THE PARADOXES OF (ANTI-)IMPERIALISM: REASON, RELIGION, AND RESISTANCE IN THE LATIN AMERICAN '*ARIELISTA*' ESSAY, 1898-1921

by

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Abstract

THE PARADOXES OF (ANTI-)IMPERIALISM: REASON, RELIGION, AND RESISTANCE IN THE LATIN AMERICAN '*ARIELISTA*' ESSAY, 1898-1921

by

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This project analizes the concept of *arielismo* in the Latin American essay during the first two decades of the twentieth century. The principle argument of this study is that *arielismo*, far from a coherent, literary movement, is in reality rife with ambiguities, contradictions, and constant semantic shifts. Therefore, my analysis highlights the origin of the term, its ubiquity, as well as its limitations by focusing on the personal, sociopolitical, historical, and geopolitical contexts that inform the important but imprecise journey of *arielismo* in Latin American cultural history. *Arielismo* appears to be a fluid concept loosely based on José Enrique Rodó's essay, *Ariel* (1900).

Most of this investigation is dedicated to the study of a series of essays and essayists that critics tend to call '*arielistas*', a tendency I interrogate by underscoring the different ways in which the so-called '*arielistas*' from various Latin American countries such as Cuba, Colombia, Peru, Argentina, and Uruguay, subvert or diverge from the fundamental precepts of *Ariel*. Specifically, I study the ways in which a variegated group of Latin American intellectuals, from the right and left, diplomats and anarchists, negotiate the discrepancies between reason and spiritualism, between elitism and democratic participation, between critical autonomy and

religious hegemony, and between idealism and pessimism, in their respective projects, which were written in an time of frequent U.S. interventions in Latin America and the Caribbean.

My readings of *arielismo* reveal that a Latin American anti-imperialist subjectivity, far from uniform, is marked by numerous paradoxes. As I will underscore throughout this investigation, those paradoxes reveal *arielismo* to be a terrain in which complex and contradictory negotiations aimed at assimilating intellectual and personal resistance and emancipation with traditional sociocultural structures. This is a dichotomy that people around the world continue navigating. Therefore, in a broader context this study examines the tensions between reason and religious faith (or between positivism and metaphysics) in various emancipatory projects and, at the same time, between the politics of agency and dependency in globalizing processes during the last century.

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Chapter I

Introduction

What's in a name? In *Naming and Necessity* (1980), American philosopher Saul Kripke elaborates a causal theory of reference that deconstructs the process by which terms are given meaning through the act of naming. Kripke calls the act of naming an "initial baptism" in which a name is assigned to something in order to represent or identify it (96). The relationship between the name used to describe a thing and the thing itself is a causal relationship, that is, one that is created and subsequently reinforced through repetition and acts of appropriation and reinscription. This causal chain of signification, whose implications regarding identity, subjectivity, and interpellation are numerous, suggests that names are not inherently descriptive, but rather are made to signify something or someone. Although Kripke's ideas revolve around the act of naming living beings, I find them useful in approaching the subject of naming literary and cultural movements and manifestations.

Scholars have a tendency to think about and categorize literature according to movements or tendencies and organize literary histories according to them. In Latin American literature, for example, scholars view writers and their work within the contexts of Romanticism, Modernism, the Boom, etc. Despite the inherent reducibility in this practice of naming, which, by the way, is a gesture meant to facilitate frames of reference, the numerous –isms according to which literary texts are situated within the canon imply a sense, no matter how imprecise or inclusive, of coherence. Of course, labels like those just mentioned are imagined to encapsulate a very diverse and disparate array of literary, intellectual, and cultural tendencies, and critical studies highlight, debate, and modify their contours based on evolving criteria. However, there is one

literary and cultural manifestation of the early twentieth century that critics refer to as *arielismo* that has largely evaded that type of scrutiny. As a result, *arielismo* tends to be afforded a degree of symmetry and consistency that, as my readings of that phenomenon indicate, it does not possess.

Throughout much of the twentieth century, Latin Americanist scholars talk about '*Arielismo*' (or 'Arielism') as a movement, situated between, or among, Modernism, Postmodernism, and the Avant-garde (roughly between 1900 and the 1920s). The label takes its name from an essay entitled *Ariel* (1900) written by Uruguayan modernist writer José Enrique Rodó, who started composing the text in the wake of U.S. intervention into what became known as the Spanish-American War (1898) in Cuba, a pivotal moment in the history of inter-American, and indeed global, relations. *Ariel* remains one of the seminal texts of Latin American literature, intellectual history, culture, and politics. It is undeniable that Rodó's message of idealism, cultural identity, spiritualism, and personal renovation resonated with young writers and activists throughout Latin America in the early twentieth century. Many essayists of that time were, and continue to be, labeled '*arielistas*' (or 'Arielists'), including monumental figures like Manuel Ugarte, José Ingenieros, José Vasconcelos, Pedro Henríquez Ureña, as well as lesser-known, but very important writers like Francisco García Calderón, Rufino Blanco Fombona, and Manuel Díaz Rodríguez. During my initial interventions into Latin American intellectual history as a graduate student, I came to think of these and other essayists foremost as '*arielistas*' because, having not read their immense body of work, I relied on what the categorizations outlined in literary histories. I had read *Ariel* several times and knew it well. However, I began to question the stability of the '*arielista*' label when I encountered the essays of an obscure Cuban writer of the 1920s and 30s named Fernando Lles y Berdayes.

