The Transatlantic Hispanic Baroque

Complex Identities in the Atlantic World

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Rethinking Identity: Crisis of Rule and Reconstruction of Identity in the Monarchy of Spain

Pablo Fernández Albolardejo

‘In what way does Spain resemble itself? In no way’ (1669)

Whilst recognising that the pamphlet literature of the ancien régime largely deserves to be called printed poison, it must at least be accepted that the statement above – the epigraph to the document quoted here (Maura y Gamazo 2: 497-8) – addressed one of the key issues concerning the monarchy from the final third of the seventeenth century and for quite some time afterwards. After criticising those who in one way or another had been involved in the monarchy’s government, the pamphlet, in its final conclusion, warned of a crucial change which, initiated earlier, by then was becoming perfectly apparent. The essence of what was being stated was not without significance: Spain had simply ceased to be what it had once been. At the beginning of the reign of Charles II, Spain was experiencing an identity crisis, an upheaval so profound that the party concerned seemed not to recognise its own reflection.²

Within their appropriate context, the aims of such lampooning were perhaps somewhat more limited and the change in identity was invoked in a more instrumental rather than truly analytical, sense. The text was a direct consequence of the plot which between October 1668 and March 1669 had in fact succeeded in stripping the Jesuit Everardo Nithard of his status as saludo (favourite) of the Regent Mariana of Austria, a dismissal that would immediately

¹ Research project HAR-2011 27562-HIST.
² The document to which we refer, entitled “Papel de los similes, hecho para el verdadero conocimiento de los sujetos y divirtimiento de los cortesanos en preguntas y responpestas,” was used recently by Pilo (“Casi todas los hombres” 257–75); the date of the original manuscript is 12 May 1669. The generic characterisation of the pamphlets as printed poison has been taken from Sawyer; it is the usual characterisation seen in the Spanish pamphlet literature of the period.
be followed by his expulsion from the kingdoms of Spain. The noise of the conspiracy scarcely obscured the acknowledgement that something deeper was happening. The crisis formed the backdrop and the stage for a decisive internal political conflict which, ultimately, merely served to ratify the true gravity of the situation. Hence, although the subversive text contained to a sequence of censures predominantly directed against those who had been occupying positions of power in the monarchy, there was, nevertheless, scarcely any criticism of the figures who had pulled the strings of the 1668–1669 conspiracy. In this respect, the authors of the text did not necessarily identify with the members of the conspiracy movement. Far from taking refuge in a partisan position, the writers of the pamphlet were making a criticism in toto of the very period in which they were living. They highlighted a state of collective demoralisation and, more specifically, a pessimistic conviction in relation to the pointlessness of the recent changes at the heart of the Spanish monarchy. There is nothing more tempting for the historian than to turn the pamphlet into one more item of proof of the crisis, a possibility that must nevertheless be handled with a certain amount of care. Accustomed to seeing the reign of Charles II as definitive confirmation of a prolonged decadence, we often forget the reactive changes that came about at that very time, reorientations and responses that did not necessarily bear any relation to the constantly-cited economic recovery or to the reception of the culture of a foreign pre-Enlightenment. There was also a clear desire to redefine Spain’s own identity, to fabricate some assumptions of identity with which to position oneself within a European setting which, rejecting any claim of imperial hegemony, proceeded to be organised according to the grammar of balance. The following pages aim to reconstruct the context in which that attempt to redefine Spain’s identity came to light, and to highlight those features which initially articulated that process of a new construction of meaning (see Martuccelli, Ch. 4: on the European context, see Ideology).

Crisis of Empire

1669 is, to all intents and purposes, a good reference point. That year would bring to a close a decade that had seen crucial changes in the development of the monarchy, including the Peace of the Pyrenees (1659), the death of Philip IV (1665), the political uncertainty brought about by the fragile health of his last son and the establishment of a regency, the rumours that were beginning to circulate surrounding a possible partition of the monarchy, and, finally, the recent independence gained by Portugal (1668). Reading about these events left little room for doubt: the aim of acting as a dynastic imperialist power, to which Philip IV had been committed, attempting to uphold the great “Monarchy of Spain” designed by his grandfather, was now ultimately proving impossible. From abroad, the messages were no less conclusive. The consequences of military defeat could now be seen in the significant field of representation, where a diminished image of the monarchy was beginning to be projected. The Royal House of France emerged as the main instigator of these changes, even though its action seemed to respond to an imperial logic rather than to the assumptions of the balance of powers. Thus Louis XIV expressed in 1662 a not undisguised satisfaction at the way in which the diplomatic incident that had occurred in London in October of the previous year had finally been resolved. Baron de Watteville, the Spanish ambassador, had been reluctant to give right of way to the carriage of the French ambassador on the occasion of welcoming the Swedish ambassador, a decision that immediately led to a dispute between the two parties. The symbolic aspect of the incident was no less significant, as Louis XIV himself would endeavour to point out immediately. The revocation of the ambassador imposed on Philip IV was accompanied in March 1662 by a solemn declaration in the “grand cabinet” of the Louvre, where the Rey Très Chrétien announced that “le roi Catholique, avait donné ordre a ses ambassadeurs de ceder la préséance aux miens en toutes sortes d’occasions.” At the hand of Le Brun, Versailles would include in its décor strategic references to this new situation, in a repeated theme whose inspiration was no other than to artistically display the “Prééminence de la France reconnue par l’Espagne.” In his Mémoires, Louis XIV would refer to the significance of an event which could be considered as “le plus glorieux” of the monarchy, a tribute, in short, to the monarchy of France which in this way would become “la première de toute la chrétienté” (quoted in Sabatier 309–310; see Álvarez López 131–4, 327–9; Ochoa Brun).

