'apodera dels homes i els penetra i els emmotlla . . . Poseu sota l'acció de l'esperit

nacional gent estrangera, gent d'altres nacions i races, i veureu com suaument, de mica en mica, va revestint-la [la gent] de lleugeres però seguides capes de vernís nacional” (153). Therefore, Prat argues in favor of an idea of nationality that is fundamentally grounded on social synergies and secondarily on geography, race, and language, since they can be overcome by the primary factor. In other words, the key factors in the nation-building process are geography, race, and language, but the definitory element is civic engagement, whose potential generates nationalist sentiments among foreign individuals. However, between the elements outlined by Prat, there is correlation, not causation—the combination of the four may (or may not) result in nationalist sentiments—but he assumes this causality as a rhetorical strategy to construct its nationalist statement.

Moreover, this assumption does not prevent Prat from articulating a racial discourse that justifies the individualization of Catalan nationalism and serves as a political reformulation of the Iberian Peninsula: “un Estat català, en unió federativa amb els Estats de les altres nacionalitats d'Espanya” (164). According to Prat, the racial origin of Catalonia can be traced to the “Iberian ethnicity,” which was “la primera anella que la història ens deixa veure de la cadena de generacions que han forjat l'ànima catalana” (154). The politician describes the Iberian Peninsula as an open territory whose ethnicity was transformed by “gentades invasores” until it was dominated by the Roman Empire for approximately three centuries (Prat 154). Prat's condensed summary of history subtly alludes to the hybrid nature of the “*etnos ibérica*,” which he links to the origin of Catalonia, providing a historical foundation for Catalan nationalism. His historical justification continues affirming that the fall of the Roman Empire resulted in the reemergence of “vells pobles soterrats,” explaining the emergence of peripheral nationalisms within the peninsula (Prat 155); then, Prat finally notes, “L'esperit nacional de la gent catalana ha deixat sempre rastre de la seva existència en totes les èpoques de la història . . . una altra

prova incontestable de la individualitat de la nació catalana” (Prat 155). If anything, this narrative of the origins of Catalan nationalism is notable because of its manipulation of history, especially since the idea of the nation did not emerge until the Early Modern Period, much later than the historic periods Prat is discussing. In other words, he employs historical processes and evidence to justify the consolidation of Catalan nationalism and to prove the individualization of the nation, bolstering further its differentiation from Spain.

Indeed, Prat’s political proposal is a complete reimagination of the Iberian Peninsula as a federation of nations in which each country would share rights and live harmoniously. “[F]em que les nacionalitats visquin a dins de l’Estat/Imperi amb els mateixos drets, associades, en comptes de dominades i subjectes, i acabaran els antagonismes irreductibles, les repulsions d’unes amb altres, les incompatibilitats de convivència” (Prat 161-162). Prat’s optimism and naïveté are reasonable, especially if one recalls Litvak’s “nationalist reactions” in the Latin countries; but the terminology he uses is striking and telling. Prat describes his utopic federation of the Iberian Peninsula as a “Estat/Imperi.” This suggests that, despite presenting Catalonia as an oppressed nation, he firmly believes in the political expansion of the West: imperialism. By employing the racial narrative of the hybrid “ethnos ibèrica,” Prat advances his imperialist agenda: he invokes this ethnic lineage, imagining that the Iberian Peninsula can become a powerful federation of nations capable of embarking on civilizing missions as would any other European country. As Krauel pointed out, Prat’s argument is overflowing with imperial pride, and his first aspiration is “la penetració pacífica d’Espanya” (170); but his ultimate goal is transforming the “ethnos ibèrica” into a Western empire:

serà hora de treballar per reunir tots els pobles ibèrics . . . dintre d’un sol Estat, d’un sol Imperi; i si les nacionalitats espanyoles renaixents saben fer triomfar aqueix ideal, saben

imposar-lo . . . podrà la nova Ibèria enlairar-se al grau suprem d'imperialisme: podrà intervenir activament en el govern del món amb les altres potències mundials, podrà altra vegada expansionar-se sobre les terres bàrbares, i servir els alts interessos de la humanitat guiant cap a la civilització els pobles endarrerits i incultes (Prat 170).

The political aspiration of this utopic Iberian federation is a replica of other European empires: it is based on the presumed superiority of the West and is justified as a humanitarian and civilizing mission. All in all, Prat's nationalist argument does more than simply defend the Iberian federation of nations; it upholds a racial discourse, the "ethnos ibèrica," that is grounded on ideas of mixture and hybridity but replicates hegemonic ideologies of imperialism to secure Catalonia's inclusion within the Western world.

In this sense, Prat's nationalist argumentation becomes a straightforward example of what Benedict Anderson called "imagined communities:" cultural artifacts that were created "towards the end of the eighteenth century" due to "a complex 'crossing' of discrete historical forces" (4). Anderson describes the concept of the nation as "an imagined political community—and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign" (6). It is imagined because it creates a sense of communion between members that will never know each other (Anderson 6); it is limited because it "has finite, if elastic, boundaries" (Anderson 7); and it is sovereign because it was created at a time in which "the legitimacy of the divinely-ordained, hierarchical dynastic realm" was dismantled by Enlightenment and Revolutionary ideologies (Anderson 7). These features correspond with Prat's conceptualization of Catalan nationalism. In *La nacionalitat*, he envisions the nation by providing a historical explanation for its emergence and a description of its ideological tenets, thereby establishing a clear-cut differentiation from Spain. All in all, these rhetorical strategies in *La nacionalitat* serve Prat's efforts to imagine, to use Anderson's

terminology, a concrete image of Catalonia: one that not only helped him, and his party Solidaritat Catalana, to win the elections in 1907, but also left a long-lasting mark on Catalan nationalism.

In sum, Prat and Ortega present a similar understanding of race albeit employing different nomenclature. They distinguish between physical features (anthropological or organic differences, for Prat and Ortega, respectively) and historical races, those originated and constituted in the racial alloy of the Mediterranean or the Iberian Peninsula. The distinction allows both thinkers to use racial hybridity to define their national identity and affirm their authority within the Western world. Yet, racial hybridity plays a different role in Ortega's and Prat's nationalist arguments. On the one hand, the former employs it to address the Spanish post-1898 national crisis and proposes hybridity not only as the Spanish (or Mediterranean) identity, but also as the authentic European race, directly challenging the European hegemonic narratives of racial purity. In this sense, Ortega's argument focuses on reconstituting Spanish national identity and reincorporating the nation into the geopolitical landscape of Europe, so *Meditaciones* is not only a self-reflection about Spanishness, but also an attempt to re-establish Spain in the West. On the other hand, Prat employs hybridity to explain the inception of Catalan nationalism but considers that social engagement can supersede racial differences in the consolidation of nationalist sentiments, a perspective absent in *Meditaciones*. Still, Prat employs a discourse of racial mixture to relocate the Iberian Peninsula within the geopolitical sphere of the West: his idea of the "Iberian ethnos" allows him to advance his imperialist agenda without advocating for racial purity. In short, while Ortega is concerned with reinvigorating Spain and regaining its authority among European nations, Prat's vision is more expansionist and portrays Catalonia as the model to reconfigure the Iberian Peninsula and recover its lost imperial prestige.

The existence and absence of national sovereignty for Spain and Catalonia, respectively, explain these two different perspectives, but there is a common thread between them: a narrative of racial hybridity. Both authors employ it to define their national identities and to negotiate and counter Europeans' Orientalist perception of the Peninsula, but this malleability of race dissipates when representing the Other, as the literary texts of the first section illustrate.

The analysis of *El negro que tenía el alma blanca* and *Llibertat!* shows that, despite presenting an anti-racist message, these two texts are paradigmatic examples of Fanon's psychoanalysis of the colonized subjects. Both protagonists, Jaumet and Peter, display a so-called dependency complex imposed by their subordinate situation, naively long for whiteness and assimilation, symbolized by the unrequited love for a white woman, and ultimately become the embodiment of the white-men's anxieties. Moreover, *Notas marruecas* and *Quatre gotes* present three main features of hegemonic Orientalism: both narrators present themselves as objective and detached spectators; they affirm their racial superiority despite showing certain ambivalence towards the Orient, especially in the case of Giménez; and their narratives are dominated by their ulterior motives, which revolve around the situation in the peninsula, rather than around race. These three characteristics prove that these Spanish and Catalan authors projected certain traits of hegemonic Orientalism when representing Moroccans, pointing out the platitudes between peninsular and European racial discourses about the Orient. Therefore, despite the differences in context and content, these four literary products—*El negro que tenía el alma blanca*, *Llibertat!*, *Notas marruecas*, and *Quatre gotes*—prove that, when perceiving and representing racial difference, Spanish and Catalan nationalisms reproduced hegemonic racial discourses and constructed a hierarchical categorization of race that privileged whiteness. All in all, the analysis presented in this chapter illustrates that both national contexts, Spain and

Catalonia, reproduced dominant constructions of race when representing the Other, but contradictorily defined themselves through narratives of racial hybridity: this is what this dissertation describes as the racial paradox of the Iberian Peninsula.

CHAPTER III

JOSEP MARIA FORN AND JUAN MARSÉ: TWO SUBJECT-POSITIONS ARTICULATING
1960S CATALAN NATIONAL IDENTITY

In the previous chapter, *La nacionalitat catalana* and *Meditaciones* imagine the ideals of the nation envisioned by Prat and Ortega, respectively. Both argue in favor of a concept of Europeanness that Ortega defines as hybrid, and Prat associates with the possibility of assimilation. And, to further complicate the case, *El negro que tenía el alma blanca* and *Llibertat!*, together with *Notas marruecas* and *Quatre gotes* served to illustrate the conceptualizations of racial difference at the beginning of the twentieth century. The first two literary pieces, despite their critical intentions, reproduce a stereotypical image of racialized subjects, while the other pair displays the quasi-Orientalist perception of the Muslim world. Together they show which perceptions of race pervaded Catalan and Spanish cultural arenas. This selection of written texts proves the intellectual, ideological, and cultural efflorescence of the early twentieth century, but the days of this moment were numbered: the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939), together with the defeat of the Republican side, shattered this cultural and ideological diversity, and thereafter Spain entered a period of economic hardships worsened by a fascist regime.

In contrast, this chapter changes the temporal and geographical frameworks of study to explore more closely the intersections between national identities and perceptions of Otherness. This case of study moves forward in time to the late 1950s, when Francoism abandoned the autarky established after the Civil War and progressively broke through the isolation imposed by Western nations. The incorporation of the dictatorship into the West came with structural

economic, political, and social transformations that affected the whole Spanish nation-state: the rampant modernization process triggered the de-population of rural areas and changed the landscapes of the metropolises. The social clash generated in these spaces mostly had a class component, especially in cities like Madrid, and reverberated in the cultural sphere, as novels such as *Tiempo de silencio* (1962) by Luis Martín Santos illustrates. However, in other modernized regions with, sub-national sentiments, to use Keating's terminology, such as Catalonia or the Basque country, the social conflict intersects not only with class but also national identity and ethnicity, adding a layer of complexity to the historic phenomena (692). To investigate this particular intersection, this chapter centers only on Catalan cultural production. This framework allows us to explain the historical particularities of Catalan national culture under Francoism, and to understand better the interplay between national ideals and perceptions of the Other. The following chapter employs two paradigmatic cultural artifacts of this social clash—Josep Maria Forn's *La piel quemada* (1967) and Juan Marsé's *Últimas tardes con Teresa* (1966)—to demonstrate how the authors' uses of language create such iconic representations. The film and the novel target the same audience, the Catalan upper-middle class, but adopt two antagonistic points of view of the conflict: one that justifies the assimilation of the migrants and teaches the national ideal to Catalan natives, and another that attacks the Catalan bourgeois and integrates the migrants into the collective imagination. Both ideological arguments are influenced by the authors' distinctive places for the subject, and both texts' assimilationist messages took root in their consumers' imaginations and contributed to materializing the integration of Spanish migrants. Forn's cautionary tale rendered Catalonia's hegemonic national discourse in images and sounds, and Marsé's bittersweet satire awakened the bourgeois' social

consciousness through irony and tenderness. However, before delving into each text, it is necessary to provide some historical context.

1960s Catalonia is embedded into Francisco Franco's dictatorship and its development projects, which was enduring a crucial moment: inserting itself into the economic and political system of the Western World. According to Sebastian Balfour and Paul Preston, "Spain's diplomatic isolation ended in 1953 when the Vatican signed a Concordat with Spain and when the United States, in an effort to broaden her [sic] Cold War defenses, signed the Madrid Pact with the regime" (8). These agreements, especially the second, facilitated the reinsertion of Spain, despite its undemocratic system, into the West as another crusader against Communism, alleviating the economic stagnation endured by the nation since the end of the Civil War. With the Pact of Madrid and throughout the decade of the 1950s, the country resumed military cooperation and financial relationships with other Western powers like France, Germany, Italy, and Britain (Liedtke 237); it received economic aid worth \$500 million USD, military aid worth \$600 million USD, \$1 billion USD of credits from financial institutions, and \$500 million USD from the US Export Import Bank (Liedtke 237-238). This political liberalization crystalized in the 1959 Stabilization Plan: a series of policies directed by a group of "technocrats" from the Catholic organization Opus Dei that "brought a new modernity to Spanish public life" (Vincent 180). With this economic abundance, the regime abandoned the old-fashioned exaltations of rural life as national iconography and adopted a discourse centered on the idea of development, the *desarrollismo*.²¹ The official narrative presented these changes as a trade-off in which the material consequences were "emigration, urbanization, and the rapid, largely uncontrolled,

²¹ The spelling of the term employed in this chapter is taken from *El desarrollismo en la España de los 60* (2014) written by Pilar Huertas Riveras and Antonio Sánchez Rodríguez, in which the authors present a detailed description of Spanish political and social transformations throughout the 1950s and 1960s.

development of tourism,” but the nation gained “prosperity in return for political compliance” (Vincent 183). The policies of the *desarrollismo* provoked the accelerated modernization process that profoundly affected Spanish society, and the industry of tourism was the regime’s crown jewel, which has attracted the attention of many scholars.²² In sum, the *desarrollismo* and all its economic, social, and political changes constitute the scenario that defined the history of Spain in the mid-twentieth century—the industrialization of the country and the surrender to consumerism.

Furthermore, the *desarrollismo* provoked the massive depopulation of the rural areas of Spain and the metamorphosis of urban spaces, which was accentuated in those areas with sub-nationalist sentiments such as Catalonia due to the differences in language and traditions. Spanish peasants, fleeing starvation and poverty, left the countryside seeking the economic opportunities offered by the modernization and liberalization of the country. There were two main destinations for these migrants. On the one hand, burgeoning Northern European economies absorbed them as their labor force. As the Instituto Nacional de Emigración shows, in a period of fourteen years between 1959 and 1973, 1.73 million people moved to other nations in Europe (Vincent 183). This diaspora towards countries such as Germany, Switzerland, and France was possible thanks to the bilateral pacts included in the First and Second economic development plans, in 1959 and 1969, which resulted from the negotiations between the regime and post-war European economies (Vilarós 231). On the other hand, these development plans

²² A compelling example of this line of inquiry is *Destination Dictatorship: The Spectacle of Spain's Tourist Boom and the Reinvention of Difference* (2009), in which Justin Crumbaugh unveils how the fascist ideology survived and became incorporated into capitalism by reformulating itself through a variety of symbols, proving the success of industrialization and of consumer society. Other research on this topic is *Spain Is (Still) Different: Tourism and Discourse in Spanish Identity* (2008) edited by Eugenia Afínoguénova and Jaume Martí-Olivella, and the essay compilation *Cine, imaginario y turismo: Estrategias de seducción* (2007) coordinated by Antonia del Rey Reguillo.

promoted a rapid industrialization of many urban spaces in Spain, which became the second destination for Southern migrants, such as Madrid, Barcelona, of the Basque Country. Although tourism was the most prominent developing industries in Spain, other private sectors, such as motor manufacturing, steel, rubber, or oil refining, were growing rapidly, raising the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) exponentially (Vincent 182).²³ Consequently, it is logical that the second set of destinations of this diaspora included the most important industrialized regions in Spain, among them Catalonia, where 36.31% of the population was born outside the region by 1975 (King 86-87). In fact, Catalonia witnessed the arrival of 1,464,000 migrants between 1951 and 1981, and over half of this number arrived in the 1960s (Balcells 152). These astonishing demographic changes, together with the uncontrolled emergence of the tourist industry, profoundly affected certain layers of Catalan society. For some Catalan natives, the influx of migrants jeopardized their national identity, which was already weakened and forced underground by Francoism.

Citizens in Catalonia witnessed the rapid transformation of their urban and coastal landscape and the massive onslaught of migrants who sought housing and employment, but this migration clashed with the oppressed Catalan national identity. During the period of *desarrollismo*, tourism completely changed the Mediterranean coast, transforming small fishing towns into brand new resorts and leisure-oriented centers. The development of other industries in urban spaces triggered the growth of "ciudades satélite" surrounding the industrial centers, such as Ciutat Meridiana or Bellvitge (Vilarós 233). These satellite cities resulted from "the emerging neo-capitalism of the nascent postindustrial age" and served to accommodate the majority of the

²³ Even though Spain's GDP increased remarkably, the country was still poor and behind other European nations: "[it] doubled in real terms rising to 40 per cent that of Italy, though this was still only 23 per cent that of France" (Vincent 182).

non-Catalan speaking labor force in “newly-constructed conglomerates built under the auspices of the Francoist economic boom” (Vilarós 233). In addition, many of these migrants settled down around the outskirts of Barcelona, constructing precarious houses with a pastiche of recycled materials, the “barraques,” and forming improvised shantytowns that re-shaped the city limits, as occurred in Cases Barates, Can Tunis, La Marina, Zona franca or Port (Vilarós 233, Gargallo 642). Given this panorama, it is conceivable that Catalan national identity, which was already under siege, was threatened by these migrants, who did not speak the language, share cultural traditions, and/or enjoy enough economic status to be welcomed. Although it is complex to measure with precision the usage of Catalan language, Enric Pujol affirms that “Sixty-eight percent of the population at that time spoke Catalan, compared to 75% in 1930,” when the first wave of internal migrants arrived to the region (76). The figure shows that the situation was worsening, but interestingly the hegemonic nationalism in 1960s Catalonia, which was led by the bourgeois, adopted an inclusionary approach that eventually resulted in complete assimilation.²⁴

The class component of this social clash was visible in other metropolises such as Madrid, but it also overlapped with the question of ethnicity in Catalonia as language became its ethnic marker. Kathryn A. Woolard identifies three main criteria that define national identity in Catalan society (“The ‘Crisis’” 58). The first one, which manifests among second-generation migrants, is birthplace, although some natives disagree with this understanding (“The ‘Crisis’” 58); the second barometer of identity is familial descent, even though “the notion of ‘blood’ or race has not been greatly elaborated in either popular or political Catalan tradition” (“The ‘Crisis’” 58); the third criteria is “sentimental allegiance to Catalonia,” that, for some natives, means

²⁴ Historian Albert Balcells hints at the class component that defines the attitudes of the Catalanist cultural movement in the 1960s, divided into liberal and conservative, and affirms that by the end of the 1960s “Catalanism was a bourgeois undertaking” rather than a liberal enterprise (154).

“demonstrat[ing] loyalty to the language, customs, and institutions of Catalonia,” and for others (prominently first and second generation migrants), emotional loyalty is enough (“The ‘Crisis’” 58). These three understandings of national identity (birth right, familial descent, and emotional attachment) co-exist in Catalan society, but they “are all completely eclipsed by a single key marker of group membership: language” (“The ‘Crisis’” 59). Therefore, the 1960s internal migrations represented an abiding challenge for the Catalan language and national identity; even though Spanish migrants represented the cheap labor force necessary for materializing modernization, they generated socio-cultural diversification that native society view as a threat. However, interestingly the hegemonic nationalist narrative strived for assimilation, and the two primary texts in this chapter are excellent examples of this: influenced by their personal positions within this historical moment, Forn explains what the national ideal should be and Marsé how it feels being a newcomer, and both contribute to shape nationalist discourses through two opposing approaches.

The Strange Case of 1960s Catalan Discursive Formation

Zygmunt Bauman notes, “All societies produce strangers; but each kind of society produces its own kind of strangers and produces them in its own inimitable way” (1); and, without a doubt, the Catalan society of the mid-twentieth century produced its own. The continuous migration from rural areas of Southern Spain into Barcelona and the Catalan coast during the late 1950s and 1960s generated a social conflict in which class and ethnicity combined to “Other” the migrants. According to Werner Sollors, ethnicity “evokes the accumulation of cultural bits that demonstrate” a cohesive collectivity (290); so, he posits that the idea creates a separational boundary that is supported through language and discourse (299). In the case of Catalonia, the

use of language is this separational boundary and the most prominent element of national identity; it profoundly intervenes in the construction of ethnic difference, but Catalan hegemonic nationalist discourses refrain from divisive and restrictive conceptualizations of the nation. Woolard posits that Catalan identity is defined by a “Catalan-immigrant dichotomy” innate to the national ideal, dividing it into two contrasting identities in constant negotiation (“The ‘Crisis’” 58). However, the scholar notes that there is “permeability of ethnic boundaries in Catalonia” and “Catalan leaders often cite Catalonia’s tradition as a *terra de pas* [land of passing by] which has historically absorbed peoples and ideas from other lands” (“The ‘Crisis’” 59). Woolard’s conclusions show that the hegemonic national discourse favors the adoption of multiple identities, considers itself an impermanent territory and adopts an assimilationist posture manifested through language. Therefore, within this paradigm, the mid-twentieth century was a challenging and crucial period for Catalan national identity and culture, which were subjected to political repression but remained loyal to their foundational principles. The most difficult task was how to enunciate a narrative that incorporates the migrants into the national ideal.

The weakened Catalan national culture undertook this complex task, which entailed accommodating cultural differences, becoming not only a question of class difference but also a question of ethnicity. Stuart Hall declares: “ethnicity not only functions within the same discursive chain as race but also operates in similar ways, that is to say, as a sliding signifier. Thus, . . . [it] appears to be grounded exclusively in the cultural, in the realm of shared languages, specific customs, traditions, and beliefs” (*The Fateful* 108). The class conflict produced by economic differences in other Spanish urban spaces was further exacerbated in Catalonia by ethnic factors such as linguistic and cultural differences: migrants neither spoke the language nor knew the Catalan traditions, and they brought and practiced their own celebrations

and festivities. Yet, Catalan hegemonic nationalism and cultural representations articulated their “own kind of strangers,” to use Bauman’s words (1).

The social conflict was so substantial that it reverberated in the political and cultural practices, rendering what Michel Foucault, in *Archaeology of Knowledge*, described as a discursive formation: an abstract space for representation in which knowledge and ideas are produced and transmitted through different media, and, in the Catalan case, one that overall advocated for assimilation (41-42). Building on Foucault’s ideas, Hall affirms: “Language is one of the ‘media’ through which thoughts, ideas and feelings are represented in a culture. Representation through language is therefore central to the processes by which meaning is produced” (*Representation* 1). Moreover, the post-structuralist theorist places cultural representation as crucial in the construction of ideologies and explains how it, through “a range of texts, and as forms of conduct, at a number of different institutional sites within society” consolidates and transmits knowledge: “[Discourse] governs the way that a topic can be meaningfully talked about and reasoned about. It also influences how ideas are put into practice and used to regulate the conduct of others” (*Representation* 44). Hall enhances the key role of cultural representations in constituting political ideologies and social practices and describes a social scenario where these representations can synchronize their discourses to inculcate society with a particular message. The schema of a discursive formation fits perfectly how Catalan national culture reacted to the arrival of Spanish migrants. The political, social, and cultural arenas addressed this issue profusely from many different points of view, making the ethnic division between natives and migrants one of the most relevant challenges that Catalan society had to face in the 1960s. However, the dominant narrative strived for assimilation; so, ultimately the discursive formation of mid-twentieth century Catalonia informed society’s political

ideologies and social practices, and nowadays the inclusion of Spanish migrants into the national ideal is a question of the past.

The relative liberalization of the Franco regime by the 1960s allowed for the revitalization of the weakened Catalan national culture, which progressively became stronger thanks in part to the role of the Catholic Church in Catalonia. Andrew Dowling's research demonstrates that "over the course of Franco's Regime, the political expression of Catalan nationalism . . . underwent a cultural and political Catholicisation," (5). Dowling shows the influence that the Church had on the consolidation of the nationalist sentiments: by taking advantage of the liberalization of Franco's authoritarianism, it engaged with nationalist and social issues, leading the reconstitutions of Catalan civic society, and strengthening the national culture throughout the late 1950s until the mid-1960s (66-67). The most distinctive example of the Church's role as a cultural promoter is the publication *Serra d'Or*, launched in 1955, written almost exclusively in Catalan, and public forum of Catalan national culture (65-66).

Additionally, the religious institution became an active agent in civic society, funding and promoting the emergence of Catholic-led associations such as boy-scout organizations, or the Orfeó Català (66-67). Among all these civic enterprises, the organization Òmnium Cultural, created in 1961 by the Catholic Catalanist bourgeoisie, was crucial in the "promotion and support of all areas of Catalan language and culture" (76). This revival of Catalan national culture is also evident in the emergence of the Nova Cançó, which was a "secular expression of Catalanism" and popularized nationalist sentiments among all social layers but was heavily influenced by the Catholic Church (77-78). As a consequence, Dowling's study shows that the revitalization of Catalan national culture under Francoism—particularly from the mid 1950s to the beginning of

the 1970s—stemmed from Catholic enterprises but reached the whole society, as evidenced in the literary realm.²⁵

The opening of this space for expression allowed the emergence of cultural representations that displayed a clear pattern: putting forward ideas of assimilation and inclusion. In the political realm, research shows that historically “ideologies of assimilation have been strongly sponsored by practically all versions of Catalan nationalism,” a trend that continued in the 1960s (Vilarós 237).²⁶ The cultural realm had a similar outcome with a vast corpus of texts that display multiple views of the social conflict provoked by the massive migration of Southern Spaniards but mostly tend to favor the assimilation and inclusion of Spanish migrants. One of the most famous examples is the poem “Barcelona ja no és bona, o mi paseo solitario en primavera” (1975), in which Jaime Gil de Biedma (1929-1990) claims the city for the migrants: “Sean ellos sin más preparación / que su instinto de vida / más fuertes al final que el patrón que les paga / y que el *salta-taulells* que les desprecia: / que la ciudad les pertenezca un día” (79). Another iconic example that depicts (even exoticizes) the customs and traditions of the migrants is the acclaimed film *Los Tarantos* (1963) by Francisco Rovira Beleta, which launched Carmen Amaya into stardom. The impact of the migration in the cultural sphere was such that the Catalan writer, Mercé Rodoreda, portrayed the struggles and lifestyle of the migrants in her second novel *El carrer de les Camèlies* (1966) without experiencing it first-hand, since she was in exile. These cultural representations, together with the two primary texts of this chapter, display that the massive migratory movement from rural Spain to modernized Catalonia impacted society deeply.

²⁵ The number of books published in Catalan grew progressively throughout the 1950s and 1960s; by 1967 the figure was 465, more than double the amount in 1963 (Dowling 84).

²⁶ This statement is corroborated by other historical studies, such as the works of Albert Balcells and Michael Keating’s essay “Stateless nation-building: Quebec, Catalonia and Scotland in the Changing State System.”

Among all these examples, the predominant argument of this cultural productions is epitomized in the figure of Francisco Candel Tortajada, Paco Candel (1925-2007), whose writings established the dominant parameters of what assimilation meant for Catalan national culture.

Born in Casas Altas, Valencia, in 1925, Candel moved to Barcelona at an early age with his family and worked as a journalist and a writer committed to the labor movement and, especially, to the Southern Spanish rural migrants who moved into the city (Provencio 13-15). His book *Els altres catalans* (1964)—a collection of articles that describes the precarious living conditions of the newly arrived Spanish migrants and denounces the exclusionary views of Catalan society, as well as the lack of institutional support—was a commercial success as its multiple re-prints and three sequels illustrate (Gargallo 643).²⁷ Candel strove to improve the living conditions of these migrants and advocated their assimilation into the national ideal, and his views were at the forefront of a thematic trend that pervaded Catalan cultural representations. Despite being the dominant narrative, this blooming cultural sphere provided space for certain dissidence to the regime and even opposing perspectives to Candel. For instance, in 1960, Salvador Espriu published *La pell de brau*, a collection of poems that evocatively criticized the dictatorial regime and laid out the democratic and cultural demands of Catalanism. The opposing reaction to Candel was *I els Catalans també* (1965), in which Miquel Arimany criticized the writer's ideas on assimilation and described his analysis as naïve and misleading due to his hopeful confidence in second and third generations of migrants (120). This conservative conceptualization of the nation, together with Espriu's dissident lyrical allegory of the dictatorial regime and the success of Candel's writings display that the Spanish internal diaspora of the

²⁷ According to the edition used in this chapter, there are three uncensored editions of *Els altres catalans*, and José Enrique Gargallo i Gil lists three spin-offs: *Encara més sobre els altres catalans* (1973), *Els altres catalans vint anys després* (1985) and *Els altres catalans del segle XXI* (2001, written by Candel and Josep Maria Cuenca Flores) (643).