Historians and commentators of Cuban literature and intellectual history dedicate relatively little space to Lles. However, some identify Lles as a follower of Rodó and as an '*arielista*'. After reading Lles's essay, *La higuera de Timón* (1921), I was surprised at how starkly antagonistic its vision was to that of Rodó's *Ariel*. While it was clear that the two essays shared formal similarities, Lles's essay seemed to undermine Rodó's idealistic message in very blatant ways. Given this disparity, I pondered how, then, could Lles be an '*arielista*'? I began to question what *arielismo* signified. A necessary step of this inquiry was to read other essayists and texts commonly referred to as '*arielistas*' in order to identify shared characteristics with Rodó's *Ariel*, as well as their differences. Since Lles is a writer with a very marginal relationship with the Latin American literary canon, I chose to analyze the most '*arielista*' essays written by essayists whom critics consistently identify as '*arielistas*', such as Carlos Vaz Ferreira, Carlos Arturo Torres, Manuel Ugarte, and Francisco García Calderón. Therefore, I focus my analysis on the period around 1910, the supposed height of *arielismo*. In this way, what started out as an inquiry into a little-known Cuban writer turned into an analysis of one of the most conspicuous, and, as we will see, imprecise cultural signifiers of the twentieth century in Latin America.

In this dissertation, I analyze the intricate ways in which essayists from Argentina, Colombia, Cuba, Peru, and Uruguay—typically classified as '*arielistas*'—negotiate a complex territory marked by a series of paradoxes associated with U.S. imperialism in Latin America in the early twentieth century. As we will see, these paradoxes include (a) simultaneously endorsing and rejecting democratic reforms based on elitism in post-war Colombia, (b) dismantling an intellectual project based on critical autonomy through a contradictory reinscription of Catholic hegemony as a cultural unifier, (c) undermining cultural sovereignty by

petitioning Western European colonization in Latin America as a way of resisting U.S. imperialism and achieving globality, and (d) appropriating an *arielista* literary form to undermine *arielismo*'s idealistic program. When read against an *arielista* backdrop, those paradoxes suggest that *arielismo* is not a homogenous concept, and essentialist or reductionist ideas of *arielismo* do not reflect the reality of the so-called '*arielistas*' and their texts. Rather, *arielismo* is perhaps best understood as a series of paradoxical engagements and hybridizations of differing perspectives loosely based on Rodó's essay.

In the second chapter, I discuss the historical, philosophical, and cultural contexts of Rodó's *Ariel* (1900), as well as analyze the essay's principal themes in order to transition into a discussion of *arielismo*. I argue that while there is a relative consensus as to the axioms of Rodó's *Ariel*, there is little agreement as to what constitutes *arielismo*, when it occurred, and who were the '*arielistas*'. For that reason, I highlight the disparity between Rodó's professed intentions and messages in *Ariel* and the reception of his essay in the early twentieth century, a time when *Ariel* was particularly influential on a younger generation of essayists and student activists throughout Latin America. I then show the variegated critiques, appropriations, and reworkings of *Ariel* and *arielismo* between the 1920s and the 1970s. I also scrutinize a wide array of events of the twenty-first century that some people have understood as incidences of *arielismo*, such as Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez's anti-imperialist declarations, the Arab Spring, and the student movement in Chile (2006-2013). Those recent events, if read through an *arielista* lense, suggest that the labels '*arielismo*' and '*arielista*', have fluctuating significations that in most cases have little more than tangential connections to Rodó's *Ariel*. Today, *arielismo* can be broadly interpreted as resistance, emancipation, anti-imperialism, and/or youth activism.

Ariel tends to be read in terms of a dichotomous division between Ariel (as representative of a spiritual Latin America) and Caliban (as representative of a crass, materialistic United States). This essentialist reading, however, overlooks one of Rodó's central objectives in *Ariel*, that is, the synthesis of positivism and spiritualism. Rodó interpreted his *arielista* program, despite its divisive implications regarding class, as foremost a program of harmony and beauty. In the third chapter of this study, I examine the complex ways in which Uruguayan philosopher Carlos Vaz Ferreira and Colombian writer Carlos Arturo Torres, both of whom have reputations as '*arielistas*', advocate philosophical and political anti-extremisms in their respective essays. In the first part of chapter 3, I contextualize the university debates surrounding positivism and spiritualism in Uruguay in the late nineteenth century and highlight Vaz Ferreira's role in reconciling those two philosophical paradigms. I then explore two of his essays, *Moral para intelectuales* (1909) and *Lógica viva* (1910), and detail his pedagogical ideas that center on preparing university students to think for themselves by learning how to avoid the pitfalls of systematic and expedient ways of reasoning. Vaz Ferreira recommends avoiding extremisms and definitiveness, which suggests that he, like Rodó, advocates a synthesis of reason and nonlogical forms of deduction, such as instinct. However, I argue that Vaz Ferreira's pedagogical program is concerned not with a synthesis of reason and instinct, but rather with cultivating a logical instinct through inquiry and rational thought. In addition, I demonstrate that Vaz Ferreira's hostility towards religion stems from his insistence on reason. Therefore, while Rodó and Vaz Ferreira share a number of similarities (both interpellate university students and advise them on how to navigate programs of personal betterment), I highlight a series of significant differences between them, such as their respective views on moral and spiritual

authorities, cultural identity, writing styles, and pedagogy, that complicate Vaz Ferreira's association with *arielismo*.

Vaz Ferreira's hesitancy to replicate the supposed harmonious synthesis of Rodó's *Ariel* is also evident in Colombian writer Carlos Arturo Torres's book, *Ídola fori* (1910). Although virtually unknown today, *Ídola fori* is one of the most valuable and influential intellectual documents of its time in Latin America. In the last section of chapter 3, I analyze the oscillative ways in which Torres reproduces and resists *arielismo*'s unapologetic elitism. *Ídola fori* is a text that uncomfortably negotiates, on the one hand, an elitist view of society in which the 'best and brightest' guide the masses (one of the key ideas in Rodó's *Ariel*) and, on the other, practical concerns for wider democratic participation and national reconciliation in the wake of the Colombian civil war known as the Thousand Days War (1899-1902). In addition to contextualizing Torres, *Ídola fori*, and critical opinions regarding both of those topics, I scrutinize Rodó's backhanded praise for Torres's essay in 1910, in which the Uruguayan criticizes the Colombian for not standing firm in his conviction of 'legitimate hierarchies' in society. I argue that Rodó's criticisms do not take into account the geopolitical realities of Colombia at that time. As opposed to Rodó, who wrote *Ariel* from a small, wealthy country on the verge of an expansive social democracy, Torres composed *Ídola fori* in the political and cultural aftermaths of a civil war, plagued by hyper-partisanship, violence, and economic decline. In chapter 3, I suggest that the disparate geopolitical circumstances of each writer's essay play a vital role in the differences between Rodó's restrictive, top-down view of democracy and Torres's more inclusive interpretation of political involvement.