The long debate surrounding this pre-eminence, which had been continuing since the second half of the sixteenth century—and reaching its climax during the 1635–1659 war—thus concluded by proclaiming unilaterally a new hierarchy between the two royal houses. Whilst important, the newly-proclaimed superiority over the Spanish monarchy did not eliminate the imperial effect which would still continue to be projected by the Kingdom of Spain north of the Pyrenees. Not without reason, some authors have mentioned the existence of a “Charles V complex” which seemed to govern the offensive movements of....

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3 Piló’s work (“Casi todos los hombres”) carefully reconstructs the connections and provenance of the key figures involved in the plot, research that has been completed with his recent contribution in collaboration with Jiana Salado.

4 As Ochoa Brun notes, the proclamation intentionally emphasised a loss of pre-eminence decided unilaterally by the French monarch, something which the solution provided for the event itself and the subsequent diplomatic relations do not confirm. For the debate surrounding the pre-eminence, see Iñarriti ch. V and VI, Jover 1635; Fernández Albeldaio, La crisi de la Monarquia 131–46.
Louis XIV during the early stages of his reign, accompanied by a militant anti-Habsburg iconography which would continue up until the death of Charles II (see Zeller 523; Ziegler). All within a political practice which, contradicting the responsibilities corresponding to a so-called imperial power, did not hesitate to subject itself completely to the criteria of the raison d’État, as demonstrated by the resounding absence of the French monarch in coming to the defence of Vienna when it was besieged by the Turks (1683). It was the Emperor himself who, after this victorious defence, would end up capitalising on the event by reaffirming the imperial dignity and, consequently, his own House. Minimising the effects of the constitutional limitations imposed in Westphalia by the members of the Empire, Leopold I came to be seen as a true Carolus rediutus. In the 1687 almanac celebrating the re-conquest of Buda of the previous year, the hand of Leopold I appeared resting on the globe, thus highlighting his imperial status (Haran 338; Monrod 234–42; Ziegler 80).

Underlining this sense of exaltation of imperial power, the Dutch engraver Romeyn de Hooghe composed around that time an imaginary triumphant entry of Leopold I into Brussels with the wish to celebrate the defeat of the Turks in Buda, an engraving in which the Emperor’s triumphant air contrasted in this case with the deferential and supplicant attitude of his nephew Charles II. Independently of a symbolic request for refuge against the offensives being launched by Louis XIV against those territories since the War of Devolution, Hooghe illustrated to what extent the pre-eminence between the two branches of the House had ceased to reside in the Spanish complex, passing into the hands of the cadet branch. This new relationship between the two branches emerged within a context in which large cracks were starting to appear in the inter-dynastic solidarity, and were already showing during the Thirty Years’ War. In 1646, the Count of Peñaranda, ambassador plenipotentiary at the Münster congress, had written to the governor of the Spanish Low Countries, the Marquis of Castel-Rodrigo, making him see that the monarch had to become accustomed to “living by himself”; given that “there is no Empire in Germany, or kinship, or blood, or friendship, or honour, or respect” (quoted in López Cordón; see Fernández Albaldéjo, La crisis de la Monarquía 336–9). Soon afterwards, Philip IV himself was the one who was complaining bitterly to Sor María de Ágreda that the signing of the Peace of Westphalia by the Emperor had been undertaken “leaving me out and with all the enemies in” (146). Making a virtue of necessity, the Spanish monarch wanted to believe that this decision had been imposed by “the rulers of the Empire and their ministers” (146), against the very will of the Emperor. An active tradition of Austro-Hispánism was pressurising this form of solidarity; but the erosion of the amicable relationships between the members of the House was clear. The marriage of one of the daughters of Philip IV to the French monarch and of another to the Emperor reflected the uncertainty surrounding the direction to be followed by the monarchy, aggravated by the concerns – in relation to succession – raised by the birth of Charles II in 1661.