1950s and 1960s was a substantial challenge for Catalan society: a conflict that reverberated into the political and cultural spheres but was steadily overtaken by the consolidation of consumer society in Spain.

Precisely, the 1960s Catalan discursive formation has attracted a lot of attention in academia, proving the fruitfulness and appeal of the historic phenomenon, and this research confirms the dominance of favoring assimilation.²⁸ For instance, Teresa M. Vilarós's research on the political, economic, and social factors that facilitated the incorporation of these migrants illustrates that the class conflict between migrants and Catalan natives was finally overcome due to the development of Western capitalist society (238). Another line of inquiry about the peculiar discursive formation of 1960s Catalonia focuses on Candel's ideology of assimilation and its influence in other means of expression. One recent example of this is *Barcelona, City of Margins* (2021) by Olga Sendra Ferrer. With a multidisciplinary approach that combines Marxist and post-structuralist theory, literary analysis and photography, the critic illustrates "how the material city facilitates the creation and development of a system of critique that then lays out the foundation for the democratic city to come" (3). Overall, the research on this discursive formation lays bare that narratives of assimilation pervaded Catalan social and political practices and that Candel's arguments deeply impacted cultural representations.

More importantly, the dominant theme of this scholarship is concerned with issues of national identity—particularly, understanding its construction in an oppressive context of diglossia—and is centered on the malleability of the concept. For instance, Stewart King, when discussing 1960s Catalan literary production and Candel's writings, asserts that his purpose was: "poner en duda exactamente lo que significa ser catalán . . . En lugar de ver la identidad catalana

²⁸ Other examples along this line of inquiry include the research of Joan Ramon Resina, Joan Gilabert, or Manuel Abellán.

como única, Candel formula una escala cultural que ayuda . . . a situar a los migrantes dentro de un marco simbólico catalán” (99). With his analysis, King shows the effects that the discursive formation had on the formulation of national identity, demonstrating that discourse is constitutive. His chapter on 1960s Catalonia builds up an overarching argument in favor of considering that Catalan literature can be written in Spanish, and his proposal is to examine literature “dentro del contexto en el que los escritores viven y escriben” (7). The critic considers the authors’ place of enunciation crucial for expanding what Catalan literary canon should look like. Similarly, Kathryn Crameri’s research on the post-dictatorship novelistic representations in Catalonia displays “the symbolic content and functions of national languages, and the subtle ways in which novelistic language may express collective history and the national identity” (7). In her chapter comparing the work of Monserrat Roig (1946-1991) and Juan Marsé (1933-2020), the scholar emphasizes again the importance of the authors’ place of enunciation: “the concept of ‘patria’ itself is highly subjective, based on an assumption of collectivity and yet defined differently by each individual member of the nation” (178). Just as with King, Crameri centers the locus of enunciation in the signifying process. Both focus on explaining the complexity of Catalan national culture and highlight the relevance of the authors’ context in the formulation of meaning; there is a common thread that ties their findings all together: the unique subjectivity of the authors when representing the historical moment. This concept is essential to understand 1960s Catalan national culture, and the following pages contribute to this debate by unveiling how the authors’ place of enunciation informs the ideological discourse of the texts.

In fact, poststructuralist theories enable us to understand the influence that national discourse has on subjects, especially on those that employ media to develop their understanding of the historical moment, thereby contributing to consolidating ideologies. This theoretical

approach understands that subjects are produced and operate within discursive formations, as 1960s Catalonia (among other territories) exemplifies. As Hall puts it, “This subject *of* discourse cannot be outside discourse, because it must be *subjected to* discourse. It must submit to its rules and conventions, to its dispositions of power/knowledge” (*Representation* 55). There is an intrinsic connection between discourse and subjects, since the latter are constructed within and subjected to the former, creating a relationship in which negotiation is constant. Precisely, that intersection refers to the relationship between the authors’ locus of enunciation and signifying practices and is what Hall calls “subject-positions:” “discourse also produces a *place for the subject* (i.e., the reader or viewer, who is also ‘subjected to’ discourse) from which its particular knowledge and meaning most makes sense” (*Representation* 56). The theorist points to the influence that discourse has on the consumers of the texts, but this “place for the subject” is also valid for authors, who create their artistic pieces aiming to provide meaning and coherence to the reality surrounding them (*Representation* 56). These theoretical considerations guide the following analysis that examines two questions: how the authors’ places of enunciation influenced the overall representation of the intersection between ethnicity and nationhood, and how the authors’ signifying practices represented the conflict and attract the attention of their target audience and readership. *La piel quemada* (1967) by Josep Maria Forn and *Últimas tardes con Teresa* (1966) by Juan Marsé are two iconic cultural representations of the historical moment. The filmmaker and the novelist presented two opposing depictions of the 1960s Catalan discursive formation but shared a similar implicit reader: the Catalan upper-middle and educated social class. Through close readings informed by post-structuralist theory, I will show that these two texts display how the authors’ “place[s] for the subject” visibly pervade the final ideological stance of each cultural product, evidencing their subjection to discourse (*Representation* 56). The

analysis also shows how the filmmaker and novelist harness language to influence and challenge the consumers of their texts: Forn delineates an optimistic future of complete assimilation and preaches the hegemonic national ideal, whereas Marsé critiques the impenetrability of Catalan society but inserts the migrants into its collective imagination. The analysis demonstrates that the place of enunciation determines the authors' signifying practices and their ideological results—in short, how they exploit language and what ultimate message they convey.

***La piel quemada* (1967): Explaining Catalan Nationalism on the Screen**

La piel quemada became an icon in Catalan national culture for its depiction of the emblematic migratory phenomenon that occurred in the Iberian Peninsula during the 1960s and for its exceptional cinematic narrative. It is therefore a perfect sample of the discursive formation of Catalonia's 1960s cultural production, not only because it provides a plausible and coherent portrait of the historic moment and the exclusionary views that pervaded its society, especially in the upper and middle classes; but also because it explicitly points out that assimilation is inevitable and sketches an inclusive national ideal that incorporates these migrants, but requires linguistic assimilation, following the discursive trend of hegemonic Catalan nationalism. Or rather, as the twenty-three-year president of the Generalitat Jordi Pujol affirmed in his 1960s underground, clandestine nationalist propaganda: “És català tothom qui viu i treballa a Catalunya,” a statement that later, in 1979, became his campaign slogan for the referendum on the Statute of Autonomy (*Double Talk* 35-6). *La piel quemada* follows this motto to the fullest, so much so that, besides showing Forn's allegiance to Catalan nationalism, it shows the influence of the filmmaker's place of enunciation. The film is a compelling example of the discursive formation in Catalan national culture because the filmmaker maximizes the systems and codes of

signification of cinematic language. By taking advantage of these systems and codes, Forn addresses the profound transformations of society, denounces social injustice, teaches the tenets of Catalan nationalism, and justifies assimilation. In this sense, the following pages present a thorough semiotic analysis of the film to contribute to the existing scholarship, which mostly adopts a “social constructionist” approach that focuses on the repercussions of the text, instead of examining the language it employs (*Representation* 5-6). Moreover, the following analysis also displays how the filmmaker’s “place for the subject,” employing Hall’s terminology, influences his signifying practices and the final statement of the film (*Representation* 56); Forn’s representation of social conflict unfolds a determined didacticism and a naïve optimism because he provides an explanation that is reasonable for him and those like him: as a relevant intellectual embedded in the Catalan cultural sphere, his ultimate goal is teaching Catalan society that assimilation is inevitable.

La piel quemada tells the story of José and Juana, a married couple that migrates to Catalonia, leaving behind the poverty of Southern Spain. At the beginning of the film, José is already working in the construction of an apartment building or hotel near the seaside of Lloret de Mar, a small fishing town in Northern Catalonia. He is expecting Juana, his brother, and children to arrive from Purullena, an impoverished small town in Granada, Spain (*La piel quemada*, Suárez 62, Yebra 317). The timeline of the story encompasses twenty-four hours, from the morning that the family leaves for Barcelona to the reunion with José in Lloret. In this short period of time, the film explains the protagonists’ struggles, fears, and feelings by constructing a parallel narration that oscillates between the spaces that José and Juana occupy and delves into their memories through the use of the flashback. With this plot, *La piel quemada* presents a lucid and poignant social commentary about 1960’s Catalonia, a remarkable achievement considering

that it was released under a totalitarian regime in which censorship still played a crucial role. Not surprisingly, distribution of the film proved to be difficult at first. It was finally released by the company Huguet-Selecciones Capitolio with an “éxito notable” and eventually gained critical success in the form of awards—the Jury Prize at the Valladolid Film Festival, the Golden Camera Award at the Cartagena Film Festival in Colombia, the Gold Fotogramas Prize for Antonio Iranzo, who plays José, and Best Screenplay and Best Actress Awards from the Círculo de Bellas Artes (Fine Arts Circle) of Madrid (“Una empresa” 72-73). Therefore, despite the difficulties finding distribution, the institutional recognition of the film, together with the positive reception at the box office, made *La piel quemada* one of the films that changed Forn’s life.

Forn was an established filmmaker whose filmography, as a director and as a producer, greatly influenced society and ultimately played a decisive role in Catalan national culture, and *La piel quemada* is the most emblematic expression of his nationalist sentiments to the extent of becoming iconic in Catalan national culture. The social commentary in the film is evident, but a brief overview of Forn’s filmography clearly shows the filmmaker’s political commitment to Catalan nationalism, with titles such as *Companys, procés a Catalunya* (1979) or *El coronel Macià* (2006) (“Josep Maria Forn”). Political commitment to the national cause and social justice is the filmmaker’s most prominent feature.²⁹ In fact, in one of his writings, Forn described himself as a “polític cinematogràfic” (“Una empresa” 78); and his entire career as a producer has had a remarkable impact on Catalan cinematic culture, producing iconic films such as *Ocaña, un retrat intermitent* (1978) and *La Ciutat cremada* (1976), which entered immediately in the cultural sphere of their time (Gimeno 144, “Una empresa” 76-77, “*La piel quemada*” 137, Moyano 36). Forn’s commitment to the constitution and development of Catalan filmmaking was

²⁹ For an extensive study of Forn’s life, career in filmmaking, and contributions to social justice and national culture, see Àngel Quintana’s *Josep Maria Forn: Indústria i identitat* (2007).

a constant in his professional career, and eventually his efforts were recognized in the early twenty-first century, winning the Creu de Sant Jordi in 2001 and the Gaudí d'Honor de l'Acadèmia del Cinema Català in 2010 (Gimeno 147).³⁰ Similarly, *La piel quemada* has been interpreted as a symbol of Catalan national culture that had the ability to influence social change but defied the stylistic and aesthetic trends of the local industry. The historian Miquel Porter i Moix highlights the film's authenticity and honesty, and he argues that the film had “un efecte de xoc, d'impacte capaç de fer pensar i reaccionar un ampli sector de públic, tant català com de fora,” (Porter 312). Along these lines, Sergi Alegre et. al pair *La piel quemada* with *El último sábado* (1965) directed by Pere Balañà due to their messages of social justice (70). These scholars demonstrate that the film was an influencing actor of Catalan national culture, contributing to its construction and solidification in the 1960s. In sum, the film, as well as the director, became icons of Catalan culture: the former presented a stirring portrait of the historical moment, and the latter showed a consistent political commitment to the national cause, although, aesthetically, the film has little to do with the 1960s film industry in the Iberian Peninsula.

La piel quemada results from a very particular filmmaking industry but is clearly at odds with stylistic trends that proliferated at the time: it neither fits the Escuela de Barcelona, the Viejo Cine Español (VCE), nor the Nuevo Cine Español (NCE), the three main tendencies in the 1960s Spain and Catalonia. Due to thematical and aesthetical differences, Sergi Alegre et. al distinguish Forn's feature from the “Escuela de Barcelona,” a term coined to encompass a group of Catalan filmmakers who shared similar ideological, aesthetic, and political views on

³⁰ Forn participated in institutional work by founding and directing the Institut del Cinema Català (Catalan Film Institute) and working as managing director of cinematography at the Department of Culture of the Generalitat, the Catalan regional government (Gimeno 144, Elduque 20).

filmmaking (Porter 284-285, Alegre et al 72).³¹ The group rejected commercial cinema and supported a provocative and experimental style of filmmaking, which lacked ideological coherence and had little effect on audiences, which clearly is in opposition to *La piel quemada*'s intentions and reception (Porter 290). As Àngel Quintana affirms, there is a profound differential gap between the film's visual style and social criticism and "los juegos metalingüísticos de la Escuela de Barcelona" ("*La piel quemada*" 138). The film deviates from this artistic movement in form and content, and the director undertakes his own path to explain the historical moment society was enduring.

Moreover, Form's feature is at odds with the two major trends that defined Spanish film industry of the decade: the Viejo Cine Español (VCE) and the Nuevo Cine Español. This categorization of Spanish filmmaking in the 1960s resulted from the famous period of Francoist "apertura" led by Manuel Fraga Iribarne, who introduced a set of progressive policies that rebranded the dictatorship to incorporate it into Western economies.³² Under Fraga and the policies of "apertura," José María García Escudero was appointed general director of theatre and cinematography from 1962 to 1967, when the industry progressively returned to the late authoritarianism of the dictatorship (D'Lugo 681, Crumbaugh 5, *A Cinema* 4, 15). Escudero introduced more progressive perspectives and implemented innovative transformations to the Spanish film industry, which received institutional support as a whole but continued to be under scrutiny in the form of censorship, as *La piel quemada* and others illustrate.³³ His two most

³¹ Some of the most renowned members are Vicente Aranda (1926-2015), Joaquim Jordà (1935-2006), and Josep Maria Nunes (1930-2010), and they understood filmmaking as an economically independent enterprise in which experimentation, vanguardism, and personal subjectivity dominate style and form and surpass content (Alegre et al 72).

³² For a complete study of Fraga's career, particularly his public persona and political theory, see *Destination Dictatorship*.

³³ The censorship board cut some of the dialogue from the script and shots from two scenes, the African dance and the Belgian tourist's hotel room (Comas 185, Afiguénova 192, Moyano 37).

notorious achievements were the publication of “Normas de Censura Cinematográfica” (which were inspired by the US Hays Code (1931)) and the creation of the “salas de arte y ensayo,” which exhibited liberal cinema (D’Lugo 681-682, *A Cinema* 16).³⁴ These “aperturist” transformations in the industry generated two major trends that critics have traditionally seen as opposites: the VCE continued traditional commercial film productions and supported the regime, while the NCE antagonized it and was considered more progressive intellectual cinema (*A Cinema* 2). However, Sally Faulkner contends that, rather than antagonists, these stylistic tendencies should be seen as complementary because both supported anti-establishment interpretations, and because “cross-fertilisation took place between [them] on financial, technical and artistic levels” (*A Cinema* 3). What is more, the film critic argues that the films of the “apertura” are characterized by the rise of middlebrow culture since the VCE and the NCE alike blurred the separation between “high” and “low” cultures and had the “special ability to ‘work through’ or ‘handle’ change” (*A History* 5). In this sense, *La piel quemada* fits perfectly within these features: it is an example of middlebrow culture, tackles the issue of class mobility, albeit focusing on the Catalan territory, and sets forth one of the major social transformations of the time—the massive diaspora from rural Spain into industrialized areas. Forn’s feature balances its sharp criticism with the hopeful optimism of Juana and José’s story, oscillating between the two ideological stances that traditionally define the VCE and the NCE.

Interestingly, if thematically and ideologically, *La piel quemada* navigates both categories, it fits neither narrative style, proving that the film is a peculiar Catalan curiosity that resulted from the “contradictory” Spanish film industry of the 1960s, to use Faulkner’s

³⁴ Escudero also reorganized the Spanish Film School and renovated film classifications by replacing the propagandistic category of “Interés Nacional” with that of “Interés Especial” (D’Lugo 681-682, *A Cinema* 16).

epistemology (*A Cinema* 3). The VCE mostly adopted popular, commercial, and entertaining genres and topics, while the NCE frequently presented an intellectual, experimental, and elevated narrative style and plots. On the one hand, when researchers compare *La piel quemada* with the NCE, they agree that the film's Neorealistic tone deviates from this aesthetical trend since it strives for a straightforward plot and avoids formal complexities.³⁵ The influence of Italian Neorealism is noticeable throughout the film—with scenes shot using a hidden camera and a functional, yet dramatic *mise-en-scène*—which has led scholars to compare the film with the “realismo crítico en la literatura de la época” (“*La piel quemada*” 138).³⁶ This aesthetical approach to filmmaking digresses from the profound plots and intricate language of the NCE. On the other hand, due to its clearheaded social criticism, many scholars argue that the film diverges from the tendencies of the VCE, also called “*cine desarrollista*” because it promoted Franco's new welfare state that resulted from the 1959 Plan de Desarrollo.³⁷ The film constitutes a defiant challenge to the official political discourses of the regime, particularly responding to the economic boom of the 1960s and the migratory phenomenon it triggered.³⁸

Instead of being associated with the VCE or the NCE, *La piel quemada* is frequently compared to the literary work of Candel due to its ability to influence public opinion, advance the necessity of assimilation, and trigger social change (Suárez 69, Comas 183, “*La piel*

³⁵ For instance, Quintana points out that the film's narrative distances itself from “los elementos metafóricos del Nuevo Cine Español” (“*La piel quemada*” 138); Roca notes, “Forn aconseguix . . . mostrar la vida tal com és, sense intel·lectualitats ni artificis” (128); likewise, Comas contends, “La simplicitat de la posada en imatges busca deliberadament formes de documental dramatitzat . . . que cerca el màxim realisme per prendre partit en vers els conflictes que planteja” (191-192).

³⁶ The scholarship regarding *La piel quemada* overwhelmingly agrees on this influence.

³⁷ The “*cine desarrollista*” is extensively explored in Faulkner, Crumbaugh. Marsha Kinder's *Blood Cinema: The Reconstruction of National Identity in Spain* (1993) offers another exploration of this period of Spanish filmmaking.

³⁸ The consensus on this issue among scholars is unanimous, and they concur that the film is as a direct thematic and ideological response to the 1959 Plan de Desarrollo (Comas 19, Yebra 310, Afigüenova 190).

quemada” 141, *Josep Maria* 23).³⁹ As David García Ponce states, Forn and Candel “plantean una integración con los nativos que pasa por conocer sus tradiciones y su lengua de tal modo que los inmigrantes se sientan miembros de la comunidad y, a la vez, obtengan el reconocimiento por parte de la población autóctona” (166). The connections between the artistic production of both artists are undeniable since they share similar ideas and supporting evidence: *La piel quemada* argues in favor of assimilation as much as *El altres catalans*. Consequently, critics have focused on the narrative and aesthetic choices that contribute to construct this inclusionary message, and their conclusions revolve around the idea of contrasts that evidence the film’s social and political commentary.⁴⁰ These studies identify the symbolic binaries, thematic opposites, and visual analogies that are at the heart of *La piel quemada*, and the critical consensus is unanimous: it is a touching oddity of the Spanish film industry of the 1960s that tackles class mobility and social change aligning with the discourse of hegemonic Catalan nationalism and rejecting the major stylistic tendencies in Spanish and Catalan filmmaking.

With this overwhelming consensus, it would appear that there is nothing else to say about Forn and his iconic film. However, these studies fall into what Hall categorized as “social constructionist approach,” which means that is “concerned with the effects and consequences of representation—its politics” (*Representation* 5-6). The scholarship on *La piel quemada* conceptualizes culture “as a primary or ‘constitutive’ process” and cultural representations as

³⁹ For instance, Maria Mercè Roca proclaims that the film is the cinematic version of the celebrated *Els altres catalans* written by Candel (129).

⁴⁰ For example, Yebra analyzes the juxtapositions between language and space to point out the social criticism of the film (318-319); Quintana analyzes the film as a dialectical game that creates a series of oppositional binaries, such as North and South or tourism and immigration (“*La piel quemada*” 138, *Josep Maria* 63); along these lines, Comas argues that the film’s language is based on visual contrasts and metaphors that seek realism and social denunciation (192); and, José Carlos Suárez Fernández praises the effectiveness of the editing and the use of analogies, which “permiten insinuar más de lo que se expresa” (68).

agents in the construction and constitution of social perceptions and values (*Representation* 6). In contrast, in what follows, I adopt a complementary approach, the semiotic: “the study or ‘science of signs’ and their general role as vehicles of meaning in culture . . . [which] is concerned with the *how* of representation, with how language produces meaning” (*Representation* 6). As such, the following semiotic analysis employs a post-structuralist theory on language with a twofold objective: to reveal how *La piel quemada* exploits the audiovisual possibilities of cinematic language to achieve a convincing message of assimilation, and how the filmmaker’s place of enunciation determines the optimistic and didactic tone of the story. In other words, this chapter illuminates how Forn’s use of language constructs a comprehensible universe on the screen and a compelling plea in favor of assimilation made for and addressed to Catalans like him: it displays that the director’s signifying practices correlate with his locus of enunciation, and this interplay ultimately affects the overall argument of the text.

This semiotic analysis of *La piel quemada* is grounded in Roland Barthes’ (1915-1980) description of the systems and codifications in which language operates and constructs meaning. He identifies two major systems of signification through which language establishes meanings: denotation, which is the primary system and refers to the most evident signifiers of a text, and connotation, which “is a secondary meaning, whose signifier is itself constituted by a sign or system of primary signification, which is denotation” (7). There is an inherent dependency between both ways of constructing meaning; while denotation is visible and fundamental in the signification of a text, connotation “is a determination, a relation, an anaphora . . . a correlation immanent in the text, in the texts . . . forming ‘nebulae’ of signifieds” (8). According to the post-structuralist theorist, these two systems enable the text “to operate like a game, each system referring to the other according to the requirements of certain illusion” (8-9). In other words,

denotation and connotation are synchronized and exploit the possibilities of language to create the same illusion: a comprehensible and cohesive fictional universe and a successful statement in favor of assimilation. *La piel quemada* navigates both systems, exploiting the narrative resources offered by cinematic language to drive society to social justice and delineate Catalan national culture.

Within these systems of signification, Barthes presents five major codes that intervene in the construction of meaning and “under which all the textual signifiers can be grouped” (19). The first code is the semic, which describes those signifiers in the text that construct characters, spaces, and objects (19). Another is the hermeneutic code, which are those signifiers that insinuate the ultimate meaning of the text (19). The third on this aleatory (according to Barthes) list is the symbolic, which also hints at these fundamental signifiers of the text, while the fourth, the cultural code, refers to all the extratextual information necessary to understand the certain references in the text (19-20). Finally, the proairetic codes are the skeleton of the text, making the narration advance and structuring it comprehensively for consumers: “whoever reads the text amasses certain data under some generic titles of actions . . . and this title embodies the sequence; the sequence exists when and because it can be given a name, [and] unfolds as this process of naming takes place, as a title is sought or confirmed” (19). In other words, the proairetic codes scaffold the text, and they are in charge of its structure and accessibility. These codes are different narrative devices that construct the fictional universe, that make it readable or watchable for readers and spectators. Without them, there would not be a story.

In conjunction, the exploitation of the systems and codes that create meaning constitutes the filmmaker’s signifying practices, which, at the same time, correspond with his “place for the subject,” to recall Hall’s terminology once again (*Representation* 56). Therefore, as a sensitive

filmmaker embedded in Catalan national culture, Forn maximized film language to create a story in favor of assimilation that provided a coherent explanation for himself (and anyone like him) of the social conflict *La piel quemada* portrays. In short, Forn creates the story of Juana and José from the perspective of the Catalan native, determining the content and the optimistic tone necessary to construct a cautionary tale for Catalan nationalism: one that addresses the actuality of 1960s Catalonia, denounces social injustice, outlines the national ideal and its requirements, and justifies the reasons for migrating by centering the narrative in the protagonists.

First, Forn envelops the story of Juana and José within direct references to the major issues the film deals with—the migration of Southern Spaniards and the cultural clash between natives, migrants, and tourists. He does so on a connotative level by using symbolic and hermeneutic codes that evoke, rather than name explicitly, those issues, making the film’s message forceful from the beginning until the end. The initial credits scene presents, in a documentary-like style, a sunny Mediterranean beach, on which the audience observes people of all kinds and hears different languages; but the montage combines wide descriptive establishing shots with close-ups of the tourists’ bodies tanning under the sun, putting emphasis on the body, and evoking the film’s title. The sequence abruptly ends with a cut from this congregation of skins under the sun to the bared back of a construction worker, and then the camera zooms out, contextualizing the new space, one of the many hotels that will host those tourists at the beach. In this moment, the film establishes the ambivalence of the title: whose burned skin is it referring to? This ambiguity has been identified by many critics, who agree that it responds to the economic transformations that resulted from the 1964 Plan de Desarrollo.⁴¹ The policy triggered the accelerated transformation of the Mediterranean coast and the consequent migratory

⁴¹ For instance, Comas notes that the initial credits “resumeixen per on anirà la pel·lícula” (188).

movement that José and Juana epitomize in the film.⁴² Through the montage, Forn explains the allegorical nature of the title and the major social concern of the film. Moreover, the development of the tourist industry entailed the arrival of European visitors whose social customs and behaviors greatly differed from those imposed by the totalitarian regime that dominated Spain, provoking a cultural clash between Europeans and natives, between well-off tourists and construction workers. This is the second major concern of the film and, as the director stated, what inspired him to make *La piel quemada*;⁴³ and Forn again uses the same symbolic and hermeneutic codes to allude to it. Manolo sees a group of young tourists dancing to modern music next to their car, looks at the blazing sun and takes off his shirt, and then the camera zooms in on his bared torso. The juxtaposition of both the dancers and the secondary character not only recalls the title and pinpoints its ambiguity, but also ratifies the cultural clash provoked by the policies of the *desarrollismo*.

Besides conveying meaning in a connotative level, the filmmaker makes his denunciation of the exclusionary views that Catalan society had towards Spanish migrants evident through several scenes that can be classified as semic codes, those that construct characters and spaces. There are two major scenes that allude to ethnic exclusion. The first, and the most commented on, is the brawl in the restaurant where José and his friends are celebrating, because it displays how Catalans discriminated against these newcomers. The scene is so explicit in portraying ethnic exclusion that most critics of the film comment on it, especially because during the brawl, the Catalan customers employ the words “xarnego” and “murciano,” two derogatory terms used

⁴² The 1964 Plan de Desarrollo allotted 25% and 19.5% of the national budget to public transportation and constructing tourist infrastructures, respectively, and the objective was “llegar hasta las 600.000 plazas hoteleras disponibles en España” (“*La piel quemada*” 134).

⁴³ Forn found the inspiration for the film while he was shooting *La barca sin pescador* (1964) in Roses, Girona, and witnessed the effects of tourism on society and geography (Comas 182, Yebra 316, Suárez 61, *Josep Maria* 23).

to refer to these migrants (Yebra 318, Comas 191, García Ponce 160).⁴⁴ Additionally, the other scene that represents ethnic discrimination is when workers line up waiting to get paid after a long day of work. Here, the paymaster, after mocking the last name “García” for being too common and vulgar, angrily declares: “¡Todos para Cataluña y los catalanes a aguantaros a todos! Y si no hay trabajo para los de aquí, ¡jala a fastidiarse! Hostes vingueren que de casa ens tragueren!” (*La piel quemada*). The literal translation of this popular idiom is “guests came to take us from home,” and it refers to the threat that newcomers pose to local people, since it suggests that this “invasion” of Southern Spaniards will result in expulsion of natives. The idiom clearly alludes to a prototypical anti-migratory trope, leaving no doubt of the paymaster’s views on and attitudes towards the migrants with whom he is working. These scenes lay bare for the audience the exclusion endured by the migrants, but Forn goes one step further in his denunciation and suggests that these derogatory views stem from the intersection between class and ethnicity. He attentively presents the Catalan upper classes as the sources of discrimination, while the Catalan middle and lower classes are depicted in a much more positive way. For instance, in the brawl scene, the owner of the restaurant clearly sides with José and his friends, calling the customers “gamarussos” and noting, “porque llevan unos cuantos billetes en el bolsillo se creen los amos del mundo” (*La piel quemada*). Also, the friendly conversations in other scenes between the carpenter, the owner of the pension, and José show that the working-class mutually supported each other no matter the origin of the person, suggesting that social class was a crucial factor in the ethnic discrimination. Thus, with these scenes, Forn denounces

⁴⁴ The idea of “xarnego” as derogatory term took hold in Catalan society in the 1960s, but its meaning has evolved through the second half of the twentieth century (thanks in part to the ideologies of assimilation that proliferated in Catalonia), ultimately becoming a political identity not exempted of controversy, but embraced by some local intellectuals, such as the writer Juana Dolores and the scholar and activist Brigitte Vasallo. Today, the term “xarnego” has lost most of its unfavorable connotations and represents a particular understanding of hybridity.

and makes this discrimination obvious to the audience by maximizing the semic codes in the denotative system of signification, leaving no doubt that this is the main issue of the film, such as the initial credits do. However, by suggesting that there is a class component associated with the exclusion, the filmmaker communicates some self-reflection to viewers, who, like him, belong to the native national culture.