Whereas chapter 3 deals with the themes of philosophical synthesis and political elitism, in chapter 4 I focus on another principal theme found in Rodó's *Ariel* which critics use to

identify '*arielistas*', that is, anti-imperialism. First, I deconstruct the paradoxical engagements with anti-imperialism and *arielismo* by two of the most prominent '*arielistas*', Argentine Manuel Ugarte and Peruvian Francisco García Calderón, at critical moments of U.S. intervention in various Latin American countries. In the first part of chapter 4, I examine the discrepancies surrounding Ugarte's rhetoric on ideology and religion that appear in his early essays (1903-1910). First, I highlight Ugarte's proposal to use critical autonomy to interrogate epistemology and ideology. According to Ugarte, traditionalism, superstitions, and memorization represent a threat to modernization, critical independence, and continental progress. In addition, Ugarte argues that humans created religion out of psychological uncertainty. For that reason, he considers the influence of contemporary religious hegemony antithetical to what should be the progressive aims of politics and education in Latin America. I underscore, however, that due to the threat of imperialist incursion from the United States, Ugarte reverses his earlier positions and in his essay *El porvenir de la América Española* (1910) insists that Catholicism serves an essential unifying function for Latin Americans to achieve material modernization and geopolitical sovereignty. Ugarte's ambivalent views surrounding religion pose it as both an obstacle for national solidarity and progress *and* the key to achieving them. This contradiction does not make Ugarte a somehow 'inadequate' anti-imperialist, but rather, demonstrates the paradoxes inherent in imperialism that one must accept in order to retain or regain autonomy.

I then analyze the contradictory ways in which Francisco García Calderón uses Pan-Latinist rhetoric not as a vehicle for anti-imperialist resistance against the United States, but rather as a petition for another type of cultural imperialism from Europe. In my examination of *Les démocraties latines de l'Amerique* (1912), I deconstruct the racist and revanchist components of García Calderón's Pan-Latinist imaginary and demonstrate that the Peruvian poses European

intervention as both the cause and remedy for Latin American's racial and economic obstacles to globality. I also emphasize the *locus* of enunciation of García Calderón's essay, as it was written in French and, more importantly, in direct dialogue with the highest powers of the French State. Moreover, I show the various rhetorical maneuvers that García Calderón makes in order to exploit cultural antagonisms between France and Germany that stem from the Franco-Prussian War (1870-71) in order to strengthen the ties between an imaginary Latin community. Lastly, I explore how García Calderón tries to align Europe's interests with those of Latin America by pointing out the opening of the Panama Canal in 1914, cutting right through the middle of Latin America, which, he argues, will afford to whichever race (or nation) that controls it a predominant position in the global hierarchy of nations. In other words, García Calderón uses Pan-Latinism not only as a way of enticing Europe to intervene in Latin America, but also as a way of bolstering Latin America's place in the modern world. The Peruvian critiques one imperialist gesture by the United States while petitioning another from Europe. This gesture seems to undermine García Calderón's status as a continentalist writer, in that he proposes a Latin Americanism that imagines itself primarily through cultural and economic mediations of other nations. Ugarte and García Calderón's contradictory thoughts surrounding anti-imperialism reveal that Latin American anti-imperialist subjectivity is not by any means unilateral. Rather, Ugarte and García Calderón's respective oscillations between resistance and appropriation problematize the coherency and bifurcation generally attributed to anti-imperialist literature in Latin America. Moreover, their texts manifest how they envision resistance, in Ugarte's case, or appropriation, in García Calderón's case, which cause them to undertake paradoxical negotiations that complicate their views on reason and religion, materialism and

utilitarianism, and alterity and globality, which in turn, I argue, complicate their respective associations with *arielismo*.

I dedicate Chapter 5 to an analysis of Cuban writer Fernando Lles's essay, *La higuera de Timón* (1921). First, I contextualize Lles, his work, and personal and sociopolitical circumstances that are important to understanding the neocolonial atmosphere in which he wrote his essay. Next, I consider his relationship with Rodó and *arielismo* in order to transition into an analysis of Lles's essay. Some critics have labeled Lles's essay as an example of *arielismo* because of formal similarities with Rodó's text. However, I argue that despite these formal coincidences *La higuera de Timón* is antithetical to *arielismo* in that it clearly contradicts Rodó's spiritualist and idealistic foundations by insisting that Latin American youth embrace pessimism, positivism, and individualism. My approach to Lles's essay will take many avenues, from an examination of ecocritical and metaphorical tropes to the intertextual challenges Lles's text presents to the reader, as well as an exploration of the ways in which Lles's denunciations of hegemony and imperialism, while seemingly calling for reformative endeavors, actually suggests an inability to carry out sociopolitical reforms. Due to the aforementioned disparities, I make a concerted effort to read Lles's essay with *Ariel* in mind, as well as separate Lles from the '*arielista*' label that some critics have applied to his essays.