Whilst clouded by uncertainty, the period stretching between the Peace of the Pyrenees and the death of Philip IV was not short of a route map. The death of the valido Luis de Haro in 1661 led to a series of key developments. On the one hand, it resulted in the monarch announcing his decision to assume the responsibilities assigned to him by his position, in line with the actions of Louis XIV (1661) and, subsequently, of Leopold I (1665) (see Hermosa Espeso, “Ministros”; Valladares, “Haro sin Mazarino” 349, 374; on the European dynamics of the time, Bréenger, “La supresión”). As an immediate result of this measure, the figure of the valido lost its visibility and the key role which—in spite of the fall of Olivares—it had been enjoying up until then, in a process that went hand in hand with the restoration of the role of Council of State and of its ministers. But the status of the royal favourite would not disappear. As seen by the actions of the Duke of Medina de las Torres, the post became one of a ministerial nature. Acting from that position, Medina steered the international policy of the monarchy in a different direction from the previous valido. As opposed to Haro’s aim of maintaining the hegemony of the House of Austria at all costs and to fight France, the Portuguese rebellion became Medina’s priority as part of a general approach which included the territorial withdrawal from the European scene. The “dystastic pre-eminence” of Haro’s policy had to be replaced by a pre-eminence of peninsular issues (Valladares, “Méndez de Haro”), a call that ultimately aimed at repositioning the strategic importance of the Spanish territories within the monarchy as a whole and at emphasising the importance of the substratum of Hispanic identity.

Everyone’s eyes were therefore on Portugal, seen from a perspective which, whilst not identical to that of 1580, nevertheless fell within a logic of incorporation. It was not an unreal option. In certain respects, the events of the past twenty years were endorsing it (Valladares, La rebelión; Barreto and

5 Very different from the previous interventions against the Turks (Saint Gotthard, 1664). In relation to the complexity of Louis XIV’s eastern policy, interpreted pragmatically, rather than out of concern for an imperial dream, see Bréenger, “La politique otronane” 87–107.

6 On this subject, warning of the status of the engraver as an unconditional servant of the House of Orange—and consequently of the presence of a Dutch interest in this request for refuge—see Álvarez-Osorio.

7 Visible in the works of Claudio Clemente, El macabrewismo degollado por la christiana sabiduría de España y Austria, 1637; José Pellicer, Fama Austríaca, 1641; Jean Chifflet, Vindiciae hispanicae, 1645; Saavedra Fajardo, Corona gótica, castellana y austriaca, 1646. On Austro-Hispánism, see Díaz, Vida y pensamiento 91–110, and also Martín Polin.

8 On the stances being debated at that time, Trładling, and Hermosa Espeso, Una mirada.

9 Reaffirming this dual status, Hermosa Espeso, “Ministros” 67; “En torno.”
Cardim). From the outset, the rebellion in Portugal had been far from bringing together a compact block of national interests directly opposed to Castilian domination. Aside from and on top of a widespread national feeling, there was a solid network of cross-cutting interests, personified in the alliances existing between noble families either side of the border between the kingdoms, and also in the political posts held by members of this same aristocracy or prominent bureaucrats. Neither was the existence of a feeling of loyalty towards the dynasty established in 1580 insignificant, perceptible in the presence of pockets of loyal subjects to the Habsburgs within the kingdom who intermittently drew attention to themselves (Schab, *Le Portugal; Le sentiment*; Bouza Álvarez, *Portugal* ch. 8 and 10; Soares da Cunha; Terrasa Lozano; De Bernardo Ares).

It can therefore be understood that by 1641—and from within Portugal—proposals had been formulated that aimed at restructuring the cluster that was the Catholic monarchy, including Flanders and the Italian territories among the members of the House and, meanwhile, allowing the three Crowns of Aragon, Castile and Portugal to continue “governing themselves [...] by their laws with equality” (Valladares, *La rebelión 297*), even considering the presence of the monarchs in Lisbon for a period of time. Going one step further, the possibility of quashing the Portuguese rebellion by means of a potential reunification was an option considered by those involved in the conspiracy of the Duke of Hijar (1648), which revealed a glimpse of the existence of a plot to kidnap the daughter of Philip IV in order to wed her to the son of John IV of Portugal, the newly proclaimed king and member of the House of Braganza. One year later, the same idea of forming a “marriage between Portugal and Castile” (Valladares, *La rebelión 297*) would instigate a complex plan led by the Jesuit Antonio Viera, which would take him to Rome, although the Iberian *retauiramento* being pursued would in this case be led by Portugal, with a view to the advent of a “fifth empire” that would take an end once and for all to the destructive power of the House of Austria and the very memory of the German Empire (Valladares, *La rebelión 104–109*; Didier, “Lusitaniae”; Cardim). A strictly Iberian horizon would therefore control the movements of a reconstructed *Spanish* monarchy. In different formats, the idea of a reunion would continue. A few months before the Peace of the Pyrenees, Pedro de Valenzuela was committed to “a united and separate Portugal,” a work in which the political reality of the peninsula was presented as a community of “Provincial nations” based on a common identity (Fernández Albaledejo, *La crisis de la Monarquía 258–9*). New proposals would continue to fuel the debate during the final years of Philip IV, within an unfolding of arguments in which the unionist approaches went hand in hand with a strict political reasoning, and without ruling out matrimonial union as an effective solution (Jover, “Tres actitudes”; Fernández Albaledejo, “Entre la razón católica”).