Besides addressing current times and denouncing social injustice, *La piel quemada* is again explicitly explaining what the idea of the nation is and what is required to become part of it. It does so by employing the most explicit code of cinematic language: the semic code. The film explains what nation means in a conversation that, on her way to Valencia in “El Sevillano,” Juana has with a passenger, who also migrated to Catalonia but is already established there.⁴⁵ They discuss what home means, and the latter notes: “Le advierto que yo soy un enamorado de Cataluña. A mí que nadie me hable mal de Cataluña. Porque es lo que yo digo: Aquí [rural Spain] me moría de hambre, allí encontré trabajo y comida ¿de dónde es uno? Pues de dónde puede vivir” (*La piel quemada*). The character affirms that ultimately one belongs to the place where there is stability and a future. His stance confirms that national sentiments towards a territory are correlated with survival, refuting the prominence of birth right usually associated with hegemonic national narratives. The conversation hints that assimilation is a likely outcome for the migrants as long as the nation secures them a place to live. The scene invokes Pujol’s political slogan: “És català tothom qui viu i treballa a Catalunya,” a reminder for Catalan nationalist viewers of the hegemonic, albeit underground and clandestine, nation (*Double Talk* 35-6). Nonetheless, Forn doubles down on his assimilation didactics in a brief conversation

⁴⁵ “El Sevillano” was the popular name of the dilapidated train that travelled between Sevilla and Barcelona carrying the waves of Southern Spaniards (“*La piel quemada*” 136, Vilarós 231)

among Catalan natives in a café. As José, Juana, and their family pass by after reuniting, they comment on the arrival of so many migrants from the South:

WAITER. Aquests són dels que es queden

CUSTOMER. Millor perquè són dels que penquen

WAITER. És veritat i els fills d'aquests, més catalanistes que vostè (*La piel quemada*).

The suggestion is evident: these migrants are the driving force of modernization, and their offspring will long for and defend the nation that allowed them to grow and make a living. Consequently, the film's explicit message recalls not only Candel's ideas of assimilation and Pujol's conceptualization of the nation, but also Enric Prat de la Riba's: one in which linguistic barriers are easily overcome, and one that is able to integrate foreign communities, although the perception of migrants at the beginning of the century was unabashedly racist.⁴⁶

Moreover, the filmmaker manifestly provides an optimistic explanation of what is required to become part of the nation, and he pays particular attention to the language difference, which ultimately is one of the foundations of Catalan identity. Forn presents a very positive portrait of the linguistic clash: throughout the movie, José and his friends have no problem understanding Catalan speakers, and they even use Catalan words and phrases in their own conversations. But the perceptive director, driven by his pedagogical instinct, affirms the assimilation of the language in the aforementioned conversation on the train to Valencia. When Juana expresses her fears for not speaking the language, the passenger notes: "yo llevo ya 20 años viviendo en Barcelona. Me fui para allá el año 42 . . . ahora ya casi hablo el catalán . . . No se preocupe. Todo el mundo la entenderá. Lo malo son los primeros tiempos pero luego se

⁴⁶ As mentioned in the previous chapter, the leader of Catalan cultural movement of Noucentisme, Eugeni d'Ors, made some reactionary remarks about the early twentieth-century migrants, epitomizing the hegemonic exclusionary and derogatory views of the Catalan bourgeois.

acostumbra uno” (*La piel quemada*). His twenty-years of experience affirm that learning the language, at least enough to survive and make a living, is possible. Finally, the most categorical conversation on the issue of language assimilation is between José and his children. On their way to their new home, they discuss the difficulties of not speaking the language and the protagonist assures them that they will learn to speak Catalan, and offers to teach them himself, suggesting that his assimilation has already started. This stance towards linguistic assimilation evokes Candel’s arguments and makes evident that, for *La piel quemada*, migrants do not constitute a threat to language or to the nation; rather, they will assimilate as long as they learn Catalan.

Following these omnipresent didactics, Forn provides a detailed explanation for the Southern Spaniards’ migration by exploiting cinematic language at all levels. For instance, the hardships and situations experienced by the migrants are portrayed through cultural codes, which provide extratextual information that is so specific that only certain viewers may understand it completely. These references point to geographical, political, or social particularities that defined life in Catalonia in the 1960s, so only those viewers who know the territory, most likely Catalan or Spanish viewers, will fully grasp the meaning they convey. In *La piel quemada*, it is obvious that the storyline of José and Juana aims to represent and justify the migratory phenomenon, but the cultural codes complement this purpose by alluding to the ramifications of other experiences caused by this migration, those which Catalan nationalists most likely would understand. The character that functions as a cultural code is “el portugués,” another construction worker whose conversations frequently hint at the scope of this diaspora. For instance, he asks José whether or not he considered migrating to another European country: “¿No has pensado nunca en ir a Francia para la vendimia?” (*La piel quemada*). Later on, in a conversation with his workmates, he talks about the working conditions in Germany: “Pues yo si tuviera un hermano, no me lo

traería aquí. Lo mejor es irse por ahí, por Europa . . . Si yo fuera más joven me iría a Alemania. Allí trabajas un año y ¡zas! coche . . . en Alemania tienen la semana de 40 horas” (*La piel quemada*). These lines of dialogue allude to the second most important destination of the diaspora: other European countries in which working conditions were more profitable. These references may be overlooked by viewers who lack historical knowledge about the de-population of rural Spain, but not by those of 1960s Catalonia, for whom this issue was part of their daily life. In addition, “el portugués” appears to be obsessed with one topic, “los puntos,” which he repeatedly brings up in conversations. In the aforementioned conversation with José, he notes, “Hoy pagan los puntos ¿verdad? . . . ¿Cuántos tienes? . . . Tengo doce. Y cuando nazca un *filho* que estamos esperando catorce” (*La piel quemada*). Later on, while he and other construction worker are having lunch, he returns to the topic and shows concern about whether or not Manolo, José’s brother, is married and has children: “¿Sabéis a cuanto pagan los puntos este mes? A 115 pesetas . . . Me han dicho que el mes pasado se dieron de baja aquellos dos chicos solteros y entró este que tiene nueve puntos . . . Oye, ¿tu hermano no tiene puntos verdad?” (*La piel quemada*). Finally, he brings up the topic again to the paymaster, who angrily replies: “¡Qué puntos ni que puntas! No hemos tenido tiempo de hacerlo... Tenim molta feina! ¡Los pagaremos el próximo sábado si es que están hechos!” (*La piel quemada*). This recurrent topic hints at the labor policies of the Francoist regime: factors such as the number of family members were measured in points and used to establish the salary of the workers (“*La piel quemada*” 134). These conversations between construction workers, together with the aggressive reaction of the paymaster, point to the complex and abusive working conditions these migrants endured. Notwithstanding, to fully understand these references, viewers need to be knowledgeable regarding the economic, geographic, and political context; otherwise, they will miss the

references. These cultural codes subtly allude to the scope of the migratory movement and the working conditions of the migrants, enriching the text's commentary on the historic moment. Even though they are not essential to fully comprehend the ultimate message of the film, they speak to Catalan viewers, adding another layer of complexity to the migratory movement and making it more relatable.

Even though "el Portugués" is a paradigmatic example of a cultural code, Forn's pedagogical purpose in explaining the reasons for migrating spills into other codifications of signifying, such as the hermeneutic and the symbolic. To delve deeper into the impact of the rampant modernization process during the *desarrollismo*, Forn's dexterity with film language harnesses editing to enrich the symbolisms created by the scenes. An example of their symbolic charge is when Manolo wanders around Valencia to kill some time before catching another train to Barcelona. As if in a documentary, the camera frames him in wide shots in which buildings, cars, parks, fountains, and people engulf the character who, at the same time, is astonished by the grandeur of the city. These shots have little importance in the development of the plot, but they carry a lot of symbolic weight for commenting on the rapid transformations of the country that accompanied the end of the autarky and the 1959 Plan de Desarrollo. Manolo's bewilderment at the modernity of the city leads viewers to ponder the accelerated transformations that they have been witnessing. Hence, the scene itself can be considered a symbolic code that maximizes the camera work to reflect on the economic transformations of the nation.

Nevertheless, there is more to the scene. Manolo's astonishment with modernity is edited in parallel with José, after work, picking up the double bed in which he and Juana will sleep and crossing the town carrying it on his back while bewildered strangers and tourists look on. Many critics have commented on the forcefulness of this scene, even comparing José's journey through

Lloret to Jesus Christ's "Way of the Cross" (Afinoguénova 192, Suárez 61). As occurred with Manolo's stroll through Valencia, there is no doubt that images of José carrying the heavy bed are symbolic in themselves and point to the potential of camera work to construct meanings. Yet, if one observes both scenes in juxtaposition, new signifiers arise, or, as Sergei Eisenstein puts it: "[juxtaposition] shall evoke in the perception and feelings of the spectator the most complete *image of the theme itself*," hinting that the key to the ultimate meaning of the text is in the editing (11). The film establishes connections between the two spaces, Valencia and Lloret, through the editing and diegetic elements, such as when the film cuts from the fountains of Valencia to the fountain where José stops to drink water. This editing strategy pervades the film and is its most inspired achievement in constructing a comprehensible cinematic universe. Therefore, by establishing connections, the film takes advantage of the multi-layered meanings conveyed by individual images themselves or by images in juxtaposition and associates one meaning with the other: modernization is impressive and booming but only thanks to the hard work of these migrants. Forn was determined to reflect on this particular moment in history, address the impact of the rampant process of modernization, and provide support for Southern Spanish migrants, portraying them as the essential actors in this modernity.

It is evident that the most salient element that justifies the migratory movement is the story of José and Juana, which becomes the center of the narrative, the reference point for the audience, who would align it with their hardships and emotions. The plot undoubtedly portrays and justifies assimilation, especially because the use of the flashback creates a cinematic stream of consciousness that provides an in-depth psychological and emotional description of the characters. To do so, Forn's displays his dexterity with film language and exploiting the proairetic code, which, to recall Barthes' words, consists of creating a "proairetic sequence" that

results from the “artifice of reading” and follows the logic “of the ‘already-done’ or ‘already-read’” (19). In other words, this codification of meaning in the context of film language refers to how the images on the screen construct a coherent and relatable cinematic universe.

Consequently, the proairetic code makes the story comprehensible. In *La piel quemada*, this code is created through the montage, which not only connects spaces and timelines, but also is the window into the consciousness and unconsciousness of the protagonists, becoming Forn’s most inspired achievement. The proairetic code in the film can be defined as audiovisual diegetic analogies that not only present the parallel storyline of José and his family and the spaces they inhabit, but also enable viewers to delve into the minds of the characters—their conscious memories and unconscious desires—constructing a coherent cinematic space and time and complex protagonists. The audiovisual diegetic analogies encompass these jumps to the memory or the unconscious of the protagonists, becoming a sort of cinematic stream of consciousness that provides a full picture of the character, facilitating the audience’s identification with José and Juana.

Further, these audiovisual analogies are always triggered by diegetic elements on the screen (spaces, objects, people, or music), which function as connectors between the spaces and timelines we see unfolding before us and the unconscious memories of the protagonists. Most frequently, these flashbacks to José and Juana’s past explain the difficult and joyful moments of their lives, all in all providing a profound description of the characters’ psyche and, at the same time, explaining the reasons for migrating. A prominent element of these temporal transitions to the past is the diegetic sound, such as when Juana’s remembrance of the *Romería* is triggered by

the song she and her family sing while riding on the bus to Lloret.⁴⁷ Another example begins when the sound of the train inspires Juana to think about the day José came back from military service and the circumstances under which she married him; the memory ends with a zoom in on Juana's hand—stamping her fingerprints on the marriage license because she cannot write—and cuts to a close-up of her hand on the train again, guiding the audience into and out of the character's conscious remembrance. These memories showcase a fully developed character, and they, together with Marta May's theatrical acting, build the dramatic arc of the character, whose self-sacrifice and humility make Juana the ultimate tragic figure of this social conflict and the most relatable character for viewers.

These musical transitions to the conscious memories of the characters become even more complex in Jose's flashback evoked by the sound of the guitar he plays during his break at work and which explains his vicissitudes to economically sustain his family in rural Spain. This sequence discloses the protagonists' motivations for migrating: the lack of labor in the fields, the struggles to feed the family, and the consequent frustration of the character. Nonetheless, Forn, determined to make the audience engage with what is happening on the screen, assembles this flashback of Jose's past without using any diegetic sound, solely the music of the guitar. This absence of sound, together with the deliberate framing of the shots, awakens the spectators' attention and forces them to fill the gaps in what is happening on the screen. Thus, they become "functioning" consumers, to use Barthes' words (4). Viewers need to decipher the argument between the cacique and those peasants who were not selected for work. Also, the rhythm of the guitar music is synchronized with the editing, strengthening the emotional association between

⁴⁷ The Romerías are popular Catholic festivities that consist of a pilgrimage to a chapel or church nearby to bless and honor a religious figure, and they are a long-standing cultural tradition in Spain, not only in the region of Andalucía, but also in Galicia, or Navara, to mention two other examples.

the audio and the images. Finally, the framing of the scenes also contributes to the explanation of the protagonist's reasons for leaving his hometown. The camera carefully frames the situations on the screen from a distance in wide and medium shots, showing the influence of Italian Neorealism, and uses close-ups solely to enhance the expressions and the feelings of the characters. One of the most striking moments in the sequence is when José returns home after being rejected by the cacique. In a wide panoramic shot, viewers see José sitting at the table empty-handed, while his wife, in the background, hopelessly looks at him and senses his frustration. The couple's bleak situation in the domestic space is explained in one single shot. Hence, Forn maximizes the signifying possibilities of these audiovisual diegetic analogies to delve into the conscious remembrance of the protagonists and provide a complete justification for their migration.

Moreover, the audiovisual diegetic analogies dive into their unconsciousness, proving that this narrative strategy is the key to the protagonists' minds and to the construction of the cinematic universe of *La piel quemada*. The camera zooms in on José's face as he sleeps on the hotel sofa and cuts to a wide shot of Southern Spain where peasants work on the olive harvest. In pure neorealist style, the film shows José shaking the branches of a tree and asking for water, and then the camera zooms in on a close-up of his face that takes the audience back to José's face in the hotel, so thirsty that he wakes up to drink some water. The visual diegetic analogy makes viewers associate José's dream with the thirst produced by his hangover and brings them back to the hotel room and present time. While this time the narrative strategy is ironic, other times it displays repressed memories from the unconscious, like the "danza ritual Africana" that triggers the protagonist's transcendence, i.e., exceeding ordinary limits of perception and accessing José's unconscious memories (*La piel quemada*). In this case, the accelerated editing combines close-

ups of the protagonist, the body of the dancer and José's remembrance of the repression exerted by Spanish Catholic Church. The scene blends sound, the venue, and the memory and links them together through the extreme close-up of José, who by the end of the performance looks bewildered. Interestingly, what triggers José's transcendent state is the exotic dance of a racialized woman, mirroring Edward Said's interpretation of Gustave Flaubert's masterpiece *L'Education sentimentale* (1869): "[the character] is entranced by her self-sufficiency, by her emotional carelessness, and also by what . . . she allows him to think" (187). The scene suggests that, despite the film's striving for the assimilation of Southern Spaniards, hegemonic discourses of race still pervaded Catalan society; or at least, the scene suggests that racial differences still prevailed, and blackness (or any other different phenotype) was perceived as mysterious, magical, and exotic, but these physical disparities were invisible with respect to Spanish migrants, a factor that may have facilitated the assimilation. Therefore, by bringing to the fore the conscious and unconscious memories of Juana and José, Forn constructs two well-rounded protagonists to which viewers can relate, because their virtues and flaws simply display their humanity and dignity.

In sum, *La piel quemada* addresses the social conflicts triggered by the modernization process of the *desarrollismo*: the massive arrival of Spanish migrants and European tourists, which Forn makes visible through the two visual allegories of the initial and ending credits. Moreover, the exchanges between construction workers and the paymaster, as well as the brawl at the restaurant make obvious the filmmaker's commitment to denounce the exclusion endured by these migrants and suggest that there is a class component attached to it. However, Forn is particularly interested in targeting Catalan society with this denunciation. With the initial and final credits sequences, the film lays bare its main concerns, the substantial and frequently

contradictory transformations provoked by the rampant development of tourism and the massive migratory movement into Catalonia. Additionally, the filmmaker denounces social injustice explicitly in scenes such as the conversation between workers and the paymaster or the brawl in the restaurant and hints at the class component of the exclusion of migrants like José and Juana. This criticism is aimed to incite self-reflection among Catalan upper and middle classes, Forn's target audience; he decided to explain Catalan nationalism, so the film delineates the foundations and the requirements of the national ideal, as shown in the conversations between the Catalan natives in the terrace or Juana and the passenger of "El Sevillano." Finally, the director pervasively justifies the reasons for migrating in both, the connotative and denotative systems of signification: the character of "El Portugués" presents the full scope of the migratory movement; the parallel montage of Manolo wandering around Valencia and José carrying the double bed to his house alludes to the direct relationship between the modernization process and the labor force of the migrants. Finally, the audiovisual diegetic analogies that pervade the running time construct two solid protagonists whose story of survival compels the audience compassion and understanding. With all these signifying practices, Forn appeals to social justice and assimilation by creating a striking cinematic explanation of the Catalan national ideal, an explanation that stems from his place of enunciation and his willingness to preach self-reflection among his native society. In contrast, the following section deals with a completely different text, one that employs other means of expression and presents a gloomier scenario of the arrival of migrants such as José and Juana. Still, just as in *La piel quemada*, the fingerprint of the author's place of enunciation is evident in his use of language.

***Últimas tardes con Teresa* (1966): Portraying the Pessimism of the Other on the Page**

If Forn's signifying practices make visible the influence of his place of enunciation and construct a convincing plea in favor of assimilation, so does Juan Marsé's narrative in *Últimas tardes con Teresa* (1966) but from the opposite perspective, one that denounces the social rigidity of Catalan bourgeois. The texts are opposite but similar since the authors' uses of language maximize the denotative and connotative systems of signification and the five major codes of constructing meaning. Instead of exhibiting the optimism and naiveté of the Catalan native, Marsé's place of enunciation leads him to adopt the opposite point of view, that of the migrant, and present a hopeless depiction of the social conflict and a harsh criticism of Catalan society. The novel becomes an iconic piece of the discursive formation that pervaded the cultural arena of 1960s Catalonia because of the author's dexterity with the systems and codes of signification of language; by taking advantage of language, Marsé creates an ironic love story told from multiple points of view to reveal the importance of information and perspective. He constructs two archetypal protagonists, Teresa, and Manolo, that serve, respectively, to criticize Catalan nationalism and to incorporate the migrant into the social strata. Moreover, Marsé's locus of enunciation casts a shadow on his signifying practices and the overall argument of the novel. The blatant pessimism of the story, portraying a monolithic ethnic and social structure, stems from adopting the perspective of the oppressed, and the crafted construction of characters contributes to the incorporation of the migrants into the national collective imagination.

Born in Barcelona in 1933, Juan Faneca Roca became Juan Marsé Carbó when he adopted the last names of his adoptive parents, and he attended the "Colegio del Divino Maestro" until he was thirteen and started working in a jewelry workshop (Clark). He published his first novel, *Encerrados con un solo juguete* (1960), with Seix Barral, a publishing house located in

Barcelona that supported and financed his literary career due to his working-class origins (Mainer 540, Clark). His literary productions were extensive, his most preferred genre was the novel, and many of his works are well-known in Spanish twentieth-century literature: *Si te dicen que caí* (1989), *El amante bilingüe* (1990), or *El embrujo de Shangai* (1993), to mention some examples in addition to *Últimas tardes* (Clark). A brief overview of his literary productions reveals the writer's predilection for the city of Barcelona, which became a recurrent character in his texts and through which he explores social, political, and religious tensions of society (Clark). Thanks to the collaboration with Seix Barral, Marsé had access to a group of writers and intellectuals linked to the publishing house, and he established a close and long-lasting friendship with the poet Jaime Gil de Biedma (1929-1990) (Clark). Once *Últimas tardes* received the Biblioteca Breve prize in 1965—which sought to energize the literary sphere by acknowledging young promising authors (Mainer 132)—the writer was catapulted to fame and entered the Spanish literary sphere where he remained firmly established until his death in 2020 (Clark).

Últimas tardes has a relatively simple plot. It tells the ephemeral summer-love story of Manolo Reyes, alias Pijoaparte, and Teresa Serrat, who fall for each other while taking care of Maruja, the girlfriend and maid, respectively, of the protagonists. They belong to the two distinct social classes involved in the social conflict generated by the 1960s depopulation of rural Spain: like José in *La piel quemada*, Manolo is a paradigmatic example of the “xarnego” or “murciano,” while Teresa is the embodiment of the Catalan bourgeoisie. Structured as a prologue and three parts of short unnumbered chapters, the novel narrates how Manolo and Maruja meet and how their relationship develops until she falls into a coma after an accident. Then, he meets Teresa at the hospital, and their summer love story begins, but after the death of Maruja, it becomes obvious that their relationship is unsustainable. Their irrefutable fate is determined by their social

status: Manolo is finally arrested for stealing and goes to prison for two years and, although Teresa likely misses him, she eventually moves on to enjoy her comfortable life. *Últimas tardes* tells this story through the voice of an omniscient third-person narrator but also occasionally employs the inner monologue of characters, most interestingly Maruja and Teresa, the two lovers of Manolo. The novel is one of Marsé's most paradigmatic pieces and, not surprisingly, has attracted the attention of many literary criticisms that revolve around three main themes: classifying the text in its literary tradition, discerning its literary influences, and explaining the rhetorical strategies that articulate its underlying social denunciation.

The novel has been framed within the overarching label of post-war Spanish literature in the twentieth century; but *Últimas tardes* resists a straightforward categorization because it is embedded in a period of stylistic innovation and change, so its thematic and formal characteristics navigate different literary trends. Gonzalo Sobejano examines and classifies post-war Spanish literature into two broad categories: the social novel and the structural novel. He includes *Últimas tardes* as an example of the former but acknowledges that the text presents some formal and thematical similarities with the latter.⁴⁸ The critic justifies this categorization because the text attacks the bourgeoisie and showcases “la zanja que separa una clase de otra” when the motivation is class mobility (450);⁴⁹ and some scholars agree with him and associate Marsé's text with the social realist novel, especially because of the determinism reflected in the narration.⁵⁰ Nonetheless, this categorization seems narrow and limiting for a novel as complex as

⁴⁸ The critic identifies several commonalities between *Últimas tardes* and the two key texts that exemplify his description of the structural novel: *Tiempo de Silencio* (1962) by Luis Martín-Santos (1924-1964) and *Señas de identidad* (1966) by Juan Goytisolo (1931-2017) (452).

⁴⁹ This categorization of *Últimas tardes* was initiated by Mario Vargas Llosa in 1966, when he published a review of the novel entitled “Una explosión sarcástica en la novela española moderna.”

⁵⁰ For instance, Kristen A. Thorne reaches this conclusion arguing that the novel “describe[s] the situation, denounce[s] the injustices of a given society, demand[s] that consciousness be raised” (Thorne 104).

this one; that is why other critics have associated it with the effervescent literary renovation that social realism experienced in the 1960s: what Sobejano called the structural novel (545).

Sobejano posits that these structural novels share the “virulencia crítica, vastedad del panorama, destreza compositiva y opulencia de medios expresivos” (452). Similarly, Eugenio G. de Nora, reviewing the history of the Spanish novel through a generational perspective, contextualizes Marsé’s text as the “Nueva oleada” of younger writers who maintain a constructive motivation but reject the previous stylistic features of post-war social realist literature (261). The critic argues that Marsé and other writers, such as the aforementioned Martín-Santos and Goytisolo, oscillate between “el lirismo subjetivo y la objetividad despersonalizada” and share common features: a realist orientation, a critical intention “en la elección y planteamiento de los temas,” and a tendency toward experimentation with literary form (262-63). Nora’s categorization points out that *Últimas tardes* has more to do with the structural novel than with the social realism that dominated the 1950s literary sphere, and many critics concur with this classification.⁵¹ If anything, this dichotomy suggests that *Últimas tardes* resides in an in-between space that was enduring a period of aesthetic renovation and change and progressively moving away from the social realism that dominated the 1950s. As José-Carlos Mainer puts it when he compares Marsé’s text to the novel *Tiempo de silencio*, because both adopt a similar subjective enunciation of reality, Marsé’s piece “mantiene su carga crítica asumiendo su condición de artefacto artístico en su construcción y en su estilo” (542).

Hence, the formal and stylistic features of *Últimas tardes* are more aligned with the trend inaugurated by *Tiempo de silencio*—that is, with the structural novel, to use Sobejano’s label, or with the “Nueva oleada”, to use Nora’s; still, the novel is reminiscent of the social realism that

⁵¹ Some scholars that concur with this categorization are Shirley Mangini González, Blanca Ripoll Sintés, Francisco Aroca Iniesta, Geraldine C. Nichols, or Carolyn Morrow.

dominated the previous decades, and that is why it is difficult to categorize it. To engage with this debate, the post-structuralist analysis presented in the following pages leans toward understanding the romance between Manolo and Teresa as a structural novel. I do so because, despite recalling the sharp criticism of social realism, Marsé's narrative and aesthetic choices manifest a complex subjectivity, distancing itself from the presumed objectivity of the social realism. What is more, I do so because my analysis suggests that Marsé took advantage of all the stylistic possibilities of the 1960s to denounce social injustice through a highly complex and intricate representation of reality, features of the structural novel. The Catalan novelist constructs a narrative in which perspective and subjectivity are crucial for completely understanding the tragic love between Manolo and Teresa, and this discursive complexity is what has defined the text's literary criticism.

The academic research on *Últimas tardes* presents an overwhelming consensus regarding three main issues: the literary influences of the text, the ironic criticism of the author, and the social determinism of the narrative. Those studies that reveal the literary intertextualities of the novel identify two major influences, the picaresque novel, and the nineteenth-century romantic novel, which combine to reinforce the social criticism of the text.⁵² Surveying these interpretations, it is apparent that *Últimas tardes* presents elements of both literary traditions and combines them to construct a mordant satire of the social, political, and economic moment. However, the present chapter is less concerned with the intertextuality of the text than with the semiotics of the narrative, so this scholarship, albeit compelling, has little effect on my argument.

⁵² For instance, Celia Romea Castro convincingly establishes connections between Marsé's narrative and the picaresque novel (466). Ripoll, Mangini, and Aroca point at the role it plays when it combines with nineteenth-century romantic novel.

If anything, my analysis will shed light on the rhetorical strategies through which Marsé reinterprets and incorporates these literary influences into his narrative.

However, the scholarship that delves into the rhetorical and literary strategies that consolidate the novel's poignant irony and social determinism is much more relevant for this chapter, because it sheds light on the politics of the text, which also happened with the case of *La piel quemada*. This criticism explains how Marsé's narrative constructs its harsh social denunciation and his representation of reality, although this research views the social conflict of the "xarnego" solely as a question of class. Firstly, literary critics point out that the text plays with dichotomies and contrasts that ultimately bring to the fore the social denunciation of the novel, a line of interpretation that recalls that of *La piel quemada*. The criticisms of *Últimas tardes* identify oppositional poles, stylistic dichotomies, unstable contrapositions, and contrasts as crucial factors in the constitution of the novel's social denunciation.⁵³ These findings demonstrate that traditional dialectics is the core foundation of the novel;⁵⁴ and my post-structuralist analysis, to further support this idea, will thoroughly explain Marsé's signifying practices, i.e., his exploitation of language to build this dialectical game. The second line of inquiry is concerned with the portrait of reality presented in the novel, and there is unanimous agreement on the underlying social commentary of the text: scholars concur that the novel unveils the class and economic divisions and conflicts triggered by the migration from rural Spain and showcases a society sadly dominated by social determinism.⁵⁵ The consensus is overwhelming and points to Marsé's pessimistic point of view about the social conflict, one that portrays Catalan society as rigid and class differences as insurmountable through a dialectical

⁵³ For this line of inquiry, please see the studies of Marcelino C. Peñuelas, Mangini, and Morrow.

⁵⁴ As Nichols puts it, the novel structurally and thematically exploits Hegelian dialectics, which describes change through contrasts and dichotomies, "to describe a society in which there is no change" (164).

⁵⁵ The studies of Dóra Faix, Aroca, and Ripoll illuminate this social determinism.

game of opposing elements. These findings leave no question about Marsé's perspective—the opposite of Forn's naïve representation—and adopt the same constructionist approach that we saw with *La piel quemada*. To expand this debate, the following analysis adopts a semiotic approach to demonstrate the interplay between the novelist's signifying practices and locus of enunciation as well as to display the narrative's emphasis on ethnicity, which is overshadowed by class.

Overall, the literary debates on *Últimas tardes* overlook the representation of ethnic differences and the role they play in constructing or challenging Catalan national culture, but there is one exception to this trend. Dana Guisasola's study, which argues that, by making Manolo the protagonist, the text outlines a national ideal that counteracts nationalists' logics and envisions an “idea de nación, abierta y plural” that blurs the “fronteras entre lo Propio catalán y lo Otro migrante” (182). Along the lines of this interpretation, the following analysis illuminates how Marsé's signifying practices convey that the division between Catalan natives and Spanish migrants is rooted not only on social class, but also on ethnic differences. Overall, this scholarship adopts the same “social constructionist approach” present in the criticisms of *La piel quemada*, to invoke Hall one more time: it explains how *Últimas tardes* acted as a constitutive element of culture in the construction and constitution of social perceptions and values (*Representation 6*). Therefore, with the intention of furthering this academic discussion, the following semiotic analysis is concerned with language as vehicle to create meaning and reaches similar conclusions as the previous section of the chapter (*Representation 6*). Just as with Forn, Marsé conveys such a compelling denunciation of the historical moment by harnessing the linguistic possibilities of literary writing, and his locus of enunciation casts a shadow on the pessimistic tone of the story and the ideological motivations of the text.