Overall, my exploration of intellectual essays written in the early twentieth century in Latin America suggests that *arielismo*, a supposedly coherent movement, is actually rife with ambiguity and is recurrently fluid throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Instead of seeking to delegitimate *arielismo* as a label, in this study I show its origins, its ubiquity, as well as its limitations. I do so by scrutinizing detailed personal, sociopolitical, and historical contexts and geopolitical realities that, far from serving to demarcate a coherent chronology or unilateral

literary or cultural movement, serve to highlight *arielismo*'s elusive, contradictory, and immensely important journey over the last century. Even though it is one of the most visible cultural signifiers of Latin Americanism in the twentieth century, *arielismo* repeatedly shifts significations. Even though the term maintains, to varying degrees, common denominators (dealing with, directly or indirectly, the themes of a common cultural identity read through a North/South lense, youth, spiritualism, beauty, and idealism), its meaning, as we will see, is not entirely empty. On the other hand, it eludes semantic precision. My project interrogates and explains a long-standing critical tendency in Latin American studies to categorize an array of essays written in Latin America in the early twentieth century as '*arielistas*'. I argue that *arielismo* is not a coherent program that Latin American writers followed, but rather a critical construct with vague contours, a convenient term to situate complex intellectual essays within a literary or historical framework. The term '*arielismo*' flourished in anthologies and literary histories, but it also infiltrated serious cultural criticism as well as blurred or erased significant considerations left outside of, or on the margins of, its always imprecise boundaries. Instead of describing a literary movement, style, or spirit, *arielismo*, in all its ambiguity, suggests a tangential connection to certain qualities associated with Rodó's *Ariel* and others not really founded on it, but brought in from diverse agendas sponsored by critics, journalists, and politicians. In a broader context, this project examines the tensions between reason and faith and the politics of agency and dependency in globalization processes a century ago as well as today.

Chapter II

Arielismo in Latin America

1. Introduction

The terms '*arielismo*' and '*arielista*' make frequent appearances in literary and historical studies of Latin American culture in the twentieth century. While those labels, derived from Uruguayan writer José Enrique Rodó's essay, *Ariel* (1900), suggest a movement ('*arielismo*') and followers or a style ('*arielista*'), their significations have a long history of imprecision, which continues to this day. In the years immediately following the publication of *Ariel*, those labels were virtually nonexistent. However, throughout the following decades they were liberally applied to, not appropriated by, a wide variety of Latin American essayists and essays. Throughout the twentieth century, *arielismo* has been one of the most important ideological and cultural signifiers in Latin America. At the same time, however, it has been, and continues to be, a polysemic idea with indeterminate contours.

In this study, I analyze a series of essays written by the so-called '*arielistas*' a century after the supposed pinnacle of *arielismo*. With that in mind, a contextualization of Rodó's *Ariel*, as well as the varying significations of *arielismo* throughout the twentieth century, has to be the necessary first step of my investigation. Therefore, in this chapter I contextualize the historical circumstances surrounding the publication of Rodó's *Ariel*, such as the tensions between positivism and spiritualism, the intervention of the United States in Cuba in 1898, and rapid economic modernization). I will then highlight key features of *Ariel* and explain what is meant by '*arielismo*', when it occurred, and who practiced it. Next, I consider *Ariel*'s influence on Latin American student movements in the early twentieth century. I will then examine the increasingly polemical connotations of *arielismo* from the end of World War I through the

1970s, which include leftist critiques of *arielismo*'s elitism, erasure of indigeneity, and lofty style in the 1920s, 30s, and 40s, as well as indigenous reworkings of *arielismo*'s symbolic protagonists in Bolivia in the 1950s, and anti-colonialist inversions of the Ariel/Caliban dialectic by Latin American writers in the 1960s and 70s. In the latter part of this chapter, I underscore the paradoxical shifts in meaning of '*arielismo*' in recent years, i.e., as being synonymous with political liberation, anti-imperialism, and cultural agency. But the examples of '*arielismo*' in the twenty-first century have very little to do with Rodó's *Ariel*. For instance, examples of *arielismo* in recent years include recently deceased Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez's anti-imperialist attitudes, as well as armed revolutionary conflicts in Colombia and the Arab Spring in the Middle East. Lastly, I consider the relevance of *arielismo* in the ongoing Chilean Student Movement by analyzing opinions by student activists published on Internet blogs. My analysis of *arielismo*'s rocky and ongoing journey suggests that today '*arielismo*' means something very different than it did a century ago, during the supposed pinnacle of an '*arielista*' movement, generation, or spirit. However, as I will show throughout this investigation, the most constant component of *arielismo* is precisely its adaptability to disparate circumstances and ideologies.

2. Positivism and Spiritualism in Latin America (1850-1918)

Although the *modernista* project in the late nineteenth century, in its variegated manifestations, disputed positivism on many fronts, Rodó's *Ariel* synthesized and popularized a reaction against positivism's hegemony. Positivism was a complex network series of philosophical and social ideas that heralded the triumph of science in the last half of the nineteenth century (Hale 148). For positivists, the only legitimate knowledge was scientific and the only facts were those that could be observed in the natural world. The arrangement and

distribution of empirical knowledge reinforced positivism's legitimacy and framed it as the only viable doctrine for dealing with facts (Foucault 219). Positivism, then, was specialized: "Because only an enlightened minority was capable of acquiring this scientific outlook, the business of government should be conducted by an élite prepared to undertake the measures necessary to modernize backward countries where 'the people' had been vitiated by superstition and unproductive habits" (Williamson 299).

Positivism was the most widely adopted and implemented theoretical instrument in Latin America in between 1850 and 1910 (García 324). While its Latin American manifestations were diverse, reformers saw in positivism a philosophical and social doctrine rooted in science that could propel their own countries towards the kind of industrial modernization and prosperity that the United States and England had already achieved. In order to modernize Latin American nations in this way, however, it was first necessary to intellectually emancipate Latin Americans from the tradition of scholasticism inherited from Spain. Scholasticism, "the application of abstract reasoning to questions of faith" (Mueller 139), was largely seen as a colonial vestige that, due primarily to its emphasis on an order and worldview dominated by religious dogma, stifled both individual autonomy and collective modernization. The newly achieved political independence of most Latin American countries seemed to be undermined by an overlooked intellectual colonialism.