Whist ignored, the mere presence of these proposals was bound to constitute a call to redirect, from a peninsular perspective, the global policy of the monarchy. This possibility, however, was proving increasingly difficult in view of the sensitive situation that had arisen following the death of Philip IV in September of 1665. The timing was particularly complex. Designed to avoid any possible royal favour, the creation of the *Junta de Regencia* (Regency Council) represented in itself a major factor of instability, given the aversion it created among those who, in addition to seeing the possibility of gaining royal favour being removed, also saw themselves excluded from the new body. Furthermore, the rumors surrounding the fragile health of the heir brought to the fore the question of the partition of the monarchy, an issue which was already being observed with concern in Europe, where France made no attempt to hide its intention to cut off the path to the cadet branch of the House of Austria. Despite what was at stake, relations between the members of the House did not improve. Leopold I was not prepared to overlook the deliberate delays, caused by the court of Madrid, with regard to the betrothal to Margarita Maria of Austria, daughter of Philip IV and Mariana of Austria, and the decisive argument with regard to a possible succession. The marriage, which finally took place by proxy in April 1666, would not improve these relations. The Emperor tried to establish an imperial strategy from Vienna rather than from Madrid. In any event, he did not hide his fascination with the political model of Louis XIV or his relative willingness to form agreements with the latter with regard to a possible partition of the monarchy, something about which there had already been rumors not long before the death of Philip IV (Oliván Santaliestra 282–328; Pilo and Salado 73–8).

The court of Vienna was thus becoming the backdrop for a complicated game of factions where the Emperor was attempting to reach an understanding with the French monarch, in that his key minister (the Count of Auersperg) was leading the pro-Spanish faction of the court itself, in turn closely connected with the pro-imperial faction of Madrid. In the latter seat, the situation was no less complicated. In a text from April 1666, it was acknowledged that the court was divided between a faction of “imperialists” and another of “Spaniards,” and where at the same time the regent was refusing to adhere unconditionally to the guidelines set by her brother, the Emperor. Faithful to the ties of family loyalty but at the same time determined to protect her son and to ensure the continuity of Nithard, Mariana of Austria presided over a Regency Council whose composition and actions reflected those same divisions. In an attempt to procure his own space, Nithard’s actions accentuated these tensions even further. In Vienna, his role was deemed highly disloyal to the interests of the Emperor, as was reiterated in the reports compiled by the imperial ambassador, the Count of Pötting, who in fact liaised openly with the sectors opposed to the Jesuit.

With his wife claiming her hereditary rights over a part of Flanders, Louis XIV started a war of “devolution” in the middle of 1667, which, ultimately, constituted a considered strategic challenge to the power of the House of Austria:
whilst they were the inheritance and property of the Spanish branch, the Low Countries at the same time formed part of the imperial circle of Burgundy. The interests of both parties were therefore affected, but the possibility of an effective and coordinated action seemed highly remote. There was also pressure from the unresolved conflict with Portugal, as demanding in resources as it was scarce in possibilities of a military solution and an acceptable agreement. In May 1667, the imperial ambassador in Madrid, Count of Pottung, had recorded in his diary “the remarkable daring of the French monarch” (308) in the recent invasion, but this observation was not followed by the subsequent declaration of war—on the part of the Emperor—that was expected at the court of Madrid. The news of the signing of a treaty of partition of the monarchy of Spain, carried out in January 1668 between the Emperor and the French monarch, highlighted these internal tensions even more (Bérenger, “An attempted”: Valladart, La rebelión 207–221). Although in the end the treaty dissolved into an ephemeral attempt as approche entrement between its signatories, the mere fact that the Emperor had come round to signing it amounted to—as Louis XIV himself would note in his Mémoires—a wonderful confirmation of the rights of the queen and an express confession of the nullity of the renunciation, all the more important given that it was undertaken by the same party that had intended to maintain it” (quoted in Gómez-Centurión Jiménez 826). The treaty rendered meaningless any possible allusion to “the bonds of blood and unity” or to the “common cause” between the two branches of the House of Austria. In a significant turnaround in its politics, the diplomacy of the monarchy—from the platform of the Burgundy circle—gave value to its status as a member of the Empire, acting as a German power and consequently requesting the help of the other members in order to defend the German liberties against the dominant demands of Louis XIV (Oliván Santslehem ch. 4; Bérenger, Finances 93–5).10