The novel's connotative and denotative systems of signification, together with the five codes that construct meaning, lay bare the unsolvable rift caused by social and ethnic differences. The tragic and sarcastic nature of the love story is a pessimistic and ominous understanding of the situation, one that diametrically opposes Forn's representation and is consistent with Marsé's place of enunciation. By bringing to the fore the strength of social determinism in Catalan society, Marsé hits the nail on the head of the conflict: he beautifully captures the frustrations and disappointments of the migrants and elevates them to icons of their time. The author maximizes language to construct a polyphonic narrative that lays bare the importance of having knowledge and perspective. He then grounds the storyline on two main characters, Manolo and Teresa, who are absolute antagonists, and he exaggerates this opposition in the narrative to the point that the figure of the "xarnego" becomes an archetype of the national collective imagination. Due to these features, *Últimas tardes* becomes a "classic text," to use Barthes' words—a text that is constituted by multiple meanings that "can be read but not written," and whose plurality of significations must be acknowledged and appreciated (4-5).

The first thing that stands out in Marsé's narrative is his dexterity with the proarietic code; it allows him to render a fictional universe explained through a myriad of voices, but mostly by an insidious yet charismatic third-person narrator. *Últimas tardes* requires careful reading, because Marsé describes the summer love of Manolo and Teresa by employing multiple points of view marked by different punctuation. There is a dominant third person narrator, but the main characters also have a space for self-expression. For instance, Teresa's inner voice appears after Maruja's fainting in Blanes. In this chapter, the third-person narrator focalizes on Teresa for the first time as she reflects on the events that occurred the day of the accident, and the narrative employs the guillemets, a type of quotation marks, to signal the beginning of her inner thoughts.

Teresa's interior monologue notes, "lo mejor habría sido hacerla volver a casa . . . porque luego quizá todo habría rodado de distinta manera para Luis y para mí," hinting at Teresa's underlying selfishness (Marsé 153). With punctuation marks, Marsé propels readers into Teresa's mind while changing the focalization of the omniscient narrator, who starts narrating from the perspective of the female protagonist. In addition, the narrative gives space to Maruja's inner monologue despite her being in a coma. Her voice unexpectedly appears in the middle of chapter twelve, while prostrated in a hospital bed. Maruja remembers the day she met the mysterious young man and recalls everything she knows about him. She then addresses Teresa and states: "Lo sé; una es como es señorita, una es ignorante y de hombres entiende poco, pero . . . a mí no podía engañarme aquella noche en la verbena" (Marsé 286). This revelation adds a new layer of information for the readers, placing them in a privileged position, since they know more than the characters; they realize that Maruja has nothing of the innocence and kindness that Manolo sees in her. Marsé assembles a narrative with multiple points of view that emphasizes the importance not only of perspective but also of information. In fact, the novelist masterfully plays with the dramatic irony to unfold the story and lead readers toward its final message, rationing the amount of information accessed by characters and readers.

The absolute control of this dramatic irony (and most of the narrative) is in the hands of the third-person narrator, who parcels out the information available to characters and readers and plays with the possibilities of punctuation to create a particular convention that constructs two levels of information: one corresponds to what the protagonists, especially Manolo, feel and experience, and the other corresponds to the narrator's commentary and judgment based on the situations and events that occur in the story. The recurrent use of parenthesis, dashes, and guillemets introduces the comments and judgments of the narrator about the story and the

characters and places readers in a privileged position because they have more information than the characters. For instance, one afternoon at the beach, Manolo contemplates Teresa getting out of the water and daydreams that they survive “una espantosa guerra nuclear (en la que desde luego y justamente hemos muerto todos, lector, esto no podía durar)” (Marsé 272). The third-person narrator shares the information contained in parenthesis with the readers, establishing a limit between what they know and what the characters explain through the narrative voice. These intrusions in the narrative add a post-modern flavor to *Últimas tardes* because they separate the characters’ fictional reality from the readers’, and this separation allows the third-person narrator to build the sarcastic criticism in the novel. Additionally, these two levels of information allow the omniscient narrator to foreshadow the upcoming failure of the love story between Manolo and Teresa. The judgmental narrative voice doles out clues throughout the narration that point to the tragic ending of the love affair. For example, Manolo and Teresa ride around the city “gracias al Floride y al sopor de aquellas tardes estivales, que ya llevaban por otra parte el germen de una ceniza aventada (el círculo se borraría con los primeros vientos nocturnos de septiembre)” (Marsé 254). By suggesting the unfortunate outcome of the relationship between Manolo and Teresa, the third-person narration guides readers to align with Manolo’s feelings and feel pity for him, since they witness him evolving towards his final disappointment with Teresa.

Consequently, the proairetic codes in *Últimas tardes* combine different literary strategies to construct a solid narrative and characters. The combination of omniscient narration and the character’s interior monologues, specifically Teresa’s and Maruja’s, create a polyphonic narrative that enhances the importance of the perspective to understand the full picture. The third-person narrator handles dramatic irony deftly, administering the amount of information available to characters and readers, in order to construct a satire attacking 1960s Catalan bourgeoisie and

foreshadow the unhappy ending. *Últimas tardes* thereby becomes an ironic chronicle of death foretold.

Moreover, Marsé, disguised in the voice of third person narrator, focalizes his social criticism even further by targeting a particular section of the social strata, liberal intellectuals, and hints at the inevitable linguistic assimilation of the migrants. He achieves this objective through cultural codes, which are helpful in understanding the full scope of the novel's social criticism. The commentary on class struggles is obvious, but readers may miss the social particularities of the late 1950s and early 1960s in Barcelona due to their lack of historical knowledge. There are several references to student political movements against Franco's dictatorship, particularly the instance in which Teresa is involved in one of those protests and is arrested. The novelist's criticism is conveyed through the voice of the third-person narrator who tells readers that the protagonist despises these students, who, for him, are "unos domésticos animales de lujo . . . unos perfectos imbéciles y unos desagradecidos" (Marsé 116). The sharp criticism of the students' subversive activism is devastating and targets a particular section of the society, but it may be overlooked unless one thoroughly knows the clandestine anti-Francoist activism of Spain and Catalonia. Notwithstanding, other cultural codes point to the linguistic alloy produced with the arrival of these migrants. In this sense, if *La piel quemada* made a remarkable effort in displaying the linguistic diversity of the historic moment, this text is less interested in that issue; still, it shows some signs of language assimilation on behalf of the migrants. For instance, Bernado, Manolo's friend and accomplice, mixes Spanish with words in Catalan (Marsé 47). In fact, Manolo shows certain knowledge on Catalan at different times in the narrative, just like when he employs it in the heated argument in which he discovers that Maruja

is a maid, not a bourgeoisie, and calls her “bleda” (Marsé 75).⁵⁶ These brief instances subtly suggest that language, despite being the most evident factor of difference, is a resolvable problem because migrants will end up acquiring it, an idea that recalls Candel’s arguments.

Similarly, Marsé charges urban spaces and secondary characters with the symbolic burden of reiterating his criticism to the monolithic social and ethnic structure of Catalan society and pointing at the mutual dependency between migrants and locals. The descriptions of the Carmelo and its surroundings personify Spanish migrants, such as Manolo, as well as their aspirations, potential, and frustrations; and the most evident symbols in the narrative have been identified by different literary critics and further reinforce Marsé’s critical depiction of 1960s Catalan society.⁵⁷ However, there is a symbol that this scholarship has overlooked. Marsé symbolically dignifies Spanish migrants by alluding to their contribution to the modernization of the territory, employing (again) space as a symbolic code. According to the third-person narrator, in the Monte Carmelo: “todavía reina cierta sonrisa de Baal . . . una sonrisa poderosa como un músculo, hecha de astucia y de ironía vagamente impúdicas, frente a la blanca sonrisa chapucera del domingo que invade la colina con la pretensión de poner a sus habitantes en Dios sabe qué miserable armonía con la resignación y la Naturaleza. . . a veces las calles se estremecen con un viento sin dirección, enloquecido, ráfagas de ira e indignación” (Marsé 42). The excerpt likens the space of the shantytown with Baal, an ancient pagan deity of fertility and chaos, and contrasts it with “la blanca sonrisa chapucera del domingo,” which subtly and sarcastically alludes to the

⁵⁶ The literal translation of “bleda” is “chard,” but this term is frequently employed in colloquial Catalan to refer to a person who is not very smart or savvy or who lacks vigor and level-headedness (DEIEC).

⁵⁷ For instance, Aroca comments on the symbolic charge of the handmade kites soaring above the Carmelo that the narrator compares to the figure of the warrior (90-91); similarly, Faix contends that Marsé emphasizes a rigid spatial relationship of verticality between the neighborhoods that Teresa and Manolo inhabit and share during their love affair (107); and Ripoll affirms that there is a “correlación con la imposibilidad del cambio social” between neighborhoods of the Carmelo and Sant Gervasi (41).

majoritarian Catholic social practices of Catalan bourgeois (Marsé 42). The contraposition of paganism and Catholicism evokes the conflictive relationship between migrants and the upper-middle classes: the former subvert and defy the social order sustained by the latter. As a god of fertility and natural forces, Baal's rage and frustration is visible in powerful wind that sweeps through the streets of El Carmelo, and these feelings correspond with those of the migrants, as if the narrator is equating them with the deity to justify their indignation: like Baal, they are subversive yet fertile, since their labor force is essential for modernization, and the exclusion they suffer is unjust given the role they play in the economic development of society. With this biblical reference, the narrative critiques the affected moral righteousness of Catalan bourgeois and alludes to the essential role that the migrants play in the national economic development, hinting at the relationship of mutual dependency.

In this sense, just as with the shantytown, the secondary character of Hortensia, also known as "La Jeringa," is symbolically charged; her persona embodies the endurances and emotions of Southern Spanish migrants, and her resemblance to Teresa evokes the possibility of assimilation. Hortensia's physicality recalls Teresa's to further explain the potential of these migrants in Catalan society and denounce their material conditions. The character is described as a "muchachita seria . . . de ojos garzos y cabellos de un rubio sucio, sin luz . . . estos ojos de ceniza y ese pelo que hoy mostraba una extraña sequedad serena e inanimada, como de cardo, habían sido luminosos" (Marsé 229-230). If Teresa is a beautiful flower, Hortensia is a thistle, a rougher plant whose spikes signal her frustration, distrust, and defensiveness. The description alludes to Teresa's white and fair physical appearance, but Hortensia's beauty is reminiscent of a luminous and prosperous past, and she only could become a cheap imitation of the charming Catalan undergraduate student; after all, Hortensia is "un esbozo, un dibujo inacabado y mal

hecho de Teresa” that shows “aquella otra personalidad luminosa y feliz que . . . aquí en el Carmelo, por alguna razón, no había tenido tiempo o medios de realizarse” (Marsé 235). The narrative recalls Candel’s denunciations (the precarious living conditions, and minimal resources available to these migrants) and lays bare why there is a resemblance between the two female characters: economic scarcity and lack of resources withered Hortensia until she became the aforementioned thistle. In the same way that she lacks the time and the means to become Teresa, so do the shantytowns and their inhabitants; they have the potential to become a part of the social structure but need time and resources. With these evocative descriptions of Hortensia, Marsé suggests that these newcomers are fairly similar to Catalan natives and have the potential to become part of the Catalan social fabric. Just like Hortensia’s hair used to shine bright in her youth, the migrants’ labor force shines as a driving force of modernization, but the hardships and exclusion they endure make them mistrustful. The social conflict regarding the migrants’ material conditions and emotional state are embodied in Hortensia’s eyes, which, just like the Carmelo, become a symbolic code that explains this social conflict from the perspective of the oppressed.

However, the major achievement of *Últimas tardes* is character construction, because Marsé’s third-person narrator creates three believable and well-rounded protagonists (Manolo, Teresa and Maruja) by focalizing the narrative on them in different manners. The writer reaches a notable balance in the focalization between them, but Manolo is definitely in the limelight, so much so that he has become the archetype of the “xarnego;” or rather, using Hall’s words, the story of the Pijoaparte “itself produces ‘subjects’—figures who personify the particular forms of knowledge which the discourse produces . . . These figures are specific to specific discursive regimes and historical periods” (*Representation* 56). The narration delves into Manolo’s thoughts

and feelings, composing a complex human character with flaws and virtues that charms the readers. It takes advantage of the semic codes to produce a subject that displays humanity but is aware of his alterity and longs for assimilation.

From the beginning, the narrative emphasizes the humanity of the male protagonist. Even though at first sight he shows little sympathy for others and seems selfish, the narrative shows that there is more to this conceited petty criminal, and it epitomizes his human nature in one concrete moment: “El chico creció guapo y despierto, con una rara disposición para la mentira y la *ternura* . . . Así desde niño, necesitó la mentira lo mismo que el pan y el aire que respiraba” (Marsé 94-95, my emphasis). The protagonist’s childhood is defined by economic hardships that led him to deceive, but tenderness is innate in him. Therefore, there is a sensitive, empathetic person under his external layer of toughness: Manolo is a complex character who displays a disposition toward “la mentira y la ternura,” the former defined by his low-economic social status and the latter by his inherent empathy and caring (Marsé 94). Precisely because of these irrepressible tendencies toward deceitfulness and tenderness, the narration constructs Manolo’s complex nature by showing his strong feelings of guilt. This is prominently illustrated when, after the accident, he visits Maruja for the first time at the hospital: “se impresionó mucho más de lo que había supuesto . . . Parecía no sólo muerta, sino maltratada, ultrajada y luego olvidada . . . ¿Hasta qué punto también su mano, abofeteándola, la había postrado en esta cama?” (Marsé 204). The terms employed by the third-person narrator apply to events and experiences lived in their relationship; and the final rhetorical question suggests that the protagonist’s guilt is so intense that he even questions his sexist attitudes. With these humanizing moments, Manolo becomes relatable for readers, who establish an emotional bond with him, making him a prototypical “xarnego” and *Últimas tardes* a much more bittersweet story than *La piel quemada*.

In order to construct Manolo as an archetypal character of these migrants, the omniscient narrator emphasizes that, besides the class difference, his skin color and physical features set him apart from society. *Últimas tardes* begins with a famous line describing the protagonist's alias, Pijoaparte: "Hay apodos que ilustran no solamente una manera de vivir, sino también la naturaleza social del mundo en que uno vive" (Marsé 25). This superb synthesis of a character clearly announces that, for Marsé, the social conflict between migrants and Catalans was a question of class, and this question is the most obvious in the narrative and has the leading role in the scholarship about Marsé's novel. However, the character descriptions contribute to construct Manolo's alterity and depict his ethnic marginalization by emphasizing his physicality and acquire racial overtones throughout the narrative. He stands out for his "rostro melancólico y adusto, de mirada grave y piel *cetrina*," and his presence generates "ese ligero malestar que a veces provoca un elemento cualquiera de *desorden*" (Marsé 26, my emphasis). Interestingly, in this case, the protagonist's skin color matches the description of his face, and he represents a threat to the social order.⁵⁸ The narration goes on, stating that his "facciones *meridionales* . . . [y] El color oliváceo de sus manos era[n] como un estigma . . . donde uno encuentra los elementos inconfundibles de la cotidiana lucha contra la miseria y el olvido" (Marsé 26, my emphasis). The narrative describes the factors that determine Manolo's marginalization: his low economic status and his physical appearance. Both class and ethnicity intersect in the character's existence, showing how Spanish migrants were a source of uneasiness, anxiety, and eventually fear. The marginalization of the protagonist stems not only from difference in economic status, but also from physical appearance, a distinction that becomes more obvious as the story unfolds.

⁵⁸ The Spanish Real Academia de la Lengua listed "melancólico y adusto" as the fourth meaning of *cetrino* (RAE).

Moreover, Marsé takes full advantage of semic codes to define how these migrants were perceived by Catalan society and render the protagonist as an outcast conscious of his alterity: his marginalization is self-explanatory in the narration. Some secondary characters in the novel refer to him as “xarnego,” like Leo Fontalbla, a friend of Teresa, or Lluís Trías de Giral, her disappointing boyfriend. Still, the character that leaves no doubt about how the Catalan bourgeois view these migrants is Teresa’s mother, Marta Serrat. She describes them as “desvergonzados que se aprovechan de las criadas” and she finally reminds her daughter that “un salvaje del Carmelo estuvo a punto de matarte” (Marsé 193-194). Yet, the narrative voice ironically points out the characters’ exaggeration: “Para la señora Serrat, el Monte Carmelo era algo así como el Congo, un país remoto e infrahumano, con sus leyes propias, distintas” (Marsé 194). The comparison aims to make clear the wrongfulness of Marta Serrat’s views, but the element employed in it, an African country, points to a hierarchical perception of race grounded on whiteness, just like what happened with the dancing performance in *La piel quemada*. Nonetheless, as the narrative voice notes, the protagonist is not alien to this circumstance: “él no ignoraba que su físico delataba su origen andaluz—un *xarnego*, un murciano (murciano como denominación gremial, no geográfica: otra rareza de los catalanes)” (Marsé 29). The narrative shows that Manolo is completely conscious of his alterity, and the aside employs sarcasm to introduce the pejorative connotations these words acquired in this particular context: by employing and defining them, the narrative shows that Catalan society reduces into a single origin the cultural diversity of these migrants, who came from many different Southern regions, most prominently Andalucía, Extremadura, and Murcia. Since Marsé aims to criticize the exclusion of these migrants, the narration makes Manolo’s alterity evident, transforming him into their prototype through semic codes and on the denotative level.

Nevertheless, the novelist reinforces the character's Otherness on the connotative level and through hermeneutic codes, such as the use of the epigraph at the beginning of each chapter, which functions as an encoded synthesis of it. Among all of them, chapter eleven begins with a verse from *Othello* by William Shakespeare, a paradigmatic example of alterity: "Me amó por los peligros que he corrido" (Marsé 248). The reference to *Othello* invokes Manolo's alterity, which can only be overcome with Mr. Serrat's approval as the omniscient narrative voice states in another aside between parentheses: "probemos a hacer borrón y cuenta nueva, aquí está la oportunidad, Teresa (y con Teresa su padre), de obtener algún trabajo digno" (Marsé 274). Similar to the cases of Jaumet and Peter from chapter one, Manolo believes that the love of the white woman and the approval of the patriarch are the keys to enter into the national ideal; but, just as happened to the Shakespearean character, the tragedy of their love story is unavoidable. The connection between the verse from *Othello* and the narrative undergirds the sinister outcome of the story and suggests that the gap between them is social and ethnic, proving that Marsé maximizes the codes of signification to make the Other an archetype.

In fact, the semic codes in the narrative illustrate Manolo's longing for assimilation replicates the pattern discussed in the previous chapter: the need for acceptance within the white world through the love of a woman. The desire for inclusion is manifest from the beginning, since the protagonist daydreams about Maruja and thinks that she is the daughter of an accommodated Catalan family. The character imagines himself as a hero, saving the "damsel in distress" and approaching her parents, who would laud and accept him, but the third-person narrator sarcastically includes an aside between em dashes (long dashes) that guarantees the impossibility of the dream: "*Xarnego, no fotis!*, parecía decirle el chapoteo monótono y burlón— y desde luego sin ninguna esperanza de verle elevarse a la dignidad huracanada que requería la

ocasión—del agua en los costados del fueraborda” (Marsé 59). Once the protagonist falls in love with Teresa, his yearning for assimilation and becoming Catalan is even more apparent, so much so that, according to the third-person narrator, “pronto iba a convertirse en una obsesión” (Marsé 274). Similar to Peter and Jaumet in Chapter Two, Manolo needs the love of the woman and the confirmation of the patriarch. For him, these needs are such a chimera that his voice creeps into the narration, interrupting the narrator, who is cunningly comparing Teresa with Jean Simmons: “(la perderé, no puede ser, no es para mí, la perderé antes de que me deis tiempo a ser un catalán como vosotros, ¡cabrones!)” (Marsé 271). The character inverts the use of parenthesis that the narrative voice has employed so far, giving the text the dazzlingly beautiful post-modern flavor, and pointing out the bitterness of the story: for Manolo, Catalan society is deterministic.

Besides constructing a believable and relatable protagonist, Marsé exploits the systems and codes of signification to present Teresa as Manolo’s antagonist, feeding the dialectics and the criticism of the novel. She functions as a symbolic code for the Catalan national ideal and, in the semic code, represents the social strata criticized by Marsé, whose criticism—filtered through the voice of the third-person narrator focalized in Teresa—weakens Catalan nationalism by invoking ideals of Europeanness and imperial power. In reality even though there are few, if any, phenotypical differences between Northern and Southern Spaniards, Teresa is presented as the antagonist in relation not only to gender and social class, but also to ethnicity since she becomes a symbolic code of Catalan nationalism. The narrative overtly displays her privileged social status in many descriptions and in her characterization: her clothing, possessions, and attitudes. She clearly represents the Catalan bourgeois, and more precisely the younger generations that initiated the subversive political activism against Franco’s dictatorship at the universities. Nevertheless, Teresa’s physical features are sharply contrasted with Manolo’s: if characters see

the latter as the Other and associate him with blackness, to recall Mrs. Serrat's comparison between the Monte Carmelo and the Congo, the narrative emphasizes the former's hair and eyes to increase the breach between them. The girl's fair hair and blue eyes struck Manolo since they met for the first time at the party, and the narrative repeatedly returns to describe Teresa's features, as well as the effect they have on the protagonist—so much so that, according to the narrator, they feed his obsession with her, as after all, she is his ticket into Catalan whiteness (Marsé 112). The social and ethnic opposition between Teresa and Manolo is manifested more evidently when the third-person narrator compares her to her mother:

[Teresa] tiene *alma de pez-mariposa* y su destino es vivir bajo una perfecta combinación de luz y azules aguas transparentes . . . el fulgor celeste de sus ojos, sus caderas un tanto pueriles, el oro viejo de sus cabellos, la miel y la seda de su nuca y también la lánguida espalda adolescente revelan la *herencia* de un *linaje* materno exquisitamente alimentado incluso en épocas de apuro . . . aquel prestigio de *casta* que ya desde niña anunciaba su fino cuello de corza y la singular expresión de su boca (Marsé 144, my emphasis).

The comparison with the butterflyfish brings to mind the colors white, yellow, and blue, which evidently coincide with Teresa's physical appearance, but also bring to mind another Teresa: the one described by the aforementioned Eugeni D'Ors in *La ben plantada* (1911), who became the symbolic ideal of Catalan national culture at the beginning of the twentieth century. With this characterization, Marsé's character symbolically embodies this ideal. Moreover, the word choices in the description evoke the idea of biological heritage, phenotypic trait, and racial purity by employing the terms "heritage," "linaje" and "casta," whose meaning is contingent on many factors and thereby are "sliding signifiers," to use Hall's epistemology ("Race, the Floating Signifier" 360). Therefore, the narrative puts the protagonists in absolute antagonism and

condemned to their fates not only by pointing to their differences in social class, but also by invoking ideas of ethnic and racial difference, as in classical Shakespearian tragedies such as *Romeo and Juliet* (1597) or *Othello* (1604).

In addition to Teresa's symbolic function, Marsé presents Teresa as naïve, self-centered, confused, and volatile to emphasize her fascination with Manolo, which ultimately responds to a sexual impulse to transgress social boundaries, to possess the Other. The narrative showcases Teresa's alliance to the emerging student movement, as well as her fascination with the ideological trends of the moment throughout the narrative: in her political activism, in conversations with her friends, or when she finds herself citing Simone de Beauvoir in her mind while talking with Maruja on the beach (Marsé 175, 178). Notwithstanding, the omniscient third-person narrator insinuates what underlies her idealist political stance: "si alguien . . . le hubiese hecho ver que su solidaridad para con cierta ideología . . . no era en realidad más que la expresión desviada de un profundo, soterrado deseo de encontrarse en los brazos del héroe" (Marsé 164-165). Marsé constructs a female protagonist who disguises her longing for love and sexual awakening under a layer of abstract theories and ideas, but he only shares this piece of information with the readers, leaving the characters at the mercy of their fatal destiny. That is why, once Teresa learns about Manolo in a conversation with Maruja at the beach, she decides to believe he is a mysterious activist from an underground labor movement, becoming the working-class hero she longs for (Marsé 179). This moment ignites Teresa's curiosity for Manolo, which eventually becomes a fascination that leads her to transgress social boundaries, fall in love with him and ultimately possess the Other. By characterizing Teresa as a confused and volatile young intellectual and exploiting the aforementioned dramatic irony, Marsé plants the seed for Teresa's exotization of Manolo.

Moreover, Marsé reinforces his criticism of Catalan nationalism by cunningly focalizing the narrative on Teresa through the voice of the omniscient narrator, who emphasizes her exoticized perception of Manolo and points to the mutual dependency between migrants and natives. The narrative emphasizes her perception of Manolo's skin and dark hair, making his alterity even more evident. This is manifested when she goes to the Monte Carmelo looking for him to inform him about Maruja's hospitalization. She finds him washing himself in a public fountain, and the third-person narrator, focalized on the girl's point of view, sensually describes what she is witnessing:

el agua resbalaba sin dejar rastro sobre su piel, que relucía al sol como una *oscura* seda polvorienta, y sacudió la cabeza resoplando, tenso al poderoso cuello, los cabellos mojados . . . su abdomen, *negro* y musculado como el caparazón de una tortuga, registraba el ritmo de algún esfuerzo, algún *latido casi animal* (Marsé 199, my emphasis).

The suggestive images evoked in the excerpt make evident the sexual connotations of the encounter between Manolo and Teresa and, thanks to the focalization on the latter, correspond with the sexual awakening she experiences in the story. Nevertheless, the racial overtones of the description are noteworthy. The darkness of his skin is emphasized twice when comparing it with silk and describing his abdomen, and the narration evokes the animal world to portray Manolo's body and movements. Rather than devalue him, this animalization serves to extol the character's virility in the eyes of Teresa and the sexual tensions that run through the novel. Still, the third-person narrator, employing hermeneutic codes that suggest rather than state, discloses Teresa's exotic perception of the Other, whose presence and physicality represent a contradictory force: she is attracted to him because of his alterity, but acting on her attraction entails social transgression. The narrative alludes that Manolo, and by extension the migrants he embodies,

with their dark skin and hair, constitute the unsettling, disruptive Other that puts the nation's stability and unity in jeopardy; it also suggests that Teresa is drawn to Manolo as much as Catalan society needs the migrant work force, since they are essential for the development of the nation despite their alterity. Teresa's sexual impulse to possess the Other hermeneutically hints at the relationship of mutual necessity between Southern migrants and Catalan natives.

Besides pointing to this dependency, Marsé's acidic sarcasm with Catalan nationalism is manifested when the third-person narrator focalizes on Teresa's inner-reasoning justifying her attraction to Manolo but evoking involuntarily the ideals of race, nation, and empire. "[Teresa] confiaba plenamente . . . en algo que ella gustaba definir como 'cierto estilo moderno de sus actitudes', algo que no podían desvirtuar ni las mismas *reminiscencias primitivas, de gitano solemne*" (Marsé 326, my emphasis). The narrative points out that Manolo's modernity is his safe conduct for acceptance into Catalan society, even overshadowing his primitive nature and Romani ancestors, hinting at the incompatibility between nation, race, and ethnicity. Teresa's interior monologue continues her self-justification and evokes other definitory values of the ideal nation-state:

la naturaleza estética de su modernismo era más bien *europaea*, no hispánica; se lo diría a Leo Fontalba, que en la playa le había llamado xarnego . . . *el imperio de los murcianos* o es físico o no es nada . . . porque en este sentido, en el estético, el murciano puede ser más europeo que el catalán y en fin que en todo caso sus actitudes hieráticas solo eran ibéricas en la medida que él era orgulloso y estaba seguro de sí (Marsé 325-326, my emphasis).

Attracted to Manolo's mysterious aesthetic modernity, Teresa's interior monologue elevates him by praising his Europeanness, bringing to mind the aspirations of Catalan nationalism, which

looked to Europe as the model. Moreover, the protagonist's train of thought describes Manolo in imperial terms and asserts that Catalan natives are less European than Southern Spaniards, alluding to the fact that empire is a definitive qualification for Europeanness. Finally, she describes the character's beauty as Iberian, a term that encompasses Spanish and Catalan identities more inclusively by putting them on the same level. These reflections on Manolo's beauty are hermeneutic codes through which the third-person narrator constructs his criticism of Catalan nationalism: alluding to its ideals, pointing out its weaknesses, and proposing a less divisive identity.