From the perspective of governing elites, a "metaphysical mentality" (Hale 152) informed by abstract theories and concepts was responsible for the variegated revolutions, dictatorships, and anarchy throughout Latin America during the nineteenth century. Political policy should therefore be based on indisputable scientific knowledge, what positivists considered the only verifiable, and therefore true, knowledge. 'Positive' knowledge, then, would

serve a disciplining function capable of quelling anarchical tensions in Latin America by establishing a hierarchical order of its classes and citizens based on evolutionary concepts. Herbert Spencer's idea of the "survival of the fittest" (1852) pre-dated the theory of evolution Darwin outlined in *On the Origin of Species* (1859). Both Spencer and Darwin rejected the idea of divine creation of humanity and proposed instead a biological mechanism of natural selection that eliminates "inferior" species gradually over time.[1] Although Darwin's popularity exceeds that of Spencer, the latter was in some ways more influential. For example, while Darwin's theory of evolution was primarily concerned with the animal and human development, Spencer took it a step further and elaborated throughout many years a "synthetic philosophy" that applied the theory of evolution to all realms of the universe: physical, biological, psychological, sociological, and ethical. In *First Principles* (1862), Spencer argued that all phenomena could be explained in terms of a lengthy process of evolution. Latin American positivists relied on Spencer's ideas on social evolution outlined in his *Principles of Sociology* (1874-1896) to justify their directive roles.

Another of the most often referenced proponent of scientism, aside from Spencer and Darwin, is German zoologist Ernest Haeckel (1834-1919). Although Haeckel was an enthusiastic supporter of evolution, he disagreed with the natural selection facet of Darwin's theory. Instead, he emphasized the importance of a Lamarckian inheritance of acquired characteristics and a materialistic monism in his works between 1868 and 1899. Haeckel's emphasis on heredity, along with the Darwinian foundation, opened the door for a plethora of racializing theories, expounded most pervasively by three French men, aristocrat and writer

[1] There is a vast body of scholarship about the influence of Darwin and Spencer's respective evolutionary ideas in the nineteenth century. See Francis 189-210 and Richards 1-21 for discussions of this topic.

Arthur de Gobineau (1816-1882), psychologist and sociologist Gustave Le Bon (1841-1931), and biologist and scientific philosopher Félix Le Dantec (1869-1917). These three men applied the principles of Darwinian evolution to sociology, psychology, and culture. Some Latin American writers, such as Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, Carlos Octavio Bunge, Alcides Arguedas, Francisco Bulnes, and César Zumeta, followed their lead and employed social Darwinism to explain Latin America's frustrated modernization in terms of its alleged racial inferiority. All of the aforementioned European scientific and sociological ideas were seminal in shaping policies of governance in Latin America. Before Latin American societies could be individualistic and stateless, governing elites would first have to assume a dictatorial-like role to ensure that the citizenry fit the criteria. By legitimating a strong centralized state on the basis of a supposedly irrefutable scientific authority, governing elites could justify not only their own interests, but also the power to implement them as national policy.

In addition to their well-known reliance on evolutionary and racializing ideologies, Latin American governing elites also depended, to varying degrees, on the ideas of Auguste Comte (1798-1857). In his *Cours de philosophie positive* (1830-1842), Comte transformed science into philosophy, creating a new science, a "social physics" that merged mathematics, astronomy, physics, chemistry, biology, and sociology into a highly influential program designed to ensure social progress. According to Comte, humanity passes through three distinct stages: the theological, the metaphysical, and the positive. The theological stage corresponds to a medieval worldview in which all answers come from a supernatural being. This is replaced by the dominance of abstract laws and theories in the metaphysical stage. Finally, the pinnacle of human progress is achieved in the positive stage, which holds that no explanation outside of

experience and observation is sufficient. In Comte's positive stage, absolutes are replaced by relativity.

Positivists in Latin America correlated these three stages to their own history. The colonial period corresponded to Comte's theological stage; independence to the metaphysical stage; and modernity to the positive stage. For example, Gabino Barreda, who studied with Comte in Paris and introduced positivism in Mexico, applied these periods to Mexican history. Comte's stages gave Latin American intellectuals and politicians a framework within which to locate their nations, diagnose their impediments to modernity, which many times centered on what they saw as Latin America's racial inferiorities, and design political policies to modernize their countries. Despite being the founder of positivism and providing a general framework for intellectual emancipation and material modernization, Comte, whose ideas began taking hold in Latin America in the 1860s (Martz 8), was not the most influential figure in the Latin American appropriation of positivism. Comte's idea of an altruistic and socially focused religion of humanity was unpopular with governing elites in Latin America, with the exceptions of Brazil and, to a lesser extent, Chile (Zea 17). Comte's philosophical system favored society over individual and material interests. As Mexican philosopher Leopoldo Zea notes, Comte's "sociocracy" that was the foundation for his ideas was rejected because it was "contrary to the interests [of liberalism] for which positivism had been accepted" (Zea 280).

A common thread of Latin American positivism was modernization, whether economic, political, or philosophical. In countries of the Southern Cone that were more economically stable and actively promoted the myth of racial homogeneity (Argentina, Chile, Uruguay), positivism was embraced to facilitate liberal political ideals (Chile), eradicate absolutist mentalities (Argentina), and replace the prevalence of religious dogma with the positive knowledge afforded

via science (Uruguay) (Zea 28). In Argentina and Uruguay, the impetus to dispel theological vestiges of Spanish colonialism in order to achieve rational liberty was particularly strong. On the other hand, countries experiencing sociopolitical and economic turmoil were more concerned with immediate and pragmatic applications of positivism. For example, for Peru and Bolivia positivism was a way to regenerate and modernize their countries after their defeat to Chile in the War of the Pacific (Martz 66).