Whilst the partition of the monarchy of Spain agreed between Leopold I and Louis XIV had questioned the internal solidarity of the House, the signing of the Treaty of Lisbon in February 1668—one month after the signing of the treaty of partition and just a few months before the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, which would bring an end to the War of Devolution—in turn raised some equally pressing questions, resulting in this case from the difficult assimilation of peace itself. A concise text of 13 chapters resolved a conflict that had been dragging on for 28 years and in whose first section, “the Catholic King and King of Portugal,” in their name “and in that of their kingdoms,” signed up to this peace. The possibility of an agreement in “from king to king” terms had been rejected in the latter years of the reign of Philip IV, opting instead for a solution under the terms of the truce signed with the Dutch rebels in 1609. The last military defeats on the Portuguese front and the success of the occupation of Louis XIV finally forced independence to be recognised, within a process of negotiation that made even more visible the climate of internal confrontation in which the regency government was developing. Ultimately, the conclusion of peace could be seen as a weakness considering the wider interests of the House, and as giving priority to the Low Countries. Aware of the situation, the regent kept her distance in relation to what could be interpreted as pure adaptation to the interests of Vienna. Flouting a consultative approach, she even attempted an announcement from the Courts of Castile to lend more legitimacy to the signing of the peace with Portugal.

It is therefore understood that Medina de las Torres, defender of a peace agreement strictly in order to preserve the monarchy, had informed the regent—in his vote on the negotiation with Portugal expressed in the State Council on 11 August 1666—that her status as guardian would always leave the door open to future claims, since “the rights of the kingdoms cannot be relinquished without the Courts.” In this respect, the signing of peace could be seen as an act which—legally—did not relinquish the right of “restitutio in integrum” once Charles II came of age (in Cánovas del Castillo 759).11 The political events taking place in Portugal at the same time as the negotiations, meanwhile, provided further grounds, from the other side of the border, for the treaty to be viewed with this connotation of reversibility. The fall on 3 September 1667 of Castel Melhor, the strong suldo of Alfonso VI of Portugal, was followed two months later by the “replacement” of the monarch by his brother Peter, leading to a period of confrontation between parties in relation to the direction to be taken by the Braganza revolution. The fact that Peter himself would accept no title other than Prince Regent added to the uncertainty. Hence the hope maintained for reintegration that he continued to support in the segregated kingdom and which, over a period of time, would nurture a climate of permanent Spanish conspiracies (Barreto and Cardim 183–220; Martín Marcos, “1668”; “Visiones”).

Aside from the impact on the image of the monarchy itself, Portugal’s independence was seen as a distancing of identity. The Duke of Alba brought this to the attention of the regent in April 1666, explaining in his capacity as State advisor that he was obliged to prevent “such an essential and key part as a kingdom within Spain from crumbling away from the Crown.” When all is said and done, the particular difference that may exist between the nouns “Lusitians” and “Castilians” should not obscure the fact that “they are both brought together under the general term of Spanish”; Spain should remain “united as when ruled by the Romans” (in Cánovas del Castillo 499). There were also constitutional reasons. In the memorandum by the jurist García [11] Mariana’s status as a guardian and the fact that ‘the rights of the Kingdoms cannot be relinquished without the Courts’ supported this possibility of restitution.
Alexandre published at the end of 1667 it was insisted upon that, prior to the signing of any peace agreement, there was no avoiding a constitutional debate between the corporate political subjects inhabiting the "Continent of the Spain." Clearly, the visible nostalgia for Spain was not far removed from the factional confrontation existing at court, where Mariana's actions and Nithard's influence seemed to be directly responsible for the loss of Portugal and the far-from-honourable Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. The consequences of this situation were: as of May 1667 Cardinal Moncada informed the Marquis of Grana, "the Regency has been reduced to tyranny; the monarch is Everardo Nithard," a situation whereby, inevitably, "nobility is insulted and determined not to tolerate it." The fact that "the lord Emperor" had "dismissed the servants he had in Spain," as well as compromising the prestige of the House itself, to some extent legitimised the reaction of the key figures in Spain to put an end to this situation (Pilo and Salado '79).