In sum, the tragic love story of Manolo and Teresa is more than a dramatic teenage romance about class difference; it is a text that explains the conflict of the "xarnego" from the perspective of the Other, an emphasis that Marsé stimulates by taking full advantage of the systems and codes of signification. The novelist—embedded in a period of literary innovation—maximizes rhetorical resources to provide a poignant and ironic portrait of the social determinism that pervaded Catalan society: his signifying practices call out the upper-middles classes, awakening their self-reflection, while his narrative constructs an archetypal "subject of discourse," as Hall puts it, a figure that becomes part of the collective imagination of the nation (*Representation* 55). The author exploits the proarietic code to construct a polyphonic narrative that supports the criticism of this social polarization, but, in contrast with Forn, he shows little interest in displaying linguistic assimilation, which is only visible sometimes through cultural codes. He masterfully combines satire and tragedy to illustrate the rigidity and exclusionary views of the upper classes as well as to dignify and include the migrants into the Catalan iconography. Manolo and Teresa become archetype and antagonist respectively, and the narrative enhances the humanity and the Otherness of the former and presents the latter as a critique of

Catalan bourgeois, a symbolic articulation that reinforces the author's criticism. Moreover, Marsé makes use of the symbolic code to imbue spaces and characters with similar underlying meanings, as the descriptions of Hortensia and the Carmelo illustrate. The novelist appears to be so entrenched in his locus of enunciation that his text becomes a pessimistic example of the 1960s Catalan discursive formation this chapter examines. Precisely, the influence of his place for the subject leads Marsé to question the social determinism of Catalan upper-middle classes, so his signifying practices take advantage of literary language to satirize their social practices. However, Marsé also conveys this complex high-brow tragic love story with the intention of capturing the historical moment in a way that captivates his readership and facilitates the accommodation of the migrants into the national ideal.

Strikingly similar, but from the opposite perspective, Forn exploits the possibilities of cinematic language to take a stance in favor of including Southern migrants into society and speak to his Catalan peers, so that they understand the dominant notion of the nation. He not only explains the motivations for migrating and the social conflicts generated by the diaspora, but he also presents a compelling description of the hardships endured by these migrants and formulates the hegemonic, albeit unofficial, Catalan national ideal: a nation that incorporates the Other through acquisition of the language. The protagonists in the film, José and Juana, are as archetypal as Manolo; all of them are complex human beings in a difficult situation, and they long for a better life in a place that perceives them as strangers. Just as Marsé, Forn, embedded in the national culture, exploited cinematic language to address his fellow Catalans; but, instead of attacking them, the filmmaker articulated, through images and sounds, a coherent, compelling, and lucid ideal of the nation—a vision that eventually materialized by the late twentieth century.

Hence, *Últimas tardes* and *La piel quemada* are two paradigmatic examples of the discursive formation that appeared in the mid-twentieth-century Catalan cultural arena and resulted from the incorporation of the Francoist dictatorship into Western capitalism. In both cases, the authors maximize the connotative and the denotative systems of signification, as well as the five codes that construct meaning to represent this social conflict, from their own places of enunciation and thereby from opposing perspectives. Forn, guided by his didactics, represented at face value the ideological stance of Pujol's view of Catalanism and undertook the mission to explain it through his art. Similarly, but from the opposite perspective, Marsé, influenced by his vital experiences, portrayed the social rigidity endured by Spanish migrants and propelled the figure of the "xarnego" into the Catalan collective imagination. The ideological opposition between both texts stems, at least partially, from the subject-positions of the authors; from these positions, they address the same social strata with different motivations, the novelist critiquing and the filmmaker justifying, but both authors' signifying practices contributed to incorporate Southern Spanish migrants into the national ideal. Forn employed a camera and Marsé a typewriter, but both achieved their purpose of provoking the emotions of society through two opposing approaches and influencing Catalan national discourses. Interestingly, Marsé's and Forn's signifying practices continued throughout their careers: the filmmaker was driven by his enthusiasm for creating a national culture, and the novelist by his skepticism of a monolithic Catalan national identity. After analyzing these two compelling texts, the following chapter in this dissertation changes again temporal and geographical frameworks to examine how contemporary cultural representations in film and literature portray race.

CHAPTER IV

CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL REPRESENTATIONS OF BLACKNESS IN SPAIN: *HIJA DEL CAMINO* (2019) AND *LO NUNCA VISTO* (2019)

With the examples of *La piel quemada* and *Últimas tardes*, Chapter Three delves into the vast cultural production of 1960s Catalonia that tackled the internal migration from Southern Spain; the analysis shows the influence of the authors' locus of enunciation on their signifying practices, contributing, through different means, to similar purposes since they have the same implicit reader/viewer in mind: the Catalan bourgeois. Forn displayed great dexterity with cinematic language, especially montage, and assembled a story that makes an appeal for empathy for the migrants and outlines the national ideal and its requirements, speaking to his viewers who were as embedded in the culture as he was. Similarly, Marsé mastered literary language and addressed the upper-middle classes, but he represented the social change caused by the arrival of Southern Spanish migrants from the perspective of the Other, so he wrote a delightful tragicomedy full of irony and tenderness. The opposing approaches of the filmmaker and the novelist corresponded with their places of enunciation, but still they achieved similar outcomes because both, the film and the novel, entered the collective imagination of the nation. To put it simply, Chapter Three shows the interconnections between discourse and the authors' locus of enunciation and signifying practices.

In contrast, the following chapter changes the geographical framework, from Catalonia to Spain, and moves forward in time to the early twenty-first century but continues to explore similar cultural products, a novel and a film. It changes the geographical context to balance the contents of the dissertation, providing two in-depth studies of both national cultures: one that

observes the historical particularities of Catalan identity (Chapter Three) and another (Chapter Four) that assesses the contemporary representations of race in Spanish cultural production. In general terms, this jump to the present context closes the project with an evaluation of contemporary Spain that establishes transhistorical connections between chapters and serves to understand better both the present and the past. More specifically, by focusing on the early twenty-first century, this chapter presents an analysis of prominent contemporary cultural representations to show that race and its manifestations in society were, and still are, a contentious neglected topic in Spain. As I will show in the following pages, the primary texts—the novel *Hija del camino* (2019) by Lucía Asué Mbomío Rubio and the film *Lo nunca visto* (2019) by Marina Seresesky—approach the issue of race and attempt to de-construct it, denouncing its ramifications in Spanish social practices. These two cultural products convey two contrasting depictions of blackness and show that the use of language is key in constructing representations of race, which contribute to the consolidation of racial ideologies. My basic argument is that the novel and the film, despite sharing a common anti-racist approach, have divergent political implications: while Mbomío’s novel effectively critiques and elucidates racial inequalities in Spanish society, Seresesky’s film fails to debunk racial stereotypes and instead instrumentalizes migrants, rearticulating a contemporary racial hierarchy.

Before delving into the primary texts, it is useful to provide a brief historical overview of how the issue of race became visible and unavoidable for Spanish society. Spain has been ignoring the weight of its complex relationships with race since the early modern period until nowadays, or, to use Baltasar Fra-Molinero’s words, “Spaniards have seen themselves as white since early modernity” (147). Nevertheless, the topic clearly became unavoidable in the 1990s: migratory movements from Africa towards the European continent increased, cultural

representations of blackness pervaded society, and the Spanish migratory legislation progressively became more restrictive. Juan A. Cebrián et al. state that in 1991 European migration into Spain began to progressively decrease, while African migration began to grow spectacularly, with the majority of these migrants coming from North Africa (439). These scholars identify the “orientación claramente laboral” of these migratory movements but overlook the role played by the political and economic changes Spain endured throughout the 1990s (441). The last decade of the century was Spain’s chance to consolidate its political and economic association with the European countries. Accordingly, the nation took advantage of its new relationships and the migrant labor force to develop economically but at the same progressively implemented hardline immigration legislation and increased border security. In fact, 1992 is the key year that epitomizes both this alliance with Northern Europe and Spain’s economic bonanza, when four events—the Olympic Games in Barcelona, the Seville Expo '92 Universal Exposition, the Christopher Columbus Quincentenary, and the celebration of Madrid as European Capital of Culture—not only “put the nation on the world’s stage,” but also “spawned a construction boom that ushered in the hiring of thousands of migrants workers” (*The Necropolitical* 9). Then, in the 1990s, there were (and still are) intrinsic relationships between African migrations and the nation-state’s development, and these relationships were so substantial that they changed the demographic landscape of the nation: “While in 1998 Spain’s population was 39.8 million and 1.6% were foreign born, 2011 reached a record high of 12.9% of the population (5.7 million) being foreign born” (Tobin 2).

As a consequence of this influx of migrants, the issue of race was unavoidable for Spanish society and erupted into the cultural sphere in a manifold of representations. Throughout the last decade of the twentieth century, many Spanish filmmakers tackled this issue in their

movies, as illustrated by two prominent examples, *Bwana* (1996) by Imanol Uribe and *Las cartas de Alou* (1990) by Montxo Armendáriz. Interestingly, these cinematic products have attracted the attention of many scholars who explore how these cultural artifacts represent migrations and blackness.⁵⁹ The aforementioned Fra-Molinero, for instance, presents a convincing and groundbreaking analysis of these cinematic products and demonstrates that the texts negotiate and reinforce racial subordination.⁶⁰ However, one of the most acclaimed and socially impactful films of this period is *Flores de otro mundo* (1999) by Icíar Bollaín, which also tackles similar topics to those in *Lo nunca visto*. The film acts as an “aesthetic bridge” between the two centuries to the extent that it explores new ways of representing race on screen. Despite this change of sensitivity at the turn of the century, racialized Spanish filmmakers are hard to find, yet one outstanding exception is Santiago A. Zannou—whose *La puerta de no retorno* (2011) approaches the issue of race from the position of the Afrodescendant. Similarly, but interpreting theatrical productions instead of films, Jeffrey K. Coleman demonstrates that his corpus constructs “a racial hierarchy encompassing social marginalization, forced assimilation, and in the most extreme cases, physical death” (*The Necropolitical* 5). As this scholarship shows, the influx of African migrants was largely described in negative terms, such as “a flood, an

⁵⁹ Both 1990s features have received a lot of attention in academic writing. Armendáriz’s is discussed in *Los “Otros”: Etnicidad y “raza” en el cine español contemporáneo* (2005) written by Isabel Santaolalla or *Memoria colonial e inmigración: La negritud en la España posfranquista* (2007) edited by Rosalía Cornejo-Parriego; and Uribe’s appears in many journal publications as “Lust and Disgust: The Rhetoric of Abjection in the Spanish Immigration Films *Bwana*, *Flores de otro mundo* and *Princesas*” (2015), to mention one example.

⁶⁰ Fra-Molinero examines how a selection of immigrant-themed feature films produced between 1975 and 1986 represent racial difference; he concludes that black characters trigger “a crisis of conscience to the moral landscape of Spanish society,” but the films ultimately “rende[r] the non-black spectator both morally up-lifted and whiter,” articulating a hegemonic racial narrative that “constructs and defines Spanish whiteness while espousing overt democratic and progressive agendas” (154). Employing similar texts, Tobin reaches opposing conclusions and affirms that her corpus of films “denounce[s] the impunity of hegemonic perpetrators and vindicate[s] the criminalized migrant subject through a transformation in point of view” (21).

avalanche, an invasion, and a seismic phenomenon,” consolidating the idea that immigration constitutes a threat to the Spanish nation-state (*The Necropolitical* 3). Also, these studies display how cultural representations addressed the issue but accommodated and rearticulated a racial hierarchy that continued favoring whiteness and subordinating blackness.

Moreover, throughout the last decade of the twentieth century, Spanish migratory legislation progressively became more and more restrictive once the nation signed the Schengen Agreement in 1991, which transformed Spain into a “*European* frontier,” to use Henk Driessen words (96). This agreement ended with the provisions awarded to certain migrants by the first immigration law of Spain issued in 1985 during the democratic era (*The Necropolitical* 8); the law facilitated the entrance of migrants into the country, giving “preferential treatment” to those individuals with “historical connections to Spain (via colonization or exile),” although, oddly enough, the law excluded Moroccan migrants from these provisions (*The Necropolitical* 8-9). The Schengen Agreement marked white European countries closing their doors to migrants from the global South or any other non-white region; and Spain, to assure its assimilation to the West, followed through with this plan by securing its borders and tightening its immigration legislation. Spanish politicians progressively enforced more conservative policies and secured the border more aggressively, but the migratory flow continued until 2008, when the financial crisis hit Spain. After that, migrations continuously decreased until 2016, once the Spanish economy slowly started to recover (*The Necropolitical* 12). Given the influx of African migrants into Spain, their impact and presence in the social, cultural, and political spheres, the 1990s constitute the decade in which Spaniards were forced to face and negotiate, more or less successfully, the issue of race.

Following the integration of blackness in the public sphere during the 1990s, a generation of black activists and writers sought to denounce and dismantle Spanish racist social practices. One example of these is Remei Sipi Mayo, a cultural activist, editor, and founder of Ediciones Mey in Barcelona; another remarkable example is Francisco Zamora Lobo, whose *Cómo ser negro y no morir en Aravaca* (1994) is arguably the most relevant literary piece of this period.⁶¹ Yet, it was not until well into the twenty-first century that the notion of race and racism gained a certain degree of visibility in cultural spaces, which finally gave room to racialized authors, artists, and creators. The appearance of new media outlets, such as podcasts, or social media networks, together with traditional ones, as television, literature, and journalism, contributed to this renaissance of cultural representations that denounce Spanish racial constructs and practices and progressively incite social change. The podcast *No hay negros en el Tibet*, the influencer Afropoderosa, or the digital news outlet *Afrofeminas* are examples of these new forms of visibility; and the emergence of racialized authors such as Desirée Bela-Lobedde, Quan Zhou, Rocío Quillahuaman, Moha Gerehou, as well as the incorporation of comedians such as Lamine Thior into the prime-time progressive tv-show *El intermedio*, prove race has arrived at the public sphere to stay. In fact, the primary texts of this chapter are two glaring examples of this “racial renaissance,” or to put it in Foucault’s words, they are an integral part of the current “discursive formation” about race in Spanish cultural production (41-42).

Like the primary texts of the previous chapter, Mbomio’s novel and Seresesky’s film are two cultural products that spurred from this current discursive formation about race in Spain; but, instead of focusing on the authors’ loci of enunciation, this chapter is interested in describing the

⁶¹ The recent publication *Afrofeminismo. 50 años de lucha y activismo de mujeres negras en España (1968-2018)* (2021) by Abuy Nfubea is a thorough study of these authors and activists that preceded Mbomio’s generation.

texts' representation of blackness to unveil their underlying ideological stance. As readers will discover, on the surface both the novel and the film appear to share a common anti-racist message but convey completely different depictions of blackness. More specifically, the following pages present two opposing case studies that show how language contributes to the construction of discourse, providing cultural products with the ability to subvert, uphold, or transform racial subordination. On the one hand, the following literary analysis demonstrates that *Hija del camino* denounces racial constructs and racist social practices in Spain but creates a notion of identity that appeals (in different ways) to racialized and non-racialized readership alike. On the other hand, the section on *Lo nunca visto* shows that the film offers a more formulaic representation of race that reproduces and accommodates racial stereotypes to the present time. In short, the analyses in this chapter bring to light the relationship between language and discourse of race: literary and cinematic expressions construct and consolidate ideologies. The novel challenges and positively transforms hegemonic racial constructs, and the film adjusts and negatively transforms them to the status quo.

***Hija del camino* (2019) by Lucía Asué Mbomío Rubio: Arousing Racial Consciousness and Futurity**

Hija del camino is the coming-of-age story of Sandra Nnom, who grew up in Alcorcón, Madrid. She is the daughter of Aurora and Antonio, a mixed-race couple, and has a little sister called Sara for whom she feels responsible. The novel is structured in three parts with ten, six, and nine chapters respectively, recounting Sandra's memories through the voice of an omniscient third-person narrator. Each part of the novel is devoted to the different spaces Sandra inhabited from her childhood to her adulthood: her upbringing in Spain, her study abroad at Coimbra, Portugal,

and her twelve-month stay in Equatorial Guinea, where she hoped to discover her origins and find her place in the world. The novel explains Sandra's search for and consolidation of identity by setting two temporal frames, the present and the past, between which the narrator oscillates in each chapter. The present is set in London. Sandra has moved there recently after returning to Spain and quickly fleeing the stagnated Spanish job market in search of a better future. In the timeline set in present time, Sandra goes through her daily life—partying with a friend, going to work with a hangover, and receiving a surprise visit from her mother and sister—while she reflects on the memories of her childhood, adolescence, and early adulthood in Spain, Portugal, and Equatorial Guinea. Within this temporal and geographical plane, the narration jumps to different episodes in her past to illustrate the difficulties Sandra faces in finding her true self because of the omnipresent racial and gendered oppression she endures. The narrative takes readers to Sandra's school and summer camps in Alcorcón, her Erasmus experiences in Coimbra, Portugal, her work in Spain as a journalist and reporter, and her trip to Equatorial Guinea; these flashbacks explain her multiple attempts to find, accept and embrace her multifaceted and fluid hybrid identity.

Hija del camino (2019), which strives to bring to light the struggles and rights of the black community in Spain, is the first fiction novel of Lucía Asué Mbomío Rubio, who is one of the most recognized voices of her generation. Like the protagonist of the novel, she was born in Alcorcón, Madrid, in 1981 to a Spanish-Guinean mixed-race couple (Beltrán 4). Her anti-racist activism is not only visible in her work as a writer and journalist, but also in her presence in digital platforms and social media (Beltrán 4). Her literary pieces draw from her personal experience growing up as a racialized subject in Spain; hence, her publications frequently contain autobiographical elements: for example, her first non-fiction novel, *Las que se atrevieron*

(2017) collects the testimonies and experiences of Spanish women who married Equatorial Guinean men during the second half of the twentieth century (Beltrán 5; Lefèvre 5). In addition to her literary production, Mbomio frequently collaborates with several Spanish media and digital platforms: she worked for TV channels such as TVE, Telemadrid, and Antena 3, regularly writes the column “barrionalismos” for the national newspaper *El País*, and contributes to *Afroféminas*, *Pikara Magazine*, *CTXT* and *Mundo Negro*, all digital magazines and news platforms (Cucarella 15, Navarro 145). In sum, her curriculum and activism are so impressive that she was included in the “2013 Thomson Reuters’ list of the 30 most relevant Afro-Europeans” and has been selected “as one of the most outstanding African women of the year” by *El País*’s blog “África no es un país” (Cucarella 16, Beltrán 4, Navarro 145). Mbomio achieved a remarkable feat with *Hija del camino*. In fact, Netflix contacted her regarding a television adaptation of the novel, but unfortunately the project did not come to fruition due to disagreements about the production values. As the novelist explains, this opportunity:

Era importante porque queríamos contar una historia que no habíamos visto en la tele. Escrita por nosotrxs. Dirigida por nosotrxs. Protagonizada por nosotrxs . . . Nuestra intención era que, tanto delante como detrás de la cámara . . . currara mucha gente racializada. Entendemos que si nos abren una puerta, tenemos que tratar de hacer que entre la mayor cantidad posible de gente y no beneficiarnos únicamente a nivel personal ya que eso no resulta transformador, es solo un parche. Pues bien, finalmente, no saldrá (Post and caption).

Not surprisingly, the writer’s body of work has been studied by some literary critics, who categorize *Hija del camino* as an expression of Afro-Spanish literature and broadly speaking focus on two lines of inquiry: one studies how the character’s coming-of-age story challenges

and resists hegemonic racial discourses and another that explains how the narrative constructs the identity of racialized subjects. One example of the first one is Mar Gallego, who argues that Mbomío's narrative denounces systemic racism in Spanish social practices by presenting the protagonist's body as a "political territory" and thereby a place for resistance (535). Similarly, Betsabé Navarro's analysis asserts that the narrative evidences how structural racism results in existential trauma, and the critic calls for finding more racialized voices that "define their own reality and transform oppressive structures" (156); and Odome Angone points out that the protagonist's hybrid identity casts her out of both the national ideals of Equatorial Guinea and Spain, and her experiences reveal systemic injustices and the incoherence and unsustainability of national ideologies (8).⁶² These findings interpret the text as an expression of political resistance, bringing to the fore the powerful and compelling anti-racist message of *Hija del camino*. The second line of inquiry about Mbomío's literary production explores how the novel contributes to the construction of Afrodiasporic identity, particularly in the context of Spain. As such, Vicent Cucarella Ramon argues that the text employs the racialized diasporic subject as a device to challenge race and racialization and to legitimize the intrinsic hybridity of Afrodiasporic Spanish consciousness (25). Along these lines, M^a Laura Vázquez Freijedo showcases how racial, ethnic, and gender constructs profoundly impact the development and consolidation of the protagonists' identity and how the novel encourages the social vindications of Afro-descent communities in Spain (29). This line of inquiry then demonstrates that *Hija del camino* strengthens the identity

⁶² The dilemmas discussed by these scholars have been the subject of critical inquiries and literary productions, particularly the generation of Afro-Spanish writers that came before the author of *Hija del Camino* and share a similar heritage—being Raquel Ilombe del Pozo Epita one outstanding example. For a more thorough discussion on Afro-Spanish literature, see *Afrofeminismo. 50 años de lucha y activismo de mujeres negras en España (1968-2018)* (2021).

of the Spanish Afro-descent community, functioning as a cultural expression of empowering racialized subjects.

Moreover, the scholarship about the novel describes the text as a pivotal expression of Afro-Spanish literature, a broad term that encompasses Afro-descent Spanish authors from two different generations: the early writers who lived through the colonial enterprise, such as Donato Ndongo-Bidyogo, and the second generation of writers who were born or grew up in Spain as offspring of post-colonial African migrants, such as Mbomio.⁶³ Sébastien Lefèvre explores the connections between these two literary generations by studying the two most acclaimed pieces of these authors: *Hija del camino* and the novel *Las tinieblas de tu memoria negra* (1987) by Donato Ndongo-Bidyogo. The critic argues that the texts bring to the fore the core consequences of coloniality and showcases the transversality between the novels, both of which highlight the negative effects of colonial discourses on African subjects and their descendants. In this sense, this chapter takes as its starting point some of Lefèvre's arguments and also characterizes *Hija del camino* as an expression of Afro-Spanish literature: the novel tackles recurrent and crucial topics of this literary trend, more specifically questions of identity, hegemonic constructions of race, and the damaging heritage of colonial eras.

This said, the analysis presented in this chapter contributes to these academic dialogues in three different ways. First, I take the reading of Sandra's coming of age story as defying hegemonic racial discourses one step further. While the novel's importance as an expression of resistance and denunciation is undeniable, the following analysis points to a broader impact: Mbomio's work awakens privileged readership's self-reflection and has the potential to catalyze transformation in society's racial perceptions. The second line of inquiry that dominates the

⁶³ Gallego, Beltrán, Angone, Cucarella, and Navarro also employ this terminology to categorize Mbomio's novel.

scholarship about *Hija del camino* demonstrates that the protagonists' rite of passage empowers racialized subjects and strengthens their Spanish Afro-descent identity. The following analysis will expand this academic debate by showing how the text, besides consolidating Spanish Afrodiasporic consciousness, fosters the de-construction of white readers. Finally, the scholarship on Mbomío's novel employs the category of Afro-Spanish literature and studies how it meditates the colonial legacies and formulates the Afrodiasporic identity; the present chapter widens this categorization by showing how the narrative incites self-reflection and social change and what positive impact these cultural representations may have on social ideologies and practices.

To achieve these goals, the following close reading is based on two theoretical terms that were coined by José Esteban Muñoz, an influential queer theorist of twenty-first century: disidentification and queer futurity. In his own words, disidentification describes the survival strategies that minoritarian subjects practice when they negotiate with “a phobic majoritarian public sphere that continuously elides or punishes [their] existence” because they do not comply with “the phantasm of normative citizenship” (*Disidentifications* 4). Although Muñoz's argument speaks about the LGBTQI+ community, these survival strategies are applicable to racialized subjects as well, since they also negotiate with a dominantly white society that continues to oppress them. Both minoritarian groups become phobic objects (i.e., they generate feelings of fear and anxiety) in the public sphere and need to simultaneously live in and resist an oppressive hegemonic status quo. For Muñoz, disidentification, “is the third mode of dealing with dominant ideology, one that neither opts to assimilate within such structure nor strictly opposes it; rather, disidentification is a strategy that works on and against dominant ideology” (*Disidentifications* 11). Muñoz breaks up the “for and against” binary of hegemonic ideology—either assimilate or

oppose the dominant system—and presents a third position that enables both influencing and resisting the status quo. Muñoz’s term deals with ideological and political stances especially regarding sexual and gender dissidence and he employs it as an epistemological tool for analyzing a wide range of queer artistic expressions, but the term also becomes useful to interpret *Hija del camino*. Sandra’s memories in London are narrated from this third stance that neither identifies with nor rejects hegemony, denouncing the dominant ideology of race but also contributing to its transformation by impacting privileged readership.

Alongside disidentification, the second term employed in this chapter is “queer futurity,” which illuminates how the text offers a critique of the present but also projects an optimistic and open horizon. Muñoz employs this term to develop the epistemology of queer utopia, which is a mode of critique that “speaks to quotidian gestures as laden with potentiality;” and he argues that queer futurity is “not an end but an opening . . . like the blackness of a black radical tradition, is a relational and collective modality of endurance and support” (*Cruising Utopia* 91). This epistemology, which serves to explain how queer cultural expressions function, consists of finding the awe in the quotidian, the former being a sense of potentiality, of future and hopefulness, and the latter any element of daily life, including cultural representations. Muñoz continues arguing that “a desire of futurity” prompts “a turn to the past for the purpose of critiquing the present,” and adds: “Queer futurity does not underplay desire. In fact, it is all about desire, desire for both larger semiabstractions such as a better world or freedom but also, more immediately, better relations with the social that include better sex and more pleasure” (*Cruising Utopia* 30). For the critic, queer cultural representations express a wish for a social transformation at the micro and macro level, a social change that encompasses a variety of sexualities and gender expressions freed from heteronormative constraints. In short, “queer

futurity” provokes reflection on the past in order to question the present and is about desiring a different world and different social relations; for Muñoz, social ties related to sex and pleasure, but for *Hija del camino*, they are related to race and racial constructs.

A disidentified narrator denounces Spanish racism and national ideal:

The narrative of the novel is constructed from a “disidentified” stance that evidences and denounces the rhizomatic scope of systemic racism, serving as a tool for empowering racialized subjects as much as for awakening the conscious of privileged readers. Edurne Beltrán de Heredia Carmona presents a similar perspective but, instead of disidentification, employs Homi K. Bhabha’s idea of the “third space;” the literary critic interprets the novel as a racial bildungsroman and argues that London becomes this narrative third space that makes Sandra’s rite of passage possible and from which she can come to terms with her hybrid identity (9). Similarly, the following analysis, instead of focusing on the spaces the character inhabits, construes the narrative voice and the discursive strategies of the text through Muñoz’s theoretical epistemology; the close-reading shows that the novel is an expression of “queer futurity” narrated from a disidentified space that the omniscient narrator inhabits. The narrative not only empowers racialized subjects but also plays a crucial role in the deconstruction of privileged readers by reflecting on the past and projecting future possibilities. The omniscient narrator sympathizes with the protagonist’s struggles and exploits the possibilities of literary discourse to illuminate what race is and how it functions but speaks from a disidentified third stance—neither entirely Sandra’s perspective, nor white people’s—that is outside of the racial conflict but makes it obvious for the privileged readership. With this disidentification, the narrative solidifies the anti-racist denunciation of the novel, making it a potential catalyst for social change, just as *La*

piel quemada. To do so, the narrative of *Hija del camino* demonstrates the complex nature of systemic racism, shows the limitations of the idea of the nation, and proposes an alternative understanding of identity, one that offers a dissident yet constructive critique of the present.

The novel employs Sandra's memories to illustrate the racist practices and beliefs of Spanish society, and the third person narrator reinforces this message by iterating and reiterating these racial prejudices clearly so that they are unavoidable for privileged readers. The narrative voice explains the fabrication of the idea of race and its pervasiveness, as well as the damage it causes on racialized and non-racialized subjects; in doing so, the novel explains how racial constructs and beliefs create and consolidate a distorted perception of the self and others. One of the main purposes of *Hija del camino* is to point out that race is "un concepto relativo y contextual," a "categoría líquida" that may also impact white people, like Sandra's mother (*Hija del camino* 139). This idea recalls Stuart Hall's definition of race as a "sliding signifier," i.e. that race is a fabricated concept that is variable, contextual, and relational, since it manifests differently in each situation, and affects all individuals alike but impacts racialized subjects negatively ("Race, the Floating Signifier" 360). *Hija del camino* shows how fluid and contingent the idea of race is, so much so that it ultimately endorses accepting diversity and hybridity as the core pillars of identity. The novel explains that racial constructs are so deeply ingrained in all layers of social life in Spain that they become invisible for non-racialized Spaniards. Sandra's remembrance of her childhood serves to illustrate the racist practices and behaviors in Spanish society, showing that race and racism are constantly present and affect racialized subjects from an early age. While these memories lay bare how racism works in Spain, the third person narrator, speaking from a disidentified position, re-states these racial prejudices clearly so that they are unavoidable for privileged readers. After recounting the first racist aggressions Sandra

suffers at school, the third person narrator affirms that, early in her life, she discovered that “fue un mal necesario que no hizo falta que presentaran. Siempre estuvo ahí, fue un elemento de socialización más” (*Hija del camino* 25). This statement plainly reiterates and explains what Sandra’s memories illustrate, that race and racism are rooted in Spanish social practices. The antiracist message of the novel becomes more obvious for readers, especially those who may not be affected by race in the same way.