A well-known case of Latin American positivism took place in Mexico. Mexican positivists sought to quell the anarchy that followed independence by codifying a blended Comtian/Spencerian positivism that would propel Mexico from a military era to an industrial one (Zea 272). Although the goal of Mexican positivists was individual liberty, they believed social order must be established before progress could take place in their country. In other words, a coercive state would first have to create favorable economic conditions before individual liberty could become a reality. The prolonged rule of Porfirio Díaz (1876-1910) pursued positivist platforms and ushered in a period of pervasive foreign investment and economic modernization, along with a notoriously Eurocentric view of social and cultural issues:

> The economy grew at an astonishing rate – an average of 8 per cent a year. The population increased by about 50 per cent to 15 million, even though European immigration remained very low. The modernization of the export-economy, by extending railway links and introducing new technology into mining and agriculture, transformed Mexico. As the railway replaced mule transport, mining production increased sharply: in addition to…silver and gold, it became feasible to mine copper, zinc and lead, while the output of silver rose by some 150 per cent. In agriculture, cash crops for export such as sisal, rubber, cochineal, sugar,

> and coffee stimulated the rural economy of many regions and led to the consolidation of the hacienda and to more rapid expropriation of Church and Indian lands. (Williamson 267)

Despite Díaz's economic priorities, his positivist policies suspended individual rights for the sake of national progress. In this way, the *porfiriato* utilized positivism to repackage *caudillismo* in a more liberal and progressive guise, where the strongman figure was institutionalized in a centralized state.

While governing elites throughout Latin American adopted positivism as a means of economic and political modernization, Cubans saw positivism as a doctrine that would legitimize their independence from Spain (Zea 29). Although Cuban positivists rejected, like most Latin American nations, Comte's semi-theological order, because it could be interpreted as a justification of Spanish colonialism (Zea 32), they embraced the Spencerian idea that deterministic laws governed the universe. The rationale was that if social evolution, progress, and liberty were objective facts, then the island's autonomy would be a natural, imminent progression. In this way, positivism's progressive optimism fueled Cuban desires for autonomy. The Spanish colonial authorities in Cuba recognized positivism as a revolutionary philosophy that sought to subvert their power in the island. As early as 1880, Cuba's preeminent positivist Enrique José Varona saw positivism as a way of subverting the clericalism that propped up colonial rule by teaching the Cuban people that their oppression was legitimate (Guadarrama González). In other words, some Cuban elites saw positivism as a vehicle capable of facilitating sovereignty.

Latin American governing elites embraced positivism as the supposed cure for all of Latin America's ills, whether racial, geographical, economic, political, or religious. By the turn

of the twentieth century, however, it was clear that the order and progress that positivism espoused had not materialized:

> La acogida al positivismo había sido casi universal, pero ninguna de las naciones positivistas había terminado con las llamadas lacras coloniales, el orden social era impuesto por la casta de los dictadores militares, la supuesta riqueza acaparada por una oligarquía latifundista y financiera, el imperialismo económico de las grandes naciones occidentales hacía presa de estos países convirtiendo su incipiente burguesía en un apéndice de la gran burguesía internacional. (Villegas 20)
>
> The reception of positivism had been almost universal, but none of the positivist nations had put an end to the so-called colonial scars, the social order was imposed by the class of military dictators and the supposed wealth accumulated by a land and financial oligarchy, the economic imperialism of large Western nations imprisoned those countries and turned their developing middle-class into an appendix of the larger international bourgeoisie.

In other words, the intellectual emancipation, social order, and material prosperity that legitimated the widespread adoption of positivism essentially reinforced a kind of colonialism from which Latin American nations sought to separate themselves almost a century earlier. In other words, as John Martz observes, "positivism permitted a rationalization of the *status quo*" (8). Proponents of positivism seemed more concerned with a bourgeoisie fantasy of order than with progress (Miller 13). As in Europe in the 1890s, some intellectuals and philosophers in Latin America were tired of the restrictive scope of scientism and its application to all aspects of human existence and proclaimed the "bankruptcy of science." By the turn of the twentieth

century, positivism was widely viewed as dogmatic and detrimental to both individual and collective progress because it could not rise above its deterministic and mechanistic foundations.

Proponents of this *neospiritualist* or *neoidealistic*[2] movement sought to reclaim the metaphysical and spiritual facets of human existence that positivism negated. Neospiritualists maintained that life cannot be relegated to a nonautonomous existence proliferated through a deterministic paradigm rooted entirely in the natural sciences. For these neospiritualists, positivism's dogmatic adherence to determinism and materialism excluded other essential, even if unquantifiable, facets of human existence such as intuition, religiosity, love, beauty, imagination, creativity, and an appreciation for the aesthetic dimension of humanity.

Neospiritualists sought to redeem the immeasurable transcendental and mysterious facets of life that positivism repudiated. Francisco García Calderón, a self-professed neospiritualist advocate, summarizes the neospiritual objection to positivism's dogmas in the following way:

> El positivismo implanta así un racionalismo limitado y vulgar, una nueva metafísica que concede a las fórmulas de la ciencia una verdad absoluta; exalta en la vida el egoísmo, los intereses prácticos, la persecución encarnizada de la riqueza. Para los espíritus simplificadores de América, esta filosofía no es una disciplina del conocimiento y la acción: limita el esfuerzo del hombre a la conquista de lo útil. (quoted in Real de Azúa, *Medio siglo* 25)
>
> In this way, positivism implants a limited and vulgar rationalism, a new metaphysics that concedes an absolute truth to scientific formulas; it exalts egoism in life, practical interests, and the cruel persecution of riches. For

[2] Neospiritualism and neoidealism are used interchangeably by both proponents and critics of that movement.

> simplified spirits in America, this philosophy is not a discipline of knowledge and action: it limits man's effort to the conquest of the utilitarian.

The ideas of French philosopher Henri Bergson and American psychologist William James circulated widely in late nineteenth century Latin America. Their vitalist meditations were appropriated by Latin American neospiritualists in order to forge a counter perspective to positivism's absolutist and deterministic paradigm by emphasizing the validity of inner subjectivity. Bergson explained evolution in a less mechanical way than Spencer by arguing that humanity evolves by tapping into a natural creative impulse, an *élan vital*. Moreover, in *L'Evolution créatrice* (*Creative Evolution*, 1907), Bergson maintains that subjective experience and intuition are more useful than rationalism and science in understanding reality. Latin American neospiritualists praised Bergson's irrationalism and incorporated it into their essays and articles. In a similar way, William James provided them ammunition against an untenable insistence on evidentialism. According to James, whose texts were widely distributed and read during this time, determinism and rationalism do not monopolize reality. Rather, James argues that whatever stimulates the mind is real. Although James, like Émile Boutroux, advocated a reconciliation of religion and science, he insisted that reality cannot be completely discoverable and understood. The confluence of Bergson's irrationalism and James and Boutroux's reconciliatory efforts were called neoidealism in the late nineteenth century because their ideas combated the notion that the individual was subject only to scientific laws. It is for this reason that the neospiritualist movement in Latin American is synonymous with neoidealism.