In Causas no causas, the exculpatory manuscript written by Nithard after his fall, the Jesuit continued to note the anti-imperialist climate existing among the "Spanish." This consisted of a series of "very serious grievances" which had been accumulating since Philip the Fair and the Emperor Charles V, continuing up until the Emperor Leopold I, whose understanding with the French king was deemed completely unacceptable. As a consequence of all of this, "Spain" was "highly offended and opposed to that Austrian line" and, no less serious a matter, the Spanish were not prepared to accept the Emperor as a possible successor in the "terrible event" of the death of Charles II. Whilst the rejection of the candidature of Louis XIV was a result of "the natural antipathy" between the two neighbouring nations, in the case of Leopold I it was more a personal disaffection. So much so, that the Spanish had begun to set "[their] sights on the figure of Don John of Austria" (in Pilo and Salado 247–9). The latter's sudden appearance at the forefront of the political scene was nothing new in itself. But the circumstances in which this was occurring were certainly new. He had been removed from his political duties by testamentary decision of his father and had also tried—unsuccessfully—to gain the support of Nithard. Above all, it was the health of his stepbrother and the recent Portuguese regency established by Peter that would give him a decisive added value. In fact, the possibility—following Nithard's dismissal—that the bastard son of Philip IV would end up declaring himself "king or governor" was given serious consideration among government circles in Lisbon, appeared in the décimas circulating around Madrid and was

12 Having to take into account in this respect "the view of all the towns and cities concerned and even if without a vote in the Court, or being called, and not just taking those of Castle, but all the first cities of the other Kingdoms and dominions of the Continent of the Spain" (cit. by Bouza, Papeles 141–2)

13 See the nuances of this process in Carrasco Martínez.

Rethinking Identity

Although imposed by this context, the alliance between the most conspicuous members of the Castilian aristocracy and the natural son of Philip IV was something more than défait, starting in particular with Don John himself. Between the conspiracy against Nithard at the end of 1669 and his appointment as first minister at the beginning of 1677 (preceded shortly before by the fall of Valenzuela), Don John's activities made it clear that the political game was being played by new rules. His successful war against Mariana's two favourites was more one of words than of arms, owing more to the shifting of public opinion than the game of court intrigues; his own support, meanwhile, was to be found less in the area of Madrid than outside the Crown of Castile. The very justification of his movements can neither be presented as a "conspiracy," nor simply likened to a coup d'état. As cleverly pointed out by Héloïse Hermant, Don John introduced a new way of negotiating by influencing the decisions of the monarchical power through advice (issued in pamphlets) and, ultimately, by gaining power through open letters to the Regent. Rather than reflecting "public opinion," his writings attempted to "persuade" by means of a logical polemic. His aim was to "resist without disobeying," by distributing manifestos which, performatively, hastened the outcome (see Hermant, "La publicité": Guerre).

As he himself had demonstrated to the regent in the manifesto of Torrejón, it was a question of restoring Spain's "lost reputation," which inevitably gave his proposals a nacionista, and at the same time redeeming, tone.16 He was acting in

14 In one of the décimas of the time, it was stated "that Don John has no intention/other than to ascend the throne" (in Egidio 187); the printing was ratified in 1670 by the French ambassador (Álvarez López 119).

15 Specifically, with the sister of the Duke of Enghien (1665), a possible successor to the Polish throne, and with the Archduchess Claudia Felicita (1666), which would open the door to the government of Tyrol (Oliván Santalíesla 91–9). In the aforementioned manuscript by Nithard Causas no causas, it is written that "Don John in times past received predictions from various judicial astrologists that Our Lord and King [...] would die at a tender age of very few years and that Don John would ascend the throne [...] and hoped to be pronounced King of the Spain or at least of some other foreign kingdom, such as that of Poland" (127).

16 On the subject of the manifesto, Ruiz Rodríguez (327). As is known, the term nacionista was coined by Feijoo, who used it in an ironic sense to describe those who only admired new developments abroad; it can, however, be understood as a form of "national
the name of all Spaniards. The characterisations of Don John as "our restorer," as the "Phoenix of Spain," corresponded with those of "caudillo" (leader), or "Messiah," with those of someone who, also imagining himself as "Hércules" or "Atlas Políticus," seemed to be the only one capable of supporting the weight of the Spanish monarchy/world. In comparison with the "foreigner" Nithard, Don John exemplified the "son of the family," although the nacionismo with which his figure was adorned was more in response to an orientation imposed by the circumstances of the time than to an attitude originating from earlier times. In any event, the bastard could read and lend political influence to the climate of reaffirmation of identity that was beginning to emerge on the peninsula. It was no coincidence that Nithard's camp criticised the constant readiness of Don John to offer himself as "the nation's saviour" or that the signatories of the manifesto against Valenzuela in December 1676 considered the followers of the new valido to be "sworn enemies of the king and the nation" (Ruiz Rodríguez 414). The allusions to the nation were far from coincidental. Even the treaties on the prince's education that were being printed at that time were already full of it. The Nuestración real (1671) with which González de Salcedo aimed to feed the political imagination of Charles II stressed the need for monarchs to be brought up "by teaching them to love their Land or Nation" (González de Salcedo 58–59); a recommendation that was reiterated in the Reynados de menor edad y de grandes Reyes, by Ramos del Manzano (1672), thus elaborating on the need to resort to the exempla of history itself. The nutriment in question had to be obtained by attending to "the native aspect of the natural land, the virtue and nature of Spain," far from any imitation of "foreign and strange documents" (quoted in Fernández Albalaidejo, La crisis de la Monarquía 418–20).