Besides explaining that race is a fluid idea ingrained in Spanish society, the narrative exposes the fact that racism is pervasive and omnipresent, since it may manifest in many different ways and in any context of social life. Although Sandra’s everyday experiences and memories already display this idea, the third person narrator reiterates it to dispel any possible doubt. For instance, after the protagonist breaks up with her first boyfriend, the narrative voice notes, “El racismo no era un insulto puntual ni una pelea de chiquillos, se trataba de una guerra incesante y ella se comportaba, desde niña, como una soldado dispuesta a defenderse y a luchar” (*Hija del camino* 97). The third person narrator affirms that racism goes beyond verbal or physical violence and compares the protagonist with a fearless soldier and racism with a never-ending war, suggesting that it is a constant and disruptive element of the daily life of racialized subjects. Moreover, the narrative voice explains that different systems of oppression intersect and worsen social injustices, recalling the idea of intersectionality—a term, coined by Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, that serves to explain how the different systems of oppression (race, gender, class, and so on) intertwine and affect each other mutually (1244). The third person narrator plainly describes this idea when noting, “Una vez más los lazos existentes entre la clase, la raza, y el origen se hacían patentes” (*Hija del camino* 167). Nevertheless, the moment that unequivocally illustrates intersectionality and omnipresence of racism is near the end of the

second part, when Sandra and her sister discuss whether or not they would date white men. “Hay gente que piensa que el racismo no es más que una sarta de complejos que sirven para justificar fracasos, y luego hay personas como Sandra, para quienes es un pulpo con infinidad de tentáculos que condicionan sus relaciones y los abocan a la soledad. A la soledad de la mujer negra” (*Hija del camino* 211). By employing the phrase “Hay gente que,” the narrative voice appeals to those readers who believe that racism is not crucial in society, challenging to their own beliefs; then, the narrative presents the opposite perspective, centering the attention on Sandra and her life experiences, visually explaining her circumstance through the image of the octopus: she is constantly trapped by the color of her skin, by the tentacles of racism that relegate her to perpetual loneliness. Therefore, the narrative provides a precise illustration of what systemic racism is through the development of the plot, and the voice of an omniscient narrator reinforces the ideas invoked by Sandra’s remembrance. The third person narrator’s statements contribute to the communication of the novel’s anti-racist message to non-racialized readership, serving as a pedagogical tool that explains racism, triggers self-reflection, and potentially may incite social change.

The last lesson on systemic racism of *Hija del camino* concerns the consolidation of the self, and it evidences how racial constructions negatively affect racialized and non-racialized subjects because they internalize a distorted perception of themselves and others. Throughout the narration of Sandra’s experiences as an Erasmus student, the narrative voice, focalized on her, elucidates how racial constructs damage the consolidation of the self in racialized subjects, particularly in a white dominant society such as Spain’s. For instance, when comparing Spain and Portugal, the third person narrator notes, “Ser la única negra de su entorno, sin duda, distorsionó su [Sandra’s] forma de verse en el mundo” (*Hija del camino* 159). At Coimbra,

however, Sandra encounters a degree of racial diversity that both shocks her and represents a turning point in her journey. It not only opens a new way of understanding the world, but it also prompts her to confront herself. To make this idea more apparent, the narrative voice takes readers back to the present timeline in London and includes the definition of endoracism in the text: “una forma atroz de autodesprecio derivada de la interiorización de los estereotipos que existen en torno a lo que supone que es ser negro” (*Hija del camino* 170). This definition echoes Sandra’s memories, functioning as a friendly clarification and reinforcement of the moral of the story; more importantly, the omniscient narrator speaks from this third disidentified stance that neither corresponds with the main character, nor opposes her, rather it “works on and against dominant ideology,” recalling Muñoz one more time (*Disidentifications* 11). By adopting this disidentified stance, the narrative voice can authoritatively speak to privileged readers and educate them as to the meaning of endoracism, which is one of the ways race functions within society.

In addition to defining endoracism, the narrative voice in *Hija del camino* questions and debunks racial discourses and stereotypes, displaying how the idea of race harms non-racialized subjects’ perceptions of the Other. The first racial narrative that is demystified in the novel occurs in the first part, while Sandra is in London. There, she ponders her childhood and remembers Sonrisa, her friend from summer camp. The third person narrator notes: “después de haber vivido en Guinea [Sandra] sabe que la fortaleza de aquellos niños no era una cualidad intrínseca: desde la más tierna infancia, sus pies se llenan de callos por la falta de calzado. No eran más fuertes, sino que estaban erosionados y su erosión era vital iba más allá de sus pies” (*Hija del camino* 45). With this categorical statement, the narrative voice reaffirms the anti-racist message of the story, this time debunking the distorted, yet ubiquitous misconception that black

people are inherently stronger in the face of adversity. Indeed, if anything, they appear stronger only because they are hardened by their experiences as the racialized Other. In short, the disidentified narrator plainly challenges non-racialized subjects' distorted perception of African children and blackness.

Hija del camino also addresses how non-racialized subjects interact with blackness through both Sandra's life experiences—more precisely, when she enters the job market and works in media and journalism—and her self-reflection filtered by the third person narrator, who reinforces the critique of the social practices that support racial hierarchies.

Ahora que lo piensa, se horroriza de haber convertido una cultura en un disfraz, un souvenir, una instantánea. Pero por aquel entonces no lo tenía claro, solo lo barruntaba, y a veces ni eso. La certeza de haberse equivocado en el pasado se hace patente en sus mejillas . . . Sandra critica todas las prácticas que ella misma llevó a cabo y que, en su momento, le salieron de una manera natural, casi por la inercia que da ser del hemisferio norte, por muy oscura que sea tu piel (*Hija del camino* 193)

Confirming Sandra's mistakes from the past, the omniscient narrator first sets forth the protagonist's self-assessment, and then synthesizes in three objects (a costume, a souvenir, and a picture) how privileged subjects reduce the culture and existence of racialized subjects. The protagonist's self-reflection is also valid for non-racialized subjects, especially given the final comment referencing the Northern hemisphere. Through the narrative voice, the novel consolidates its denunciation and educates non-racialized readers regarding systemic racism by explaining that race is constructed, pervasive, and damaging. These achievements are powerful in themselves, but *Hija del camino* undertakes yet more.

The novel also constitutes a sharp critique of the idea of the nation that presents as self-centered, restrictive, and racialized, and of Spanish society that remains oblivious to its colonial past and racial diversity. For instance, the text recounts the first time Sandra voices her oppression in the workplace, when she speaks up about racism to counter her colleague's comment suggesting that there is no racial problem in Spain. The protagonist summarizes systemic racism in Spain when she notes: "Tú partes de cero y yo empiezo en negativo, teniendo que demostrar que no soy lo que los demás imaginan" (*Hija del camino* 61). Then, Sandra's vindication continues focusing on Spanish racist society:

La autopercepción de este país es excelente. Nos vemos como un sitio amable, simpático . . . y lo es, pero no solo eso. Cuando algunas personas cuestionamos esa imagen basándonos en nuestras experiencias vitales . . . en lugar de escucharnos, nos regañáis como si fuéramos menores de edad y nuestro criterio fuera nulo. Eso también es racismo. Por supuesto que no todos los días son terribles, no nos insultan ni nos agreden a todas horas, pero sucede. Y con una vez vale, porque duele. Que no nos creáis, también duele (*Hija del camino* 61).

The speech expresses Sandra's feelings of "tristeza, enfado y hartazgo" and exposes the protagonist's frustration with a nation that, instead of listening, patronizes and avoids assessing its self-perception, so that it continues its racist social practices (*Hija del camino* 61). Sandra speaks directly to Spanish non-racialized readers, displaying their racism and calling into question their self-assumed positive perception of themselves. She also points out their lack of critical thinking towards themselves. This criticism is not only stated by the protagonist but also reinforced by the narrative voice.

When recounting Sandra's memories in France as an exchange middle-school student, the third person narrator explains that she envies the patriotism of her French racialized friends because she feels no patriotism toward Spain: "De pequeña no la dejaron formar parte de aquello y después fue ella la que no quiso ni pudo. Para ser, era necesario existir, y ni ella ni las personas no blancas existían en el imaginario español excluyente, que se retrataba y se retrataba a sí mismo solo de una manera: siendo blanco" (*Hija del camino* 119). The narrative voice glaringly states that the Spanish nation, despite its positive self-perception, is profoundly discriminatory because it is rooted in an ideal of whiteness that pervades all layers of society and prevents any assimilation or inclusion of racialized subjects; and the disidentified stance from which the narrator speaks awards these statements a degree of authority that awakens the self-reflection and incites the deconstruction of non-racialized readership. Moreover, the third person narrator challenges Spanish hegemonic national ideal by comparing its social practices with those of Portugal, which appears more diverse and open than Sandra's country of origin. The protagonist is amazed by the racial diversity of the student body in Coimbra and "el conocimiento generalizado de la historia que tenían en la universidad portuguesa," whereas Spanish society was completely oblivious of its colonial past, especially "en lo concerniente a la etapa africana" (*Hija del camino* 164). The narrator denounces Spain's amnesia about its interventions in the African continent, one of the most neglected parts of contemporary history or, in Antonio Feros words, one of the most prominent moments of "selective oblivion" in the constitution of the nation (233). The historian argues that the constitution of the Spanish national ideal "was based, in more or less equal part, on remembrance and forgetting, collective memory and selective oblivion. Remembrance was necessary to appreciate the common achievements and ideologies . . . oblivion to forget or reinterpret everything that had once been divisive" (233). In this case, the

colonial interventions in the African continent are a prominent example of this oblivious perspective of the past, and the narrative points to this amnesia and exposes the ignorance and apathy of Spanish society. Finally, while Sandra and her sister discuss the issue of dating white men, the omniscient narrator explains that the pervasiveness of race is exhausting for racialized subjects like the protagonist, who: “Le da pereza tener que luchar en vertical y en horizontal contra estereotipos que se asocian a su color de piel por esa construcción falsa que se dio a llamar raza, o tener que explicar conceptos, o no encontrar empatía ni en la calle ni en la cama” (*Hija del camino* 211). Racialized subjects cannot exist outside their race because it determines all their spheres, the private and the public, the institutional and the social. Hence, the narrative, together with the constant reinforcements of the narrative voice, lays bare that nation and race go hand-in-hand even in a country that touts its openness and friendliness and considers itself outside of the racial conflict.

Constructing a sense of possibility and future:

Because *Hija del camino* is constructed from this disidentified stance of the narrative voice, the anti-racist criticism crystalizes in the story, but the novel also anticipates a sense of futurity that resists racial hegemony, empowers racialized subjects, and encompasses an alternative understanding of patriotism. As the third person narrator explains, Sandra, after working as a journalist, realized that “la nación de la afrodescendencia no tiene fronteras, y que conserva aspectos de la cultura de ese continente del que sus nativos se fueron o les arrancaron aunque hayan pasado siglos desde que se los llevaron. Viajar le sirvió para sentirse de y en casa en medio planeta” (*Hija del camino* 191). The narrator is projecting an alternative understanding of the nation, one that is free from physical frontiers, as well as colonial and Eurocentric

discourses, and that embraces hybridity as a possible alternative for the future. This Afro-descent nation is related to the African diaspora that resulted from colonization and slave trade and recalls Paul Gilroy's ideas of the "black Atlantic," which refers to "the rhizomorphic, fractal structure of the transcultural, international formation" that came into being with colonization and slave trade (4). The narrative unmistakably evokes this theoretical space and claims it as a category for identity in which the protagonist feels comfortable; but the narrator envisions this unusual conceptualization of patriotic ties without making any concessions, i.e., without idealizing the African continent.

In the third part of the novel, Sandra moves to Equatorial Guinea hoping to discover her origins and to find a national space to which she can relate, based on an idealized image of Africa drawn from her father's memories. But her experiences in the African country are completely opposite to what she imagined: Sandra "pasó de sentirse, sobre todo, negra, que era la parte de su identidad que más problemas le había ocasionado en España, para sentirse, sobre todo, mujer" (*Hija del camino* 304). In Spain, blackness is the defining factor of her existence, but in Equatorial Guinea, it is gender oppression that she experiences on a profound level, and she again loses sight of herself. As the narrator puts it, the protagonist clashes with this phallographic society, and "Su brújula, definitivamente, se había hecho añicos" (*Hija del camino* 304). Neither Spain nor Equatorial Guinea are meant for her: she is unable to fit in and adapt in either national context; as a result, she is one of those "desarraigadas," a subject that resides in an undefined in-between space and attempts to reconcile two incompatible identities (*Hija del camino* 305); or rather, as the third person narrator puts it: Sandra "se conviert[e] en el agua que separa a los dos continentes y, como tal, trat[a] de encajar entre dos orillas cercanas que distan una eternidad" (*Hija del camino* 305). This uprooting leads the protagonist to ponder the

meaning of homeland and belonging, but the only certainty she finds is the recurrent presence of the path, the bittersweet road of life that everyone walks down. While in Equatorial Guinea, Sandra reflects on these issues and asks herself:

si era normal tener que forzar una pertenencia que tal vez no le correspondía. Desconocía cuál era su sitio, su lugar en el mundo, más allá del camino que andaba y desandaba, hasta dejarlo roto y desgastado. Lo transitaba, a veces con fuerza y otras destrozada. Lo atravesaba, a ratos seducida y a ratos rechazada. Y llena de cicatrices, del amor y de la rabia, seguía en busca del espacio en el que sentirse a gusto y propia, no ajena. Le frustraba y le parecía estimulante al mismo tiempo, era causa y consecuencia de ese error eterno (*Hija del camino* 315).

The protagonist wonders whether or not she can feel Guinean at all and what her existence means; but she only visualizes a bittersweet road towards an idealized space in which she can be genuine and comfortable with herself, and these constant wanderings provoke mixed and contradictory feelings in Sandra, whose strength pushes her to continue walking a never-ending road.

However, by the end of the novel, the omniscient narrator explains that, through her reflections, Sandra arrives at an understanding of the purpose of this eternal wandering: “A lo mejor no se trata de moverse . . . sino de reconocerse” (*Hija del camino* 360). This realization not only constitutes Sandra’s recognition of her authentic self but also allows the narrative voice to exalt the figure of the migrant in order to evoke an alternative understanding of identity formation:

los migrantes y sus hijos son eternos errantes, aunque no se muevan. Son el puente que une, la frontera que separa. Son corazón y son *nem*, depende del momento, depende de

los otros, y depende de ellos mismos. Ella ya no es Sandra ni es Nnom, es todo junto, hasta sus nombres gritan su riqueza, su intersección y su diferencia. Narran el sendero que empezó antes de que ella naciera y que está lleno de trechos bellos y vías muertas. No queda otra que seguir la marcha: nació en un camino y continúa en él (*Hija del camino* 360).

In other words, migrating entails embracing a fluid multifaceted identity and inhabiting a limbo that both unites and separates spaces. Identity is more than a name or a nationality, it is a complex and ever-changing combination of factors. Ascribing to one nation or another is contextual, interpersonal, and personal, and the narrative proposes embracing diversity, difference, and contradiction in order to shape identity, separating this existential process from geopolitical constraints and racial and gender constructions (if that is even possible). *Hija del camino* constructs a hybrid identity that encompasses all the inherited categories and labels but is open to accepting and including new definitions that will arise while walking down the road of life. This illustrative metaphor unequivocally resonates with the Afrodiasporic subjects and their decedents, who find explanations and possibilities for their complex identity construction processes; but the idea of the path also speaks to other readerships because it breaks with the monolithic understanding of national identity. Identity markers, such as place of birth, skin color, language, and so on, have little to do with national allegiance; rather, lived experiences, family and friends, and recognition forge national belonging. The figure of the path encompasses these ideas, but the symbol is also evocative for privileged readers, who may recall iconic works in Spanish literature, such as the novel *El camino* (1950) by Miguel Delibes or Antonio Machado's famous verses: "Caminante, son tus huellas/el camino, y nada más;/caminante, no hay camino,/se hace camino al andar" (139). Similarly to the idea of home presented in *La piel quemada*, *Hija*

del camino critiques the systemic racism and national ideal that dominate Spain and foresees an alternative idea of patriotism. This notion of patriotism bestows racialized subjects with a sense of belonging and appeals to non-racialized readers. The novel then, mostly through the disidentified narrative voice, consolidates a sharp anti-racist message that resists hegemonic racial constructs in Spain, and delineates a new possible meaning of the nation: one that is mutable and fluid and can be embraced by both racialized and non-racialized subjects. Therefore, the disidentified narrator serves to criticize systemic racism in Spain and suggest an expression of national affiliation outside of the norm; the narrative creates a sense of future possibility that recalls the idea of “queer futurity,” coined by Muñoz, and comes to fruition in the timeline set in the present time in London (*Cruising Utopia* 91).

As an analytical epistemology, queer futurity describes how cultural representations both critique the present (as the disidentified third person narrator does) and inspire a sense of potentiality through the quotidian: a desire “for both larger semiabstractions such as a better world or freedom but also, more immediately, better relations with the social,” to recall Muñoz’s definition (*Cruising Utopia* 30). The narrative in *Hija del camino* itself brings to mind the idea of queer futurity, after all Sandra’s reflections on her past call into question the present, more precisely Spanish systemic racism, and illuminate alternative ways of understanding oneself and others. Nevertheless, these not-yet-here possibilities prompted by queer futurity are more evident in the scenes set in the narrative present. Firstly, the narration establishes London as a diverse yet imperfect space for self-exploration, displays the character’s processes of self-acceptance, and sketches a fruitful future full of possibilities for the protagonist, becoming a tool for “endurance and support,” to repeat Muñoz’s words (*Cruising Utopia* 91).

Sandra's reflections and soul-searching occur in London, which the narrative voice presents as the perfect space for finding the anonymity and the diversity the protagonist is looking for. She embarks on her existential journey to find herself and chooses London for "su modernidad y diversidad," which she could not find in Spain or Equatorial Guinea (*Hija del camino* 13); the third person narrator, without making concessions, infuses a sense of possibility and futurity in the protagonist's perceptions of the city. London is too crowded, too large, too grey and rainy, but here "La soledad es una imposición de la que no es posible librarse," which is exactly what Sandra needs to find herself (*Hija del camino* 51). The cosmopolitan British capital imposes loneliness and anonymity on its inhabitants: although London is imperfect, it provides the protagonist with the isolation she craves for reflecting on her past and her future. Moreover, the protagonist ponders "el privilegio que supone estar en Londres" because it offers her "muchos más tonos de maquillaje que en España. Es un sitio que, además de tener diversidad, la reconoce" (*Hija del camino* 99). While in Madrid the public sphere is dominated by whiteness and racialized subjects are constantly marginalized and made invisible, London acknowledges its diversity and provides Sandra with spaces where she can recognize herself and grow without feeling like an outcast. This idea is even more explicit when Sandra, her mother and her sister visit Brixton, a neighborhood where populations from many African countries are concentrated; she recalls her first impression of being surrounded by black people and affirms that London "Es un lugar en el que las mayorías y las minorías están invertidas" (*Hija del camino* 151); and the narrator explains this is why she chose London to continue "[el] camino que emprendió hacia sí misma" (*Hija del camino* 152). This inversion of the racial hierarchy makes London a space full of possibility and futurity, where, despite the loneliness and isolation, she can find and express her true self because she does not need to continue struggling against a society that denies

recognizing her. As the third person narrator notes, Sandra dislikes the British weather and her job at the shopping center, but she is fascinated by “el no cuestionamiento de sus aristas identitarias, de lo que la convierte en el prisma complejo que es” (*Hija del camino* 321). Even though London is an imperfect space—after all it is a first-world capitalist epicenter—it allows the protagonist to escape the identitarian traps imposed on her in Spain and Equatorial Guinea and to undertake the existential quest towards self-acceptance.

Throughout the scenes set in London, the narrative progressively develops Sandra’s coming of age story, walking readers through her process of embracing her hybrid and multifaceted identity. The disidentified stance of the omniscient narrator strengthens the appeal of Sandra’s self-acceptance process, making it even more credible and relatable than a first-person narration, which may capture the emotions of racialized readership. The existential journey begins with Sandra waking up from a nightmare and contemplating a “monstruo de dientes pequeños que le muestra sus fauces: su maleta,” an object that at this point is terrifying but ultimately will be embraced by the protagonist (*Hija del camino* 11). Also, in the first part, the narrative voice leaves no doubt that Sandra is in London “por decisión propia” (*Hija del camino* 12); and it progressively suggests that her self-perceptions are changing and becoming more positive and empowering: “[Sandra] vislumbra una pronta reconciliación con su yo actual. Poco a poco va reconociendo todas y cada una de las identidades que creyó enfrentadas y que, sin embargo, conviven en ella cediéndose el turno, conversando serenas o discutiendo acaloradas, pero entrelazadas” (*Hija del camino* 63). The narrative foresees a sense of possibility as Sandra goes through her daily life, ladening the quotidian with feelings of hopefulness, and insinuates Sandra’s passage to self-acceptance and self-recognition of her hybrid identity. In fact, after sharing with readers Sandra’s childhood and existential separation from the idea of the

nation, the narrator ends the first section of the novel clearly hinting at the first step forward in her soul-searching journey: “sabe que se ha hecho fuerte y se ha recolocado” (*Hija del camino* 121). The present timeline in the first part occurs over the course of one day in a diverse, yet anonymous space, describing a protagonist ready to begin her journey to self-acceptance.

In the second part of the book, Sandra’s introspective process continues as she explores memories of her adult life in Portugal and Spain until she decides to move to Equatorial Guinea. When she worked as a journalist in Madrid, people “Automáticamente le ponían la etiqueta de persona de mundo e interesante. Ahora, no. Ahora no es nadie” (*Hija del camino* 134). However, she receives a visit from her mother and sister, which is a ray of light bringing with it a sense of futurity that evolves throughout the whole second part of the novel until she reconsiders hybridity within herself. The protagonist continues struggling to find herself throughout the second part but applying the technique of recalling her lived experiences helps her to construct the “healing narrative” that supports her in her quest for maturity and self-acceptance.⁶⁴ The third person narrator reinforces how Sandra assesses the condition of hybridity: “Quizá debía aceptar que su lugar está en el limbo, en ese camino” (*Hija del camino* 209); the narrative voice concludes the second part with Sandra’s declaration to her mother: “Solo tengo claro que necesitaba caminar un rato en solitario y en esas estoy” (*Hija del camino* 219). In this second part, then, the character evolves from seeing herself as nobody to recognizing her hybridity, embodied in the suitcase and the path, and learns that she must embrace the self-imposed loneliness of her life in London.

⁶⁴ Cucarella convincingly categorizes the novel as a “healing narrative” that rejects the idea of race, favors transnationalism and hybridity, and vindicates the diasporic identity by showing that the geographical movements of the character result from a colonial legacy and shape a feminine transnational and hybrid identarian paradigm (29)

Finally, the third part, which delves into Sandra's remembrance of her experiences in Equatorial Guinea, begins with the narrator explaining that, after the visit from her family, she "Tardará unos días en volver a su estado inicial de retiro voluntario, siempre con la maleta abierta" (*Hija del camino* 247). Throughout this last part, the narrative shows how the protagonist evolves to embrace herself as a hybrid and multifaceted subject, constructing a story of "endurance and support," to repeat Muñoz's words yet again (*Cruising Utopia* 91). The monster that terrified her at the beginning of the story starts taking form: the suitcase is an object that blatantly embodies the figure of the migrant. For the protagonist, it is the Afrodiasporic subject and offspring, but for others, it could be any migratory movement. Then, as mentioned previously, by the end of the section, Sandra embraces her hybrid and fluid identity and continues walking down the road of her life.

Moreover, the narration in *Hija del camino* reinforces Sandra's transformative process and quest for self-acceptance through the events that happen to her in London while she reflects on her past; to different degrees, these events correlate or can be associated with her memories and offer a hope of bountiful future for the protagonist. In the first part, the narrative sets up Sandra's existential uneasiness with herself (her aforementioned fear of the suitcase). She meets with her friend Martha, although their encounter is bittersweet because they both have changed, and there is no trace of what used to unite them: "ambas son conscientes de que puede que jamás vuelvan a verse" (*Hija del camino* 76). Nevertheless, this inability to re-connect with her friend is slightly ameliorated with the visit of her mother and sister in the second part, which infuses a sense of futurity and belonging despite the difficulties of living in London: "Hoy, de nuevo, la oscuridad la espera a la salida del trabajo, pero esta vez va acompañada de quién más quiere, feliz aunque sin gritarlo a los cuatro vientos, visible solo para quienes la conocen desde que

nació” (*Hija del camino* 141). The adversative conjunction “pero” annihilates the darkness and loneliness Sandra feels in London. The visit produces a sense of belonging and affection, helping the protagonist to feel grounded even though she lives far away from her beloved family.

Furthermore, later in the narrative, the three women go to have dinner in a restaurant, and Sandra flirts with Pedro, the waiter with whom she exchanges phone numbers; so, not only does her family’s visit boost Sandra’s emotional state, but also meeting Pedro hints at the sense of future possibilities and changes that London inspires. Finally, in the third part of the novel, the protagonist ties up loose ends left dangling in Equatorial Guinea—namely, her sentimental relationship with Miguel Ángel and the death of her beloved aunt Celia—and meets Luis, who personifies another sense of possibility. Luis is a client of the shoe shop, where the protagonist works, and has a small audiovisual production company. After some small talk with Sandra, he gives her his business card and encourages her to contact him regarding a future professional collaboration. This unexpected yet quotidian event is another boost to Sandra’s sense of futurity in London: she is learning to accept herself and, at the same time, her life is moving forward toward undefined but manifold possibilities.

In sum, *Hija del camino* shares similar traits to what Muñoz described as queer futurity. The present and past temporal frameworks function as a critique of hegemonic racial ideology but inspire a future full of possibilities that addresses not only systemic racism but also more immediate social practices. The novel both empowers racialized subjects and awakens readers’ self-consciousness by constructing the plot through a disidentified third-person narrator that reaffirms the anti-racist message of the text from an external perspective presumably out of the racial conflict. Through the protagonist’s experiences and the narrative voice, the novel explains systemic racism, challenges the narrow national ideal and prompts a more inclusive and hybrid

conceptualization of identity. The text effectively exploits the discursive possibilities of literary writing to consolidate its anti-racist denunciation and becomes an artistic expression with abundant potential for social change. In contrast, the other primary text in this chapter, despite sharing similar intentions with *Hija del camino*, falls into the trap of relying on racial stereotypes for creating comedy and reproducing hegemonic narratives of race, which ultimately dilute its anti-racist message.

***Lo nunca visto* (2019) by Marina Seresesky: Adjusting Racial Stereotypes and Hierarchy**

So far, the present chapter demonstrates that *Hija del camino* conveys a solid denunciation of Spanish racist social practices and an empowering discourse for Spanish racialized subjects, but this second part presents the opposite interpretation. Mbomío's novel contains all the ingredients for challenging hierarchical constructions of race, questioning the national ideal and advocating for an intersectional understanding of identity. In contrast, Marina Seresesky's second feature, *Lo nunca visto* (2019), misses the opportunity to construct a convincing denunciation of Spanish racism despite attempting to do so; rather, the film, as a representation of race, replicates hegemonic discourses of racial difference, reformulates racial stereotypes to the socio-economic circumstances of twentieth-first-century Spain, and instrumentalizes blackness to accommodate migrations into the normative social order. In short, Seresesky's second feature attempts but does not succeed in conveying a challenging and constructive cultural representation of race, at least one that contributes to social change as much as the contemporary "racial renaissance" undergoing in Spain.

Lo nunca visto addresses two current issues in Spain: the depopulation of rural areas and the racist social practices of society. The action is set in Fuentejuela de Arriba, a small fictional

town in rural Spain with fifteen inhabitants that will lose access to the doctor, the ambulance, and the snowplow if the census does not reach eighteen. This is a critical problem for all the villagers, so Teresa, the mayor's wife, frustrated by the situation and by her cheating husband, decides to take charge and figure out a solution during a town hall assembly. At the same time but in a different setting, a group of four black people (three men and one woman) appears in the woods near Fuentejuela, running away from something or someone menacing, even though soon viewers learn they are fleeing the Guardia Civil, a police force prevalent in rural areas of Spain. These four black characters, named Latisha, Shukra, Calulu, and Azquil, are dressed in traditional African costumes, although it is winter and there is snow everywhere. As viewers learn later, they are professional dancers who came to perform in Spain but were scammed and then threatened by the owners of the venue. They eventually stop in Teresa's backyard but are discovered by her and Jaime, who have just come back from the town hall assembly and, frightened by the newcomers, hide inside the house in fear. After watching the four, who are awkwardly standing in the middle backyard, freezing cold, through the window, Teresa approaches them and convinces them to come into the house, instead of calling the police. Then, Teresa, together with Jaime and their friend "El Guiri," hide the black dancers in their houses and convince them to stay and live in Fuentejuela, solving the depopulation problem of the town. However, to do so, first Teresa must convince all their neighbors, who are clearly against it and profoundly racist; she devises a plan to integrate the four migrants: what she calls "Programa Rápido de Integración" (PRI). This improvised and sloppy program gives the four black migrants jobs around the town and includes them in the upcoming dance performance that the villagers are preparing for the Fiestas de Fuentejuela—an event designed to bring attention to the town and entice nearby villagers to come and live there. In the next days, the four migrants and the

villagers learn to overcome their differences, relate to each other affectively, and establish emotional bonds through a series of more or less over the top comic scenes and slapstick gags. As such, “El Guiri” and Latisha fall for each other, Calulu helps Jaime to come out as homosexual, and Teresa leaves her failing marriage and enters in a polyamorous relationship with Azquil. The culmination of the plot is the day of the Fiestas de Fuentejuela, when the four black migrants are revealed during the performance, the police try to arrest them because they are undocumented, but Teresa, Jaime, and the other neighbors stop the detention by proposing marriage to them.