What is not generally recognized in viewing neospiritualism as an *anti*-positivist movement is the fact that neospiritualist discourses in Latin America did not advocate a complete break with positivism. Instead, neospiritualists sought to synthesize positivism and spiritualism

into an optimistic outlook that merged rationalism and the imperceptible realms of reality. Although positivism took different forms and existed in various degrees in different Latin American countries, the neospiritual movement coalesced around one primary text: Uruguayan essayist José Enrique Rodó's *Ariel* (1900). In his essay, Rodó challenged the exclusivity of positivism's deterministic and materialistic conceptions of human existence. Rodó sought to restore the legitimacy of a subjectivity unmitigated by positivism's insistence on empiricism and quantifiability. Although Rodó disagreed with positivism's restrictive scope, its excessive and malicious uses, and its claim as exclusive truth, he also recognized its importance to the modern era. Rodó, like Martí before him, understood the validity of science in advancing knowledge and humanity, but insisted that there was more to life than scientific empiricism.

3. Viewing North From South

The historical context surrounding Rodó's essay is rich and complex. Latin America, to varying degrees, was in the midst of widespread modernization. Massive immigration and variegated technological and industrial advancements made urban centers explode and connected Latin Americans to each other and the rest of the world in ways previously unimaginable. Latin American modernization, however, paled in comparison to that of the United States, a country who was on the rise as the next empire. Furthermore, the involvement of the United States in the liberation of Cuba from Spain in 1898 was a pivotal event that caught the attention of many Latin Americans. Three years into the Cuban War of Independence (1895-1898), Spain granted limited autonomy to Cuba. When a riot broke out between Spaniards and Cubans shortly after, U.S. President William McKinley deployed, with very little warning to Spain, the battleship *USS Maine* to Havana Harbor under the guise of protecting U.S. interests in Cuba. On February 15,

1898, an explosion, whose cause has been much discussed, erupted on board the *Maine* and it sank, killing most of the crew. Although the cause of the *Maine*'s demise remains unclear, the U.S. press framed the event as a Spanish attack on the United States.[3] Public outrage ensued and the voices for full-scale U.S. retaliation grew increasingly louder. Two months later, in April of 1898, after Spain refused U.S. requests to remove all its forces from Cuba, a mutual declaration of war was issued between Spain and the United States on April 25, 1898. Land and naval battles lasted only a few months and the Treaty of Paris was signed on December 10, 1898. Due to this agreement, Cuba and Puerto Rico became U.S. protectorates. While Spain termed 1898 "the Disaster," Latin American nations viewed U.S. intervention in Cuba with suspicion. In effect, 1898 symbolized two interconnected phenomena: the end of the Spanish Empire in Americas and a pinnacle of U.S. hegemony in the Western Hemisphere. Rodó began writing *Ariel* in 1898, a tipping point that would set off a barrage of U.S. involvement in Latin American affairs. This backdrop explains why many read Rodó's essay as a type of Latin Americanist manifesto (Brotherson 12).

4. Key Features of *Ariel*

Ariel is a literary text rich in ambiguities and contradictions. Critics have labeled *Ariel* many things: a "literary and political movement" (Vázquez and Torres 8) a "philosophical and social dissertation" (Pedro Henríquez Ureña, *Ariel* 121), "a sort of ethical and intellectual breviary for Latin American youth" (Gómez-Gil, *Historia* 453), a "spiritual breviary" (Sánchez, *Balance y liquidación* 105), a "lay sermon" (Barbagelata 421), an "American gospel" (Ainsa, "El centenario" 89), a "manifesto for Latin America's cultural and spiritual emancipation" (Aguilar

[3] Recent investigations and speculations suggest that the *Maine* sank due to a coal fire below deck.

Rivera), an Americanist and *modernista* manifesto (Oviedo *Historia* 326), a "political manifesto" (Pensado), a cultural and ideological movement (Mora 39), a "program to balance antimonies" (Ainsa, "El centenario" 104). For Roberto González Echevarría, *Ariel* is "the first wide-ranging proposal for Latin American identity" (17). It goes without saying that critics have interpreted '*arielismo*' as a number of things. In a very broad sense, however, and following Alberto Zum Felde, '*arielismo*' means the influence of Rodó and *Ariel* on other Latin American essayists in the first three decades of the twentieth century (*Índice crítico* 311).

The essay begins with a venerated teacher, Prospero, who is delivering his final address of the term in his office to his young students. Prospero invokes a nearby statue of Ariel as his inspiration for the neospiritualist liberation and reformation he inspires his students to carry out. Throughout the essay, Prospero calls for Latin American youth to carry out a spiritual revolution and resist the modern affinity for specialization and utilitarianism. In addition, Prospero advises his students to employ the moralizing function of beauty and counteract the aforementioned affinities by engaging in disinterested activities. Overall, Prospero's message is idealistic and revolves around a number of key ideas, which are succinctly summarized by Orlando Gómez-Gil: an exaltation of youth, liberty, will, and knowledge, a reaction against positivism, utilitarianism, and materialism, the development of personal and spiritual faculties, and the preservation of an intellectual aristocracy to guide society towards disinterested ideals (*Historia* 453).