Clearly, the historiography was not far removed from this growing patriotic indigenism either. Dedicated to the "Tutrix of Charles the Desirèd," the Corona Real de España por España (1668), by the Benedictine friar Gregorio de Argaz, strived to leave a record of the signs pertaining to identity, to make the regent see the importance of the three Spanish crowns (one made from the gold of Castile and Asturias, another from the silver of the Pyrenees and Andalusia, and a third from the iron of Cantabria) of which she was the custodian and which by no means would compare unfavourably with those which had been adorning the holder of the Empire (Argaz 90–91; on the imperial coronation, see Cavina). It was worth highlighting above all the last of these crowns of Spain, given that the one flaunted by the Romans and Carthaginians "did not pertain passion," of a love for oneself, completely different from the sacrificial demands and the driving role of history that nineteenth-century nationalism assigned to the nation.

17 Such as that incorporated by the engraver Pedro de Valenzuela in the second edition of De lege politica, by Pedro González de Salcedo (1678).

18 On the importance of this turnaround, see Fernández Albalaidejo, "Lecciones de Roma."

19 From the same "argument" in the book: "understanding metaphysics of state is not demonstrative, but conjectural. A design of what it must be created, for what it will be or can be" (n.p); see Blüher and the excellent work by Robbins (ch. 2).
could be considered in a different way and, in this respect, Seneca’s work could be considered as a monument to an early “National politics” (Baños de Velasco n.p.). The vicissitudes of the philosopher were highly illustrative when it came to putting together a description of Spain which exalted its “Standing, Religion, Fertility and Nobility,” along a path marked by the tracks and deeds of “the invincible Cantabrians” (8). Cantabria ratified its status as a true dēpōt of Hispanic essences, as endorsed by its inhabitants being direct descendants of Tubal, the coming of St. James and the maintaining of the true religion from the outset; and, no less, the presence of its own dress (completely removed from “the Roman, Goth or Arab”) and of a language which, like Basque, demonstrated strict loyalty to those origins. As descendants who were from those “legitimate Spanish,” Pelayo and García Jiménez could only have descended from those Cantabrians, far removed from any Gothic origin. Seneca finally established himself as a founding reference when it came to shedding light on the new patriotic memory on which he was obliged to reflect: “May the Spaniard see what sons his Nation had, and may other Kingdoms admire what Nation this is, the origin of such illustrious Spaniards” (1–2).

Both aristocratic and patriotic, Baños de Velasco’s description of Spain did not however add much new in relation to the question of origins, a debate that was being held in the European Republic of Letters due to the appearance of the Geographia Sacra by Samuel Bochart (1646) and which at that time was becoming rather complex. It was the entity of “ancient history,” the very possibility of addressing that time, that was in question. Between the demands of criticism and the abyss that was opening up with Pyrrhonism, some members of the Republic were trying to lend intelligibility to a period in which, furthermore, a bitter debate was brewing in relation to the origins of each of the naciones (see, for example, Borghero ch. 1–3; Grell 983–1003; Pouloin 253–67; Kidd 9–34). The appearance of the Población y lengua primitiva de España (1672), by Joseph de Pellercier, is a much overlooked Hispanic contribution to this debate, which also served to air some internal issues.20 His work proceeded to look into the “primitive history” of Spain, beyond “the brief and simple news left by our forefathers,” going back to a time well before that left by Jiménez de Rada or Lucas de Tuy. The result of their investigations suggested “another Spain, most unlike the one that had been recorded until now,” and from which there was also emerging “a different Empire” inhabited by “different [if not uncertain] inhabitants” (Pellercier, Prefación 3). As opposed to the leading role that had been played by Tubal as the first inhabitant of Spain, Pellercier decidedly advocated in favour of Tarsis—the grandson of Jafet—whom he claimed to be the first king of Spain and to whom he attributed the origin of its monarchy. Pellercier’s operation thus cleansed part of history itself of the disrepute back into which it had been made to fall by the false chronicles. Tarsis gave Spain’s first inhabitant an exotic, oriental provenance which, at the same time, enabled him to get round the ever-delicate problem of establishing where the “nest” of the monarchy, the seat of the first inhabitants, lay (Pellercier, Población 17–25).