Seresesky, the director, was born in Argentina but has lived in Spain for some decades. After working extensively as an actress in theatrical and audiovisual productions, she began her career as a filmmaker in 2010 with the awarded documentary *Madres 0,15 el minuto* and the short film *El cortejo* (Interview). Before writing and directing *Lo nunca visto*, her short film *La boda* (2012), as well as her first feature-length film *La puerta abierta* (2016) received remarkable institutional recognition in the form of awards and nominations (Interview).⁶⁵ Her filmography displays her predilection for comedy and her interests in creating new stories from a feminist perspective, which is why her films frequently revolve around female experiences, specifically those of middle-aged women, “an almost invisible age in film” (Interview). Regarding *Lo nunca visto*, Seresesky states that the film displays this feminist perspective by inverting the active-passive roles traditionally ascribed to men and women, respectively: as such, the character of Teresa (Carmen Machi) takes on the leading role, and her friend, Jaime (Pepón Nieto), becomes her inactive and submissive companion (Interview). This inversion of roles, as

⁶⁵ In total, *La boda* received eight awards and three nominations in national and international film festivals, including a Goya nomination for Best Short Fiction Film (“The Wedding”); similarly, *La puerta abierta* earned seven awards and several nominations in film festivals in Spain and abroad, including two Goya nominations: Best Supporting Actress and Best Lead actress (“The Open Door”).

well as the filmmaker's preference for traditionally invisibilized female characters are evident in the film, since the leading character is Teresa—who not only becomes the initiator of the whole plot, but also undertakes a journey of self-recognition and transformation by leaving and divorcing her husband to engage in a polyamorous relationship with Azquil. Moreover, the filmmaker created *Lo nunca visto* inspired by a study that argued against the possibility of repopulating rural areas with foreign migrants because it was undesirable for both locals and newcomers (Interview). Seresesky disagreed with the study and noted in an interview: “How is it possible that we can't arrive at an agreement in the face of such necessity? It's necessary for both parties to work to meet halfway . . . the story is about discrimination, racism from both sides and the prejudices that prevent us from opening up to others” (Interview). The intellectual motivations and intentions of the director are unequivocal, but her understanding of racism entails a bidirectional relationship between different races that suggests the possibility of a “reverse” racism oppressing non-racialized subjects. This perspective on race takes into consideration the irretrievable human need to typify difference but overlooks the historically inherited power relationships between racialized and non-racialized subjects. In fact, as this chapter will demonstrate, this narrow perception resonates in the narrative, affecting the whole film, which overwhelmingly fails to create a poignant and empowering representation of racial difference.

Lo nunca visto shares many traits with what has been known as “comedia costumbrista,” a long-lived cinematic genre that has left an indelible mark on Spanish filmmaking—evidenced by the fact that comedy is one of the most distinct genres of Spain.⁶⁶ There is an overwhelming

⁶⁶ Some scholars identify this link between comedies and nation in the Spanish context because the genre is able to encapsulate social realities in a light, entertaining and distanced manner. For instance, Jordi Revert posits that comedy in Spain is probably the “género que con mayor insistencia ha conjugado los avatares culturales de [España]” (16). Steven Marsh also associates comedy with the nation and adds that

consensus on the characteristics that define the “comedia costumbrista.” Scholars locate its origins and evolution from the mid-1950s to the mid-1960s and identify its “filiación neocostumbrista” (Hernández and Pérez 313).⁶⁷ More precisely, critics argue that “comedia costumbrista” resulted from the policies of *desarrollismo*, mentioned in the previous chapter, which is why this genre is sometimes labeled as “comedia desarrollista” (Hernández and Pérez 314, Asión 207). These scholars argue that the genre rearticulates the cinematic models of the previous decades as “una visión rosa, exaltadora del desarrollismo y del modo de vida de las clases favorecidas . . . [que] emita una imagen de España más europea y moderna” (Hernández and Pérez 314).⁶⁸ According to Ana Asión Suñer, these cinematic products were conceived and consolidated by José Luis Dibildos and his production company, Ágata Films, and the genre evolved into what has become known as “cine de Tercera Vía” (207).⁶⁹ Dibildos was the most relevant film producer of “comedias costumbristas,” but he was not content with the stylistic paradigm of 1960s Spanish filmmaking, which was dominated by two stylistic trends (the Nuevo and Viejo Cine Español mentioned in the previous chapter). In a roundtable with José Luís Garci and Roberto Bodegas, two key figures of the “cine de Tercera Vía,” Dibildos puts it succinctly:

“there is no consensus of opinion on whether it is subversive or conservative” in the Spanish context (2); and the scholar points out that comedies in film or other means of expression tend to have closed, happy endings that invoke “a sense of ‘togetherness’ in the very content of the genre” (2).

⁶⁷ Ana Asión Suñer frames the origins of the “comedia costumbrista” in these decades but emphasizes that these cinematic products inherited narrative and stylistic features from the previous generation of Spanish filmmakers (205).

⁶⁸ Films such as *Las chicas de la Cruz Roja* (1958) directed by Rafael J. Salvia, *El día de los enamorados* (1959) by Fernando Palacios, and *Amor bajo cero* (1960), and filmmakers such as Pedro Lazaga, Javier Aguirre, or Fernando Merino are outstanding examples of this optimistic and self-satisfied genre (Hernández y Pérez 314, Asión 207)

⁶⁹ The “cine de Tercera Vía” was inaugurated by *Españolas en París* (1973) produced by Dibildos, who later released *Vida conyugal sana* (1974), *Los nuevos españoles* (1974) y *Tocata y fuga de Lolita* (1974), all of them outstanding examples of this cinematic trend (Asión 207-208).

no nos gusta la mayoría del cine español . . . Estamos en contra de ese cine que halaga los peores gustos del público. Por otra parte, tampoco creemos que el camino sea ese cine simbólico, cerrado, absolutamente intelectual, bueno o malo, que no ‘conecta’, que no logra comunicar con el público español [refiriéndose al Viejo y al Nuevo Cine Español respectivamente] . . . No decimos que [la Tercera Vía] es el cine que hay que hacer en España. Nos limitamos a constatar que ese tipo de cine, con calidad, garra crítica y difusión masiva no existe y debiera existir (Pérez 55).

Determined, Dibildos advocated for the break-up of the stylistic dichotomy between the NCE and VCE, and, manifestly influenced by American screwball comedy, he inaugurated a “third way” of making movies that combined commercial viability with intellectual status. Dibildos was correct since his productions were box offices successes (Asión 207-208); and his commercial enterprise lasted throughout late Francoist era until the consolidation of democracy in the late 1970s (Asión 213). Further, this scholarship identifies three prominent intertextual influences: “la tradición cultural y folklórica española [en particular, el sainete], la comedia italiana de comienzos de los años cincuenta . . . y la asimilación híbrida de los géneros cinematográficos de Hollywood” (Hernández and Pérez 313).⁷⁰ By incorporating these three referents into the script, these comedies presented similar traits: they were composed of a series of sketches that brought dynamism and fluidity to the narrative and an ensemble cast of characters who were stereotyped in traditional figures—such as “el pícaro, el galán enamorado, la señorita moderna y vivaz, el gracioso, el idealista, [or] el maduro romántico”—and defined by

⁷⁰ Asión identifies the same influences and adds that these comedies, despite incorporating a decentralized narrative structure, contained “cierta carga moral” and frequently exploited “la satirización de algunos de los nuevos elementos del paisaje consumista español” (205).

their lines of dialogue (Hernández and Pérez 317; Asión 205).⁷¹ These characteristics became the hallmark of Spanish comedy forever and recurrently are visible in many other historical moments and more contemporary productions, so much so that the primary text of this section reproduces at face value all of them.

Moreover, *Lo nunca visto* has remarkable production values that make it a fairly high-quality cinematic product in the Spanish film industry, which is sustained by institutional funding; still, these features were not enough to convince film critics about the value of the film since it mostly received negative reviews. The movie, co-produced by Tandem Films and Solomon Solon A.I.E., was financed with the support of the ICAA (Instituto de la Cinematografía y de las Artes Audiovisuales), RTVE (Radio Televisión Española), and Netflix, and distributed by Filmax (Premios Goya, “Lo nunca visto”). It was shot in Navarra, Segovia, and Madrid with a crew of well-established professionals—such as the cinematographer Sergi Gallardo and the soundtrack composer Fernando Velázquez—as well as a fairly popular cast, including the renowned Carmen Machi and Pepón Nieto, as main characters, and other emergent actors and actresses such as Jimmy Castro, Jon Kortajarena, Malcom T. Sitté, Ricardo Nkosi, or Montse Pla (Premios Goya, Filmaffinity). In addition, the film had twenty nominations for the 2020 Goya Awards from the Academia de Cine (Spanish Film Academy), including Best Director, Best Film, and Best Original Script, but did not win any of them (Premios Goya, “Lo nunca visto”). The film currently is available on the streaming platform Netflix and grossed \$560,504 dollars worldwide, a modest figure for a production with a budget of 1.8 million euros (“Lo nunca visto,” Rodríguez 70). All in all, these features illustrate that the film was a

⁷¹ Similarly, Patricia Diego and María del Mar Grandío also concur with these discursive features in their study of the “comedia costumbrista” in television productions (107).

commercial enterprise conceived to reach a wide audience and become a blockbuster at the box office or on streaming platforms.

Despite possessing the characteristics necessary to become a commercial success, the reception of *Lo nunca visto* was rather negative, because film critics and reviewers considered it a weak and tawdry comedy. For instance, the review from the mainstream newspaper *El País* criticizes some gaps in the script, such as the incongruent and unjustified initial sequence and the over-the-top scene in which Azquil offers Teresa sexual favors out of gratitude for her help (“Negros en la España vacía”). Along these lines, but in much more negative terms, Miguel Anxo Fernández points out that the film is a “sobredosis de caricatura, inflación de estereotipos y mucha pachanga,” and compares it with a “truño,” “astracanada,” “churro,” and “coña marinera” (26).⁷² The only relatively positive review is from the digital newspaper *El Confidencial*, which praises the fact that the film addresses two contentious topics for Spanish society: depopulation of rural areas and migrations from African countries. Although the reviewer criticizes the manner in which the film reproduces “los peores vicios de la comedia costumbrista,” she affirms that the filmmaker “apunta a lo absurdo del racismo confrontando las tradiciones de unos y de otros, subvirtiendo el punto de vista” (Medina). Despite this last review, *Lo nunca visto* was unable to completely convince critics of its cinematic approach to portraying racial difference, and its critical reception suggests that there are some questionable aspects in its representation of blackness. Interestingly, despite this evidence, academic criticism has not addressed these issues yet—although the Spanish artist Quan Zhou describes the film as sensationalist in her graphic

⁷² The reviewer uses these four terms to denigrate the film, and all of them have very negative connotations. While “coña marinera” is an expression to describe something as laughable and ridiculous, “astracanada” means “Acción o comportamiento públicos disparatados y ridículos” (“Astracanada”); “Turd” is the English translation of “truño” (“Traducción”); and the reviewer employs “churro” referring to its second meaning: “chapuza, trabajo mal hecho” (“Churro”).

novel *Gente de aquí, gente de allí* (2020). The following analysis fills this gap in two different ways: it explains why the film leaves much to be desired as a representational practice depicting race, and it demonstrates how the text whitewashes Spanish racism, reaffirms the racial hierarchy, and morally elevates non-racialized viewers.

In order to illuminate what hinders the film's ability to become a challenging and poignant representation of racial difference, the theoretical considerations posed by Hall in his essay "The Spectacle of the Other" are useful. Hall breaks down the Anglo-Saxon "*regime of representation*" that constructed and perpetuated racial discourses through cultural productions, and he describes this representational system as: "the whole repertoire of imaginery and visual effects through which 'difference' is represented at any one historical moment" (*Representation* 232). The poststructuralist theorist contends that "similar representational practices and figures" for representing Otherness reappear throughout history, consolidating this "*regime of representation*" that perpetuates racial difference and subordination (232). In short, Hall denounces the manner in which Anglo-Saxon cultural productions contribute to the construction of a representational system that sustains and reinforces the racial hierarchy and power inequality between racialized and non-racialized subjects. Although this study focuses on a completely different geographical context, *Lo nunca visto* displays many of the features posed in his analysis. These ideas illuminate the major drawbacks that obscure the anti-racist intentions of the film, explaining why it misses the opportunity to construct an empowering and challenging racial representation such as *Hija del camino* does. Firstly, Seresesky chooses comedy as the genre to tell her presumably anti-racist story, but the mocking is mostly directed toward traditional behaviors of rural Spanish society, rather than to its racist social practices, which are only represented through exaggeration. Secondly, the film constructs a reckless representation of

blackness, not only because it stereotypes racialized characters and traps them in a more sentimental version of the racial hierarchy, but also because it instrumentalizes them to uphold a hegemonic and opportunistic discourse of assimilation. These discursive choices make the film more relatable and appealing to Spanish white viewers: relatable because it presents familiar and self-satisfying scenarios, and appealing because it rearticulates the racial hierarchy, accommodating it to the status quo.

A Familiar Scenario to Comfort Privileged Viewers:

What is the origin of humor? What constitutes a joke, or a pun? According to the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, many theories have tackled these questions throughout history, and some of them are too simplistic and insufficient to explain why humans laugh, for instance the Superiority and the Relief theory (Morreal).⁷³ The most updated and accepted one is the Incongruity theory, which proposes that comedy is triggered when something is incongruent and “our standard mental patterns and normal expectations” are violated (Morreal); but incongruity may generate feelings other than amusement, such as “fear, disgust, or anger,” so comedy “is not just any response to incongruity, but a way of *enjoying* incongruity” (Morreal). Thus, the elements that constitute comedic expressions are mental disassociations and thwarted expectations, as well as a personal disposition to take pleasure in them. With these ingredients, comedy becomes the poignant and subversive genre which can deal with contentious topics and social conflicts from a presumably non-aggressive, yet persuasive perspective. However, *Lo*

⁷³ The Superiority theory began with the Greek philosopher Plato and dominated Western thinking until the eighteenth century, and it contends that laughing expresses feelings of superiority over other people or over a former state of ourselves (Morreal). The Relief theory counters the Superiority theory and understands laughter is a mechanism of the nervous system that functions as “a pressure-relief valve does in a steam boiler” (Morreal). The third one is the Incongruity theory, which eventually surpassed all these philosophical tendencies.

nunca visto fails to achieve that potential, even though the film attempts to include these ingredients: the narrative grounds its comicalness on familiar tropes for Spanish society (those of the “comedia costumbrista”), rather than Spanish racist social practices, so it neither breaks with viewers’ expectations nor predisposes them to reflect on their internalized racism.

The comicality in the film continues a long-lasting stylistic trend in Spanish filmmaking, the aforementioned “comedia costumbrista;” and the script constructs most of the humorous incongruencies around Spanish rural society. Viewers are predisposed to laugh about the traditional and familiar tropes of “comedia costumbrista,” and they ultimately laugh at those rather than their racist practices. *Lo nunca visto* shares many stylistic traits with this particular genre of Spanish filmmaking that marked almost two decades of Francoist dictatorship. One common trait is the ensemble nature of the script, where all characters stand out in some way due to a particular characterization, as if the film were a classic Spanish comedy of Luis García Berlanga but, interestingly, neglecting and instrumentalizing the racialized characters. Although Teresa is the main protagonist, the script presents a wide cast of comic secondary characters that are recurrent in the “comedia costumbrista:” the two “spinsters,” the grouchy old-lady, the rough peasant, and the uncompromising bartender, as well as Teresa, the spiteful middle-age married women, and Jaime, the closeted homosexual, are characters that have appeared frequently throughout the history of Spanish film comedy—characters like these can be found in many comedies such as 1960s comedies starring Paco Martínez Soria, Lina Morgan, or Gracita Morales, or more contemporary films like those of Pedro Almodóvar or Daniel Sánchez Arévalo. The inhabitants of Fuentejuela de Arriba are comical because they are extravagant, old-fashioned, and lunatic, not because they are blatantly racist.

Another common feature between *Lo nunca visto* and the “comedia costumbrista” is the narrative style, one that rarely uses close-ups to deeply capture the actors’ performances and prioritizes wide long-shots to narrate scenes in which many characters intervene at the same time. This narrative style is fairly common in the “comedia costumbrista,” because it allows the camera to show everything that is happening on the scene, and it incites the viewers’ interests in all the characters. This cinematic language is visible in the scenes in which many characters are involved, such as when Shukra, Calulu, and Jaime brawl with the owner and old men at the bar: the action in these scenes is narrated through combinations of medium shots of the main characters and medium long or wide shots of the scenario, privileging the action instead of the emotions. These two aesthetic decisions, an ensemble cast of prototypical characters and an explicative mise-en-scène, demonstrate that *Lo nunca visto* continues the traditional conventions of Spanish comedy on the screen. However, by presenting such a familiar cast and cinematic narrative, the film predisposes the audience to laugh about those clichés and makes viewers overlook the racism showcased by the characters. This hinders the film’s ability to challenge racial constructs and prevents viewers’ self-reflection on their own social practices. In the film, the humorous incongruities necessary for comedy rely on recurrent familiar tropes of the “comedia costumbrista” while the racism displayed by the characters remains (for the most part) unchallenged and becomes contextual. The text’s comicality shifts its attention from race; instead, its mocking is directed to what Spanish viewers easily recognize, making them prone to laugh about the extravagancies and backwardness of rural society, about what is familiar for them, not their racism.

Notwithstanding, the film’s strategy is to disrupt mental patterns and expectations regarding the issue of race by including exaggeratedly racist dialogues, but this narrative

technique is ineffective in denouncing Spanish racist social practices. This overt racism is evident in many dialogues, which display hegemonic perceptions of race, such as associations with savagery and underdevelopment, and frequently acquire sexual overtones, reinforcing a sexualization of blackness that, as readers will discover, is epitomized in the two white protagonists. These exaggerated dialogues reflect classic racist jokes or idioms of the Spanish language, like the indiscriminate use of the word “negro” by the white characters, or when Jaime disagrees with Azquil and sarcastically states that finding a job in the city is as easy as “encontrar un negro en la nieve” (*Lo nunca visto*). This approach highlights racism, but the racist language is never the source of incongruity—the source of comedy—except in the scenes that concern Teresa and Jaime; throughout the whole running time, all the secondary white characters spout racist dialogue without any filters, and the comicality of the film barely addresses this behavior, which contributes to its naturalization, i.e. normalizing this linguistic practice. Hall argues that there is a naturalization process of the “racialized regime of representation” that oppresses on the grounds of race (*Representation* 245); he notes “‘Naturalization’ is therefore a representational strategy designed to fix ‘difference’, and thus secure it forever.” (245). This process, but with a reverse outcome, is precisely the effect of the explicit racist dialogues in *Lo nunca visto*: the hyperbolic depiction of Spanish racist social practices has little effect on viewers; rather, the film participates in naturalizing racist use of language, since there are no signs of change or transformation in any local of Fuentejuela throughout the entire movie. Moreover, despite its purposeful overtness, the racism of the dialogue is diluted through the succession of events that move the story forward, and the racist lines and comments of all the characters (principal and secondary) are inserted into the scenes without much questioning. This artistic decision throws a light on racial language but has little impact on viewers, because it remains unchallenged

through comedy, and appears diluted in the narrative as a “natural” feature of Spanish society, one which migrants need to accept and adjust. With these aesthetic and narrative strategies, *Lo nunca visto* naturalizes the use of racist language and presents a well-known scenario that replicates the features of the “comedia costumbrista.” The film confers a weak commentary on Spanish racist social practices because these are reinforced, rather than challenged, and even when they are challenged by any racialized character, they remain unresolved or simply overlooked. In short, this representation of blackness glosses over the issue of race, so that the film appears more appealing and self-satisfying to wide audiences on streaming platforms, such as Netflix, where *Lo nunca visto* is currently available.

Besides this unsuccessful critique of Spanish racism, the film shares many features with the racialized discourse analyzed in Hall’s study. According to him, racialized discourses are “structured by a set of binary oppositions”—civilization and savagery, culture and nature, black and white races, purity, and hybridity—and apply all these racial ideas differently with respect to racialized and non-racialized subjects (*Representation* 243-244); and, regarding to the culture-nature binary, Hall notes, “Among whites, ‘Culture’ was *opposed to* ‘Nature.’ Amongst blacks, it was assumed, ‘Culture’ *coincided with* ‘Nature,’ for blacks, ‘Culture’ and ‘Nature’ were interchangeable” (244). In other words, racialized discourses are based on a set of polarizing binaries that are applied differently to racialized and non-racialized subjects: for privileged subjects, Culture opposes and subdues Nature, but for racialized subjects, both ideas are intertwined and indistinguishable. Overall, the film reproduces this opposing understanding of Culture and Nature. Teresa and Jaime are able to subdue their “natural” sexual desires towards blackness by formalizing their relationships with Azquil and Calulu, respectively. In contrast, the

four racialized characters show little transformation or evolution except in the final surrender to the hegemonic social order embodied in the image of marriage.

In fact, the film presents an awkward and clichéd exaltation of African dance that becomes the only action black characters can do to resolve the conflict. The performance first appears at the beginning of the film in the initial credits through a heavily edited montage of different unrecognizable body parts that belong to the four black characters, but the audience never sees their faces; these uncontextualized shots, together with the first appearance of the dancers running through the forest in their performance costumes, links the four black migrants with traditional African dancing, recalling the old stereotype that associates blackness with musical rhythm. Then, dancing becomes the element through which the villagers and the four black migrants confront one another, when all of them start rehearsing a Spanish folk dance for the Fiestas de Fuentejuela. The scene aims to illustrate that both folkloric expressions constitute culture, but these two traditions are presented as opposites in two different manners. On the one hand, the interactions between the characters during the rehearsal present Spanish folk dancing as dull and prescriptive and African folk dancing as lively and spontaneous. On the other hand, this scene evokes the idea that dancing for the villagers is a technique to be learned and rehearsed, whereas for the black characters, it is inherently natural, almost unlearned. To put it simply, cultural clash embodied in the dancing establishes an inextricable association between dancing and the four black characters, which reinforces hegemonic notions of racial difference.

Indeed, dancing becomes the only activity they can perform successfully, and the ultimate expression of resistance that triggers both the climax of the third act and the resolution of the film during the final performance at the Fiestas—when, Campillo, Teresa's political rival in the mayoral race, calls the police to arrest the migrants after seeing them dancing on the stage. Black

culture, embodied in the dancing performance, appears as “natural” for these four characters, as an inherent and unchangeable trait they carry within themselves—so much so that it is their final weapon against the enemies of Fuentejuela. Hence, *Lo nunca visto* is a continuation of the racialized discourse illustrated by Hall: Seresesky draws upon an old trope about blackness to create a scene that contrasts Spanish and African folkloric tradition but ultimately fails to challenge or debunk this stereotype; rather, the film presents a mock portrait of African dance that fixes the equivalence between black culture and nature. What is more, this representation of blackness replicates the hegemonic racial discourses that present racialized subjects as fixed and trapped in a monolithic “natural” state, reinforcing, rather than subverting, the “racialized regime of representation,” recalling Hall’s words (*Representation* 245). Once again, *Lo nunca visto* conveys its anti-racist denunciation by replicating hegemonic discourses of race, more specifically by perpetuating the assumed and unbreakable association between culture and nature for black people. In short, the familiar language of the “comedia costumbrista,” the exaggeratedly racist dialogues, and the phony exaltation of African dance mold the film’s anti-racist message; but, these discursive strategies unfortunately dilute it because they ultimately naturalize and accommodate a hegemonic notion of blackness: one that appeases “Spanish whiteness while espousing overt democratic and progressive agendas,” using Fra-Molinero’s words (154).

“Fixing” Blackness and Accommodating the Racial Discourse:

In addition to these accommodations to the status quo, another major shortcoming of *Lo nunca visto* is that: the four racialized characters are subordinated to the development of the white protagonists, and consequently the film presents a careless and shallow depiction of them, to the

extent that the final result is a stereotyped and instrumentalized representation of blackness. In the film, the de-population issue is resolved thanks to the four racialized characters, who agree to stay in Fuentejuela, but the racial conflict remains inappropriately addressed, essentially unresolved and rearticulated as a different, yet hierarchical discourse. *Lo nunca visto* does so in two different representative strategies. On the one hand, it depicts black characters as phobic objects for Fuentejuela's locals but employs them (specially Calulu and Azquil) to trigger change in the two white protagonists, Teresa and Jaime. The latter are the only ones who seem to overcome their racial prejudices, but they do so by instrumentalizing blackness, because it supports their plea in favor of non-normative sexualities: Calulu and Azquil trigger, respectively, the acknowledgement of Jaime's homosexuality and the recognition of Teresa's polygamy. On the other hand, *Lo nunca visto* neglects the construction of the four racialized characters and confines them to the hegemonic racial binary, becoming a stereotyped representation of race. Even though Latisha, Calulu, Azquil and Shukra unsuccessfully contest the racist social practices of Fuentejuela's locals, viewers receive little information about them, so their representation reduces them to simple features, accommodating the racial discourse to the nation's needs and incorporating race into the status quo.

In *Lo nunca visto*, the first representative strategy to address the issue of race is to picture blackness as a phobic element that disrupts the little town in Spain, but it also becomes the core conflict of Teresa and Jaime's dramatic arc, subordinating it to whiteness. It is evident in the first scene of the film that Latisha, Calulu, Shukra, and Azquil are phobic objects, when, during a town hall, all the neighbors, already concerned about the annexation to a neighboring village (Fuentejuela de Abajo), learn that the police are looking for four black people. The reactions and comments of the inhabitants show that blackness unleashes their fear and anxiety; this initial

scene then functions to establish the two main conflicts of the plot: the de-population of rural Spain and the fear of Otherness, with only the incongruities of the former become comedic elements. Furthermore, Teresa's and Jaime's needs, feelings, and motivations are thoroughly described, since they are the two main characters who endure a profound existential transformation throughout the narration. Jaime eventually falls for Calulu and comes out of the closet, while Teresa foregoes a traditional relationship for a non-conventional sentimental one with Azquil. These two racialized characters become the narrative device that moves forward the development of the protagonists; but the result unfortunately appears opportunistic and recalls hegemonic racial narratives that exoticize and sexualize black subjectivities. In short, the two white protagonists' storylines present glaring instrumentalizations of blackness as a narrative device. By representing black characters as objects of desire, the script addresses the issue of race and attempts to debunk racist stereotypes through the two white protagonists, but these dramatic arcs discursively objectivize and sexualize blackness. Moreover, the protagonists' storylines serve to reinforce the aforementioned Hall's Culture-Nature binary but this time for non-black spectators, and to render them morally uplifted through a fetishistic "white-savior complex."

The second representative strategy adopted by *Lo nunca visto* is disregarding the construction of the four black characters and imprisoning them in a hegemonic racial binary that reinscribes hierarchical discourses of race. While the two non-racialized protagonists are completely developed and align with Spanish traditional filmmaking, the four black characters are stereotyped and ultimately trapped in a binary set of expectations that paradoxically they must fulfill in order to be accepted. The script neglects the development of the four black migrants to the extent that they remain unknown to the audience and appear shallow and

unrelatable, or what Hall would call stereotyped. He notes, “Stereotyping reduces people to a few, simple essential characteristics, which are represented as fixed by Nature,” a description that matches the representation of the four racialized characters in the film (*Representation* 257). Viewers learn that the black characters arrive in Spain from some undefined country to perform their sophisticated (and romanticized) traditional dance and perhaps find a job in the city, but they are chased out by authorities after the performance. The audience also knows only one or two more things about each character: Latisha is a journalist, Calulu is a dancer and homosexual, Shukra is the former’s ex-boyfriend and the latter’s brother, and Azquil is a teacher and polygamous. These are all the facts viewers learn about the characters, who barely disclose their motivations for migrating or their future ambitions; hence, they are reduced to a few simplified features, becoming almost irrelevant to the audience—so much so that, by the end of the film, it is difficult to remember their names. The script squanders the opportunity to portray the reasons and motivations for migrating through more empathetic depictions, and instead entirely neglects the development of Calulu, Azquil, Latisha and Shukra.

Still, in defense of *Lo nunca visto*, the film includes direct confrontations to the racist language and behavior of the neighbors, and these contestations are mostly enacted by Latisha and Shukra, who eventually succumb to hegemonic ideologies. From the beginning of the film, Shukra is reluctant to trust and follow through with what Teresa has decided is best for him and his friends, while Latisha reacts and calls out white characters’ racist attitudes and language. She first reacts when Teresa and Jaime, thinking she and the other racialized characters do not speak Spanish, use the derogatory term “conguitos,” and when one neighbor calls her and her friends “salvajes” after being introduced to the whole town during the second assembly (*Lo nunca visto*). The first derogatory term refers to a Spanish brand of chocolate peanuts whose name evokes the

demonym of Congo and whose marketing image is a flagrant racist depiction of blackness;⁷⁴ and the other term synthesizes the colonial Eurocentric racial hierarchy that associates blackness with underdevelopment and barbarity. These associations are also evident in the portrait of Shukra's contestations to racism, in which the character is presented as aggressive, violent, and mischievous. The two black migrants overtly denounce Spanish racial social practices, but they are secondary characters, not the protagonists, so their reactions are less influential on the viewers' emotions and thoughts. Therefore, despite these occasional attempts to contest racism, *Lo nunca visto* fails to effectively address Spanish racist language and social practices by constructing a hyperbolic and stereotyped image of blackness. These representative practices produce a meek antiracist discourse because they buttress a hierarchical notion of race and indulge non-black viewers, whose privilege remains unchallenged or even reinforced.