Pellercier’s proposal attempted to disregard the debate surrounding “which part of Spain started to become inhabited first” (Moret 78) which had been initiated shortly before by the Jesuit Moret in his Investigaciones históricas, but inevitably the debate continued beyond this initial moment. There was pressure from certain regional political communities which, ignored by the imperial argument, were seeking to secure a space of their own within this process of re-establishment. In this respect, to prove the presence of the first inhabitant in their region was also to open up the possibility of their own legislation and monarchs, of a community of montañeses who could claim the status of original Spaniards, of inhabitants of the region in which Spain began. The debate surrounding the first king of Spain after its less thus went hand in hand with the argument surrounding the essence of the first legislation, of what the nature of the founding charters of the community in question could be. In some way, Pellercier warned that Spain’s crisis of imperial identity had opened the way for a dynamic of redefining identity which, in the face of the emergence of histories of the peninsular naciones, ran the risk of blurring the visibility and virtual unitary entity of Spain to propose a conglomerate of concurrent histories of the nation’s inhabitants, another idea of Spain. Hence, previously, his antiquarian investigation had resorted to recreating a history and to proposing a memory in accordance with its original status of “different empire,” an empire of its own which “with more or less sovereignty” had been maintained in spite of the “invasions” by the Romans, Carthaginians and Goths. And where, furthermore, the Spanish had never lacked “a natural king,” even if he was “stationed in this or that corner of its provinces” (Pellercier, Población 3–5).

The presence and importance of the Goths was indisputable but, in accordance with the origins being considered, it was of interest to blur the Gothic-Scandian connection and to explain their arrival in Hispania in another way. The split from the Gothic crown of Saavedra was crystal clear. Far from originating from “the outer-most parts of the North,” the Goths originated from the Orient, identifying with the Getes, a branch of the Scythians. Arriving finally in Spain, “as far as their colonies remain today,” their identification with the Hispanic
land was formed from the very first moment (Pellicer, Prefación 136). The diversity shown by its members did not prevent a unit from being established to twin them. The detail was not insignificant. The actions of the Genea offered a unifying pan-Hispanism that Pellicer used to explain and define the process of constructing Spain’s identity. The presentation of Pelayo as the “only King of Spain,” the natural successor to the “Ancient Right of its Spanish Monarchs” formed part of this logic. His Anales de la Monarquia de España después de su pérdida recounted and carefully recalled the moment in which “the Christians of Asturias, and of the Pyrenees” proceeded to elect the “King and Leader to govern them.” Not without warning that, previously, the “commissaries” elected for this purpose took care of establishing “sixteen laws” drafted “for election of a King of Spain; not of Aragón, of Navarra, or of Sobra, but universal to all Christians of the League of the Pyrenees, who represented, as free subjects, the Ancient Gothic, and Spanish, Monarchy.” The laws in question were no more than “those known today as Fueros de Sobrarbe,” the true “Fundamental law of the Monarchy of the Spain.” A single king and common legislation supported the new imperial memory. There could be other monarchs and other legislation, but they were understood to be subsequent, like branches torn away from a single trunk, ultimately limbs of a single monarchical “body” whose head was no other than Pelayo (Pellicer, Anales 31–3, 104–106, 157–8; see Botella Ordinas, “La constitución”).

Pellicer died in mid-December 1679, scarcely three months after the death of Don John of Austria. The end of that year offered at the same time the first balance in the complex attempt to redefine identity that had been initiated ten years earlier. Whilst impossible to execute officially, the split from the Austrian origins and the Gothic-Scandinavian races appeared to be firmly established. But there was no such agreement when it came to assuming in shared terms a past which, from its alleged origins, was nevertheless perceived to be its own. In reality, the dispute surrounding the interpretation of the history of Spain was no so much a debate on the actual reality of Spain as one on which—on which community within it—could assume the label of Spanish primogeniture. It is a question that would therefore mark the years leading up to 1700. Unlike the royalist dynamic that had been imposed in France, in Spain the debate was more around the enlargement and affirmation of each of the nationes Hispanicas than around

the expectations of grandeur that the head of the monarchy might be able to offer. It is an approach that largely explains the dynastic options faced and that would manifest themselves from 1700 onwards, and the leading role that the construction of a Spanish national identity would finally assume throughout the eighteenth century (Fernández Albaladejo, “Dinastía”). The unresolved contradictions of this process would, as is known, mark the history of subsequent times and even that of our present day. As if refuting the statement in the 1669 pamphlet—Spain still remained committed to continuing to resemble itself.

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21 Specifically, and in relation to the rejection of the traditional provenance of the Godias, Pellicer writes: “May it be the proposed deceit of the Gothic crown, which brings the Goths, from the outermost parts of the North to Spain, and of greater deceit the Historic Investigations.” On this relocation of European scope, see Johnson.

22 The projection over the present moment was clear: if “whenever one speaks in the actions of the Castilians they are Spain; and those of Aragonese are Spain; and in this consequence those of the Navarrenses, Andalusians, Valencians and Vizcayans, all are of Spanish; and also those to whom the Genea were referring” (Pellicer, Prefación 135).


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