Besides, the film represents black characters trapped in a hegemonic racial binary—one that paradoxically they must fulfill in order to be assimilated, maintaining an unequal power relationship between racialized and non-racialized subjects. Hall points out that, in a racialized regime of representation:

Black people are still seen as childish, simple and dependent, though capable of, and on their way to (after a paternalist apprenticeship), something more like equality with whites. They were represented as either supplicants for freedom or full of gratitude for being freed—and consequently still shown kneeling to their white benefactors

Representation 249).

⁷⁴ The marketing image of the brand has attracted a remarkable critical attention, being Diana Q. Palardy's journal article "The Evolution of Conguitos: Changing the Face of Race in Spanish Advertising" one example.

Hall states that the racialized regime of representation infantilizes racialized subjectivities, subordinating them to the guardianship of privileged people, and reduces their existence to two possibilities: begging for freedom or expressing gratitude for the intervention of white people. This depiction is also present in Seresesky's film. For example, Calulu and Shukra intervene in some comic scenes in which the actors (Jimmy Castro and Ricardo Nkosi, respectively) emphasize their childishness and simplicity; many scenes depict them in this light, such as when they sleep together for the first time at Jaime's house or when Shukra discovers Calulu putting on make-up in the bathroom. The *mise-en-scène* in these scenes evokes classical slapstick films, like Charles Chaplin's or Buster Keaton's, in which the composition of the shots is frequently wide and frontal, framing both characters symmetrically, to display and emphasize the comicality of their actions. Moreover, the script also represents a dependent and paternalist relationship between black and white characters, establishing a subordination of the former to the latter and reinforcing a racial hierarchy. The four racialized characters have little decision-making and agency in the script; they absolutely depend on the benevolence of Teresa and the other white characters, who must show them how to work and adapt to the customs of Fuentejuela. Teresa frequently employs patronizing comments and attitudes in her descriptions of and behaviors towards the four migrants, such as when she refers to them as "pobrecitos" or adopts motherly attitudes towards them (*Lo nunca visto*); and, once the "Programa Rápido de Integración" begins, Teresa, Jaime and the other villagers show Latisha and Azquil how to pick up home-grown eggs, Calulu how to cook the typical "yemas del huevo" of Fuentejuela, and Shukra how to work as a waiter. What is more, these characters are represented within the hegemonic stereotype, either because they beg for freedom—as they acknowledge to Teresa when they explain the difficulties of living in their country of origin—or because they express their gratitude not only verbally, but

also physically—they agree on staying to repopulate Fuentejuela, and Azquil even offers his body to satisfy Teresa’s sexual desires. With this representation of black characters, *Lo nunca visto* neglects their construction; thereby, the film diminishes the possibilities of empathy from the viewers and consolidates subordinate racial relationships. These interpersonal relationships limit the racialized characters’ agency, patronize their capabilities, and force them to enact two possible, yet submissive representations that they do indeed fulfill. When Latisha, Calulu, Azquil, and Shukra hide in Teresa’s house, they all beg her and Jaime not to call the police and help them escape to the city, pleading for freedom and therefore meeting the one pole of the binary; and when the four black characters decide to stay in town and develop their sentimental relationships with the white characters (Latisha with “el Guiri,” Calulu with Jaime, and Azquil with Teresa), they gratefully pledge alliance in return for being saved—Azquil’s sexual offer to Teresa being the most blatant representation of this pole of the binary. The film’s representation of race adjusts the presumed antiracist discourse to give non-racialized viewers a sense of self-satisfaction and reintegrate an updated “racialized regime of representation” (*Representation* 245). In consequence, *Lo nunca visto*’s representational practices—the distinct imbalance in the construction of black and white characters, and the reductive depiction of racialized subjects—water down the antiracist denunciation and instead reify a hegemonic hierarchical discourse of race.

Lo nunca visto’s representation of blackness is even more harmful because it illustrates how racial discourses are transformed through time to accommodate and reformulate old stereotypes, maintaining the subordination of racialized subjects. The film, in its attempt to debunk racial stereotypes in Spanish society, seeks to demonstrate that the four African migrants are not so different from the local inhabitants of Fuentejuela. To do so, it shows how the black

characters are suspicious of the locals and have narrow perceptions of white people, thus mirroring the villagers. This depiction aspires to place the villagers and the African migrants on the same level, but it is a false equivalency; there is an unequal power relationship between the groups and the former's fear is based on perception and stereotypes and the latter's on actual experience. Such a relationship is evident when Teresa and Jaime hide in the house because they are afraid of the migrants, who are freezing cold in the garden. In this scene, both the protagonists and the four racialized characters mirror each other's perspectives and repeat similar dialogue lines and actions: such as "son peligrosos y feos," or "puede ser una trampa" when both Teresa and Calulu want to approach the reciprocal group (*Lo nunca visto*). The film neither interrogates the distinction between the villagers' and the migrants' source of fear nor account for the preexisting inequality between them. The equivalence between locals and foreigners attempts to debunk the belief that black people are dangerous and savage, but their representation is too simplistic: it assumes there is goodness in everyone (black or white) and overlooks the particular experiences of the characters and the unbalanced power relationships between them.

In addition to presenting a false equivalency, *Lo nunca visto*, as a cultural representation, reformulates a racial stereotype, accommodating blackness and racial relationships into a hegemonic social organization. While typing is necessary to produce meaning, *stereotyping* "reduces, essentializes, naturalizes and fixes 'difference' . . . [and] deploys a strategy of 'splitting' . . . *exclud*[ing] or *expel*[ing] everything which does not fit, which is different" (*Representation* 258). Hall contends that, through this fixing of meaning, stereotyping maintains social and symbolic order, setting up "a symbolic frontier between . . . what does not or is 'Other', between 'insiders' and 'outsiders', Us of Them" (258). Fixating meaning is a way to deal with the anxiety of difference, a way to take control of the social order, but it is based on a

divisive strategy that increases inequality and subordination of the Other. Stereotyping is a strategy to alleviate the anxiety produced by the contingency of meaning, because it contributes to secure the meaning of anything or anyone different from Us, whatever breaks with the established social order. To do so, stereotyping establishes a symbolic separation between the hegemonic Us and the Other and an unbalanced relationship in which power is exerted by the former against the latter. This stereotyping is evident in the aforementioned depiction of African dancing and the construction of black characters; but it is also visible in the overarching antiracist message of the text—which resituates the hegemonic racial hierarchy and instrumentalizes race to conform to the social order, conveying a more sentimentalist stereotype.

Lo nunca visto rearticulates a hierarchical racial discourse that assumes the inherent goodness of black subjectivities and takes advantage of them to anchor the social order of the nation-state. Taking the example of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe, Hall discusses these ideas and states: “[the novel] counters one set of stereotypes (their savagery) by substituting another (their eternal goodness). The extreme racialization of the imagery has been modified; but a sentimental version of the stereotyping remained active in the discourse of anti-slavery” (*Representation* 249-250). Hall argues that the famous nineteenth-century novel counteracts the cliché that associates blackness with lack of civilization and barbarity, but it (perhaps involuntarily) creates the new belief that racialized subjects are inherently good, reformulating a more mawkish stereotype and maintaining the racial hierarchy. Similarly, *Lo nunca visto* replicates this discourse in its representation of the four black migrants, who display their inherent goodness by accepting Teresa’s proposition to repopulate the little town and by patiently tolerating the racist social practices of the villagers. The film ends by transforming and reformulating racial stereotype and conveying a new patronizing (and, as we will see,

instrumentalized) version of the prejudice. It establishes different sentimental relationships between black and white characters, but the former are always dependent on the latter: their decision-making is conspicuously absent in the narrative since they continue following through on Teresa's plan without much disagreement. This dependency is showcased from the beginning, when Teresa feeds them and gives them clothes, and strengthened throughout the narrative, such as the scene in which Jaime and his mother teach Calulu to bake the famous "yemas de huevo" of Fuentejuela. Consequently, despite its anti-racist intentions, the film's representation of racial difference merely transforms and accommodates stereotypes for contemporary times—equating racialized and non-racialized subjects and assuming an innate goodness—but perpetuates the subordination of black characters by depicting them as completely dependent of the locals.

In addition to, and perhaps due to, maintaining this dependency, *Lo nunca visto* not only strengthens the unequal power relationships between racialized and non-racialized subjects (as Hall argues for the Anglo-Saxon context). It also is a blatant opportunistic instrumentalization of blackness. The narrative in the film presents a hegemonic nationalistic discourse that advances assimilation for the sake of survival, not equality, and discursively objectivizes black characters. After all, the only reason why the villagers of Fuentejuela accept the presence of the four black characters is that they need to increase the population; otherwise, they will lose the town's doctor, ambulance, and snowplow. This whole premise of the film is flawed because it devalues the integrationist racial discourse as opportunistic. With this arrangement, the film leaves the hegemonic system intact and naturalizes a racial narrative that continues to take advantage of blackness or, in a broader sense, Otherness, sustain white privilege and benefit those who enjoy it. Something similar occurs with the leitmotif of the film, "integrarse o morir," declared by Teresa during her introduction to the final dance performance that will trigger the resolution of

the story. The slogan presumably applies to both migrants and locals equally—either they learn to live with each other, or they die—but in reality, due to the power inequality between them, this integration is much more complex for those racialized, who have to accept Spanish racist social practices as they are. In the film, Teresa and Jaime are the two characters that, thanks to blackness, evolve and eventually accept themselves and their non-normative sexuality, but none of the Spanish characters shows any change in social practices: those remain unchallenged by the end of the film. This development of the events hinders even further the integrationist message of the film, which is already flawed in its original design.

Besides being opportunistic and bleak, the assimilatory racial discourse prompted by *Lo nunca visto* requires that racialized subjects participate and uphold hegemonic institutions of social organization. This idea resonates with the term “homonormativity,” coined by Lisa Duggan, which, as she notes, “is a politics that does not contest dominant heteronormative assumptions and institutions but upholds and sustains them while promising the possibility of a demobilized gay constituency and a privatized, depoliticized gay culture anchored in domesticity and consumption” (179). This political discourse accommodates homosexuality to the current heteronormative status quo, but the accommodation comes with some requirements: avoiding political dissidence and embracing consumerism and domesticity. Duggan employs homonormativity to challenge the American gay-rights political movement of the late twentieth century, but this idea can be interpreted in terms of race, considering that *Lo nunca visto* naturalizes racial difference within the dominant regime. The final credits scene determines the incorporation of the four black characters to hegemonic forms of social organization with a sequence of snapshots in which each of them marries one local. With this final statement, the racial discourse represented in the film not only leaves the hegemonic system intact and

naturalizes an opportunistic and conservative racial discourse; but it also implies that integration requires participating and upholding established and traditional institutions, and that these social practices would be enough to accommodate racial difference and depoliticize racial injustice.

In fact, what the narrative lays bare is that the four black characters become symbolic objects that endangered territories of the nation and sustain hegemonic institutions, so that the film's criticism does not jeopardize white privilege but rather reproduces hegemonic racial discourses. The unequal power relationship between characters is constructed throughout the narrative, but it is most obvious during the chaotic scene in the third act, when the police are arresting the four migrants, and one villager screams in the middle of the racket: "No se van a llevar a nuestros negros ni hartos de vino" (*Lo nunca visto*). This line of dialogue synthesizes why the film's representation of blackness is highly questionable: its racial discourse narrows black subjects into stereotyped binary, establishes a false equivalence between them and white people, reinforces the dependent relationship, and ultimately instrumentalizes them to sustain the social order. These representational practices diminish the antiracist denunciation of the film to convey a self-satisfying racial discourse that leaves white viewers' perceptions and privilege intact; *Lo nunca visto*, therefore, chooses to accommodate its critique of racism to non-racialized audiences and becomes harmless and irrelevant for inciting social change.

In conclusion, the representation of race and racism is disappointing, because it reinforces, rather than contests, stereotyped notions of race and rearticulates hegemonic racial discourses to present audiences. It does so by presenting a familiar setting for Spanish viewers, one that is embedded in the tradition of the "comedia costumbrista" and mocks traditional behaviors of rural Spanish society. The racist social practices in Spain are present in the film, but they are only represented through exaggeration, a comedic strategy that ultimately weakens the anti-racist

denunciation of the narrative because it appears unrealistic to viewers. Moreover, the film conveys a stereotyped and instrumentalizing representation of blackness; the text grossly neglects the characterization of the four racialized characters, reducing them to “a few, simple essential characteristics,” trapping them in a sentimental and opportunistic reformulation of the hierarchical racial narrative (*Representation* 257). The film constitutes a timid, if not failing, denunciation of racist ideas and practices due to its ineffectual representation of blackness and is ultimately more obliging to hegemonic racial discourses than the other primary text in this chapter. In contrast, *Hija del camino*, taking advantage of the discursive possibilities of written language, comprises a compelling and constructive challenge to Spanish racism. Mbomío’s novel awakens racial consciousness in racialized and non-racialized subjects alike: the protagonist’s story becomes a referent with which racialized subjects identify, and the use of a disidentified omniscient narrator authorizes the denunciation of Spanish racism and incites the deconstruction of non-racialized subjects. The novel epitomizes Muñoz’s category of “queer futurity,” because it reflects on the recent past of Spanish racist social practices, denounces the nation’s unawareness on the issue, and projects alternative, yet possible relationships at the micro and macro levels. In opposition to *Lo nunca visto*, the written text is able to convey a much more solid critique of race and racism in Spain and to project more constructive and non-normative social relationships.

CONCLUSION

RACIALLY HYBRID AND RACIALLY BLIND

This dissertation has examined three different processes of Othering that appeared in Spain and Catalonia over approximately one hundred years, throwing light on the relationships between ideology, culture, and representation. More specifically, the dissertation has analyzed how Spanish and Catalan intellectuals, writers, and filmmakers represent their national identities and their perceptions of the Other in written and audiovisual cultural products. The first three decades of the twentieth century and the modernization of Catalonia during the 1960s, together with the recent heterogenous and globalized societies, are relevant historical moments in the contemporary history of the Spanish nation-state that are particularly productive to investigate the interplay between race, ethnicity, and nation. By focusing on these historical moments, the chapters provide a thorough investigation of distinctive cultural artifacts from each context. Taking a post-structuralist perspective, the analysis of the corpus brings to the fore the constitutive relationship between ideologies and language: even though they are different, the latter elaborates on the former (“The White” 100). This dependent relationship hints at the relevance of representation in the consolidation of ideologies; language constructs perceptions and ideas about the world, and cultural products employ it to represent these perceptions and ideas, so representations, as well as their use of language, are essential to defining and constituting ideologies; that is why, this dissertation focuses on how language (written or audiovisual) is used when representing the Other in order to discern what racial or ethnic ideologies the primary texts convey. The critical readings of the corpus illustrate that cultural

products may function in different directions, either they construct, dismantle, or transform ideologies, specifically, those that created national identities and their notions of the Other.

First, with the purpose of establishing a broad understanding of Spanish and Catalan national cultures, Chapter Two investigates the early twentieth century by interpreting cultural products that either constructed the national ideal or represented the Other. This section of the dissertation employs two political essays written by influential intellectuals of the time: *Meditaciones del Quijote* and *La nacionalitat catalana*, in which Ortega y Gasset and Prat de la Riba respectively set forth discourses of racial hybridity to define their nations. The chapter demonstrates that both writers negotiated their inferiority complexes with respect to Europe and conveyed ideas of hybridity to define themselves. This negotiation is evident in the authors' theorizations of the authentic European race, but the way they employ it in their discourses is different. Both invoke the idea of historical races to define those communities that emerge from the racial and ethnic diversity in the Mediterranean or the Iberian Peninsula, advocating for racial hybridity instead of purity in an attempt to resituate the nation within the Western world. These conceptualizations of race relate to the critical paradigm in Iberian Studies that argues the Iberian Peninsula is both "orientalizing" and "orientalized" at the same time (Venegas 15, Martín-Márquez 9). Racial hybridity is at the core of Ortega's and Prat's ideas of the nation, either as the term that defines the European race for the former, or as the inception of national diversity in the Mediterranean for the latter. The basis of their national identities can also be read as the authors' responses to this twofold Orientalism. However, the close readings of the two political essays show that this conceptualization of race influences the authors' nationalist arguments differently. Ortega's racial narrative is more concerned with reinvigorating Spanish identity and regaining authority among European nations, a reaction to the inferiority complex provoked by the

“orientalization” of the Iberian Peninsula. In contrast, Prat’s nationalist discourse presents a more expansionist vision in which Catalonia has the potential to reconstruct the Iberian Peninsula and its lost imperial prestige. This divergence between the two nationalist discourses results from the different political circumstances of Spain and Catalonia, where only the former enjoyed national sovereignty.

Moreover, Chapter Two investigates the representation of the Other in cultural products from the early twentieth century and interprets two pairs of literary pieces by applying post-colonial theories. On the one hand, the two diaries of the Rif War, *Notas marruecas* and *Quatre gotes*, share three characteristics with the Orientalist author described by Said; the narrative voices in the texts presume that they write from a distant and objective point of view; they assert their racial superiority but present an ambivalent position towards the Orient (more prominently in the case of Giménez); and their narratives are driven by ulterior political motives that concern the Spanish nation-state instead of race. The close readings of these literary pieces evidence that these Spanish and Catalan authors share a stereotyped view of Moroccans and replicate some traits of hegemonic Orientalism. On the other hand, Jaumet and Peter, the protagonists of *El negro que tenía el alma blanca* and *Llibertat!*, replicate at face value Fanon’s psychoanalytical description of the colonized subject, even though both texts share anti-racist intentions. Throughout the narratives, the protagonists embody the white-men’s anxieties, display a presumed dependency complex in relation to the colonizer, and portray a deep longing for whiteness and assimilation that is personified in the love of a white woman. Similar to the case of *Notas marruecas* and *Quatre gotes*, these two literary works demonstrate that Spanish and Catalan national cultures perceived and represented racial difference through hegemonic discourses that privileged whiteness. Therefore, the close readings of these four literary pieces,

together with Ortega's and Prat's theorizations about race, constitute what I call the racial paradox of the Iberian Peninsula: a contradictory double standard ingrained in Spanish and Catalan national cultures that enables them to project hegemonic discourses of race to represent the Other while self-identifying as racially hybrid. This basic contradiction explains, at least in part, why Spain and Catalonia have only recently considered the racial discourses embedded in their national ideals. Until the last decade of the twentieth century, Spanish society was relatively homogenous, but this demographic landscape changed radically in the 1990s and early 2000s, when the nation became one of the largest recipients of migrants entering the European Union. It is only in this period that academic criticisms began to examine national anxieties about race, ethnicity, and migration; but my dissertation demonstrates that these anxieties not only existed throughout the twentieth century but also were (and still are) crucial factors in the construction of national identities.

Additionally, Chapter Two engages with academic discussions that study the intersections between nation and race and inspires future lines of inquiry that would elucidate the characteristics of these two national cultures. First, *Meditaciones del Quijote* and *La nacionalitat catalana* extoll hybridity to define Spanish and Catalan national ideals, similarly to the narratives pointed out by Branche in his transatlantic study of Luso-Hispanic literature. The scholar also identifies that the Other is frequently represented through hyperbole (12-13); and the two pairs of literary texts analyzed in the chapter are formulaic since Insúa's novel and Rusiñol's play, as well as *Notas marruecas* and *Quatre gotes*, reproduce hegemonic discourses of race. Secondly, Ortega's and Prat's political essays apply the idea of hybridity positively to define their national identities, but the four literary works suggest the existence of reductive and negative perceptions of the Other among both. This contrast parallels Goode's findings on the malleability of the idea

of hybridity that can be seen as negative or positive depending on social, political, or economic interests (210-213). Moreover, the analyses of the texts bring to the fore questions that might inspire further research. For instance, the close readings of *Llibertat!* and *El negro que tenía el alma blanca* point to the existence of a reductive understanding of blackness in the early twentieth century, a topic that would be worth investigating further in other means of expression, such as photography, journalism, or illustration. Another line of inquiry that deserves to be explored is studying the vast corpus of cultural products about the Rif War in both Spain and Catalonia to illuminate how the “bidirectional orientalizing” of the peninsula plays out in each national context. Good resources for these lines of investigation include journals such as *Marruecos gráfico* and *España (Tánger)*, writers like José Díaz Fernández, or Domènec Juncadella, or the archival materials from the Centre Excursionista de Catalunya or the Institut d’Estudis Fotogràfics de Catalunya.

Then, Chapter Three, “Josep Maria Forn and Juan Marsé: Two Subject-positions Articulating 1960s Catalan National Identity,” analyzes two paradigmatic cultural artifacts, *Últimas tardes* and *La piel quemada*, and delves into the social conflict of 1960s Catalonia. This peculiar process of Othering rendered the figure of the “xarnego” and resulted from the clash between Catalan society (especially upper-middle classes) and rural Spanish migrants. Employing post-structuralist theories, this section of the dissertation elucidates the relationship between the authors’ loci of enunciation and signifying practices, demonstrating the ability of both texts to influence the Catalan national discourse. Forn and Marsé take full advantage of the connotative and the denotative systems of signification, as well as the five codes that construct meaning, to create compelling narratives of this social conflict. Corresponding with their situations within society, they present opposing perspectives of the demographic change

provoked by the rampant modernization process that incorporated the Francoist dictatorship into Western capitalism. Entrenched in his locus of enunciation, the filmmaker assembles an eloquent cinematic narrative that describes in detail the ideological stance of Catalan nationalism (that of Jordi Pujol) and justifies the migration and the features of the national ideal. In contrast, Marsé represents the conflict from the opposite point of view, painting a gloomy picture of Catalan society that targets the upper-middle classes by emphasizing their social determinism through irony, sarcasm, and tragedy. Still, both texts are paradigmatic examples of the “*discursive formation*” of the “xargeno,” to recall Foucault’s theorizations (41). In *La piel quemada*, Forn delineates the national ideal for Catalan natives like himself, and in *Últimas tardes*, Marsé creates the archetype of migrants that propelled them into the collective imagination. In 1960s Catalonia, both served as “constructors” of the national discourse, exhibiting their influence on ideology.

The post-structuralist analyses presented in Chapter Three provide a detailed description of prominent features of Catalan national culture; and they point out that language is key in defining the nation, that the dominant idea is assimilation, and that this process of Othering was exacerbated by economic, political, and cultural factors. As Marsé and Forn suggest in their narratives, the conflict of the “xarnego” had a clear class component, and the Catalan language stood out as the ethnic marker that defined national alliance, so much so that the filmmaker presented it as a prerequisite to enter the nation. Still, what is interesting about this process of Othering is that it advocated for integration, rather than exclusion, of the Other. The analyses of *La piel quemada* and *Últimas tardes* illustrate that Catalan national culture strove for the incorporation of the migrants into the nation, and eventually society integrated the “xarnego”—as if it were the continuation of the integrationist discourse proposed by Prat in *La nacionalitat*

catalana. Moreover, the chapter hints that this assimilationist narrative was influenced by economic factors. The policies of *desarrollismo* brought a rapid industrialization process of some regions of the Spanish nation-state, a process that would not have been possible without the migrant labor force. Additionally, the close readings of the texts suggest that the discourse of assimilation dominant in Catalan national culture is influenced by political factors: the subordinate position of the Catalan language under the Francoist regime and the fact that the nation never had full sovereignty. These two circumstances facilitated projection of a Catalan nationalist ideal that sought to integrate Spanish southern migrants, or at least an ideal more accepting of difference. Another contingency that fueled this process of Othering is the aforementioned “bi-directional orientalizing” of the Iberian Peninsula, which impacted Catalan national culture and may have exacerbated the exclusionary views of the bourgeoisie toward Southern Spanish migrants. This line of investigation has received little (if any, to my knowledge) critical attention, even though it is applicable not only to the period of the mid-twentieth century, but also to other historical contexts; it is a possible line of future research that will explain further how the double-orientalism of the Iberian Peninsula unfolded in Catalonia.

Finally, Chapter Four, “Contemporary Cultural Representations of Blackness in Spain: *Hija del camino* (2019) and *Lo nunca visto* (2019),” focused on contemporary Spain and, similar to Chapter Three, examined two cultural artifacts that represent racial difference in discursively opposite ways. Lucía Mbomío Rubio’s novel *Hija del camino* presents a challenging, yet empowering and hopeful narrative about racial difference, a narrative that critiques the present by reflecting on the past and envisions a different future, what Muñoz called “queer futurity” (*Cruising Utopia* 30); and the novel is constructed through an omniscient narrative voice that speaks from a disidentified position and “works on and against” the status quo

(*Disidentifications* 11). Mbomio Rudio's narrative serves as a tool to incite not only empowerment for racialized individuals but also self-reflection for a privileged readership, awakening their racial consciousness. In contrast, Marina Sereseky's film *Lo nunca visto* presents a well-intentioned, yet formulaic and opportunistic representation of race: one that portrays racialized subjects ineffectually, reinforces racial stereotypes, and rearticulates hegemonic discourses into the national collective imagination, becoming a disappointing representation of race and racism in contemporary Spain. The cinematic narrative of the film is familiar and unchallenging for non-racialized Spanish audiences; it is constructed following the traditional style of the "comedia costumbrista" and employs exaggeration to denounce the racist social practices of the nation, a comic strategy that dilutes, rather than reinforces, the film's anti-racist intentions. In addition, the representation of blackness in Sereseky's piece disregards the opportunity to create four solid and compelling black characters and instead reduces them to traditional stereotypes about blackness. This simplified depiction fixes the notion of difference and reinforces Hall's "*regime of representation*" in different ways ("The Spectacle" 232). The film's narrative not only sustains racial hierarchies but also conveys a normative message and instrumentalizes race for the sake of the nation's continuity, rearticulating the racial discourse for the present.

Accordingly, the critical analyses in Chapter Four relate to academic discussions of race and nation and evidence that representation is crucial in the consolidation of ideology. The film sustains Branche's argument that, in the Luso-Hispanophone, national discourses define the nation in terms of hybridity but conceptualize hyperbolic representations of the Other; yet the novel's accurate anti-racist critique reverses this paradigm by providing an unprejudiced depiction of blackness (12-13). Along these lines, both cultural artifacts evoke nation-building

narratives of remembrance and oblivion identified by Feros: *Hija del camino* successfully evokes the latter when mentioning Spanish colonial presence in Africa, whereas the film indirectly reproduces the former by replicating the traditional discourse of the white savior (233).

Moreover, the stereotyped representation of blackness in *Lo nunca visto* is a glaring example of Hall's "inferential racism" and contributes to the rearticulation of hegemonic racial discourses ("The Whites" 105). The film attempts to incite self-reflection on Spanish racist social practices but barely affects the consciousness of white spectators and, what is worse, deceitfully exploits blackness to secure the continuity of the nation-state. In contrast, *Hija del camino* dismantles this paradigm of representation and constructs a brand new one that is empowering and inclusive.

Together, all the analyses presented in this dissertation demonstrate that cultural products are active agents in the constitution of ideology. The close readings show that representation is crucial in this process because language, whether written or audiovisual in this case, constructs the realities surrounding us: it is "the principal medium in which we find different ideological discourses elaborated" ("The White" 100). Each of the texts in the corpus displays this idea, sometimes more overtly, like *Lo nunca visto*, *Notas marruecas* or *Quatre gotes*, others more subtly, such as *La piel quemada*, *Llibertat!* or *El negro que tenía el alma blanca*, and others even symbolically, as *Hija del camino*, *Últimas tardes*, *Meditaciones* or *La nacionalitat catalana*. All these primary texts construct racial ideologies by representing race, becoming ideological apparatuses, but not all of them operate in the same way or convey the same ideas: some replicate, rearticulate, or sustain hegemonic racial discourses, ascribing to Althusser's theorization, but others function reversely, debunking and subverting ideologies, and creating new understandings of Otherness (1341). In short, the dissertation demonstrates that, throughout the twentieth century, notions of racial and ethnic difference actively participate in the

constitution of Spanish and Catalan national identities, suggesting that these notions are essential to completely understand nationalist discourses.

All in all, the dissertation has demonstrated that hierarchical perceptions of race and ethnicity have been present in Spanish and Catalan cultures throughout the century, even though both national ideals are based on a hybrid identity. It also has revealed that the contradictory identity of two national cultures in the Iberian Peninsula is influenced by its symbolic subordinate position within the context of Europe, i.e. the “bidirectional orientalization” identified by Venegas and Martin-Márquez. What is more, this paradox of national discourses in Spain and Catalonia promotes the racial blindness of these national ideologies, because their racial hybridity becomes the “perfect excuse” to reaffirm a colorblind society and ignore completely the issue of race: both national cultures are simultaneously racially hybrid and racially blind.

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