Despite the fact that Rodó consistently argues against the reductive dichotomies that positivism espoused, *Ariel* has been largely read according to them, i.e., Latin America/United States, Ariel/Caliban. While Rodó's views of the United States are often referenced, there is a tendency to gloss over *Ariel*'s nuances regarding this issue in order to mythologize Rodó's essay

as an overtly anti-imperialist essay in which Ariel represents Latin America and Caliban represents the United States (Lockhart 180). Many literary and historical studies of Latin America continue to frame *Ariel* as an anti-American text (Dent 318; Smith 111). Before the publication of *Ariel* in 1900, a publicity promo for the essay that was published in the Uruguayan newspaper, *El Día*, in 1899 framed Rodó's text as an anti-American study (Brotherston 9). Rodó insisted that this inaccurate statement be corrected before the following publicity announcement (Rodríguez Monegal, "Introducción" 194).[4] Rodó clarified this point on *El Día* on January 23, 1900, saying "no es cierto que el tema principal de la nueva obra sea, como se ha dicho, la influencia de la civilización anglosajona en los pueblos latinos. Sólo de una manera accidental se hará en el libro un juicio de la civilización norteamericana, tratándose de caracterizar en ella lo que puede y debe servir de modelo y lo que no debe ser objeto de imitación" 'it is not correct that the principal theme of the new work is, as some have said, the influence of Anglo Saxon civilization in Latin nations. The book offers only an unintentional opinion about North American civilization, and it tries to characterize in it what can and should serve as a model and what should not be the object of imitation' (cited in Gómez-Gil, *Mensaje* 56). In other words, Rodó envisioned his essay as a nonpolemical work about the spirit, not an anti-American manifesto.[5] Some scholars, such as Enrique Anderson Imbert, also emphasize the Uruguayan's purpose in the interpretation of his essay:

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[4] See Brotherston 9-17 for a discussion of Rodó's resistance to reductionist interpretations of the Ariel/Caliban dichotomy.

[5] In fact, a decade later, in an article dedicated to the publication of Carlos Arturo Torres's book, *Ídola fori* (1910), Rodó reiterates: "No creo engañarme si afirmo que éste era, aun no hace mucho años, el criterio que prevalecía entre los hombres de pensamiento y de gobierno en las naciones de América Latina; el criterio ortodoxo en universidades, parlamentos y ateneos; la superioridad absoluta del modelo anglosajón, así en materia de enseñanza como de instituciones, como de aptitud para cualquier género de obra provechosa y útil, y la necesidad de inspirar la propia vida en la contemplación de ese arquetipo, a fin de aproximárselo, mediante leyes, planes

Unfortunately some readers reduced *Ariel* to a scheme that discredits its purpose: for these readers Ariel versus Caliban symbolizes Hispanic-America versus Anglo-America, spirit versus technics. Reducing the book to such a scheme does

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de educación, viajes y lecturas, y otros instrumentos de imitación social. Los Estados Unidos aparecían como viviente encarnación del arquetipo; como la imagen en que tomaba forma sensible la idea soberana. Absurdo sería, desde luego, negar, ni la grandeza extraordinaria de este model real, ni las positivas ventajas y excelencias del model ideal: el genio de la raza que en aquel pueblo culmina; ni siquiera lo que de practicable y de fecundo había en el propósito de aprender las lecciones de su bien recompensado saber y seguir los ejemplos de su voluntad victoriosa. El radical desacierto consistía no tanto en la excesiva y candorosa idealización, ni en el culto ciego, más que por sereno y reflexivo examen y prolija elección, más que en la vanidad de pensar que estas imitaciones absolutas, de pueblo a pueblo, de raza a raza, son cosa que cabe en lo natural y posible; que la estructura de espíritu de cada una de esas colectividades humanas no supone ciertos lineamientos y caracteres esenciales, a los que han de ajustarse las formas orgánicas de su cultura y de su vida política, de modo que lo que es eficaz y oportuno en una parte no lo es acaso en otras; que pueden emularse disposiciones heredadas y costumbres seculares, con planes y leyes; y finalmente, que, aun siendo esto irrealizable, no habría abdicación ilícita, mortal renunciamiento, en desprenderse de la personalidad original y autónoma dueña siempre de reformarse pero no de descaracterizarse, para embeber y desvanecer el propio espíritu en lo ajeno" 'I do not think I deceive myself if I affirm that this was, not that many years ago, the criterion that prevailed among intellectuals and men of governance in Latin American nations; the orthordox criterion in universities, parlaments, and cultural associations; the absolute superiority of the Anglo Saxon model, in matters of pedagogy and institutions, as well as ability for any kind of beneficial and useful deed, and the necessity of inspiring life itself in contemplation of that archetype, with the purpose of come closer to it, through laws, educational plans, trips and lectures, and other instruments of social imitation. The United States appeared as the living embodiment of the archetype; as the image in which the sovereign idea took sensible form. Of course, it would be absurd to deny the extraordinary grandness of this real model, or the positive advantages and excellencies of the ideal model: the genius of the race which culminates in that nation; or even the practical and productive aspects of the purpose of learning lessons from its well rewarded knowledge and following the examples of its victorious will. The radical mistake consisted not so much in the excessive and innocent idealization, nor in blind worship, but due to serene and thoughtful examination and tedious choice, it resided in the vanity of thinking that these absolute imitations, from nation to nation, from race to race, were something natural and possible; that the structure of the spirit of each one of those human collectivities does not have certain essential characteristics, to those that should adjust their organic forms of their culture and political life, since what is efficient and opportune in one part is perhaps not in others; that inherited dispositions and secular customs can be emulated with plans and laws; and finally, that, even though this is unattainable, there would not be illicit abdication, mortal renunciation, in detaching oneself from his original and autonomous personality, ever the master of reforming, not deforming, oneself, in order to take in and dispel one's own spirit in outside models' ("Rumbos nuevos" 500).

> not make it appear to be a call for mental, spiritual, and physical effort, but rather a school for conformists. […] The United States theme is only an accident, an illustration for a thesis on the spirit. To contrast the two Americas and to launch a political manifesto were so far from Rodó's intention that *Ariel* was not an anti-imperialist work. He makes allusion only to moral imperialism not so much exercised by the United States as by the desire of imitation on the part of Spanish America. (Anderson Imbert 316)[6]

Of course, as Roland Barthes and Michel Foucault point out, the way a reader interprets a text is not restricted by the writer's intention.[7] Even though Rodó and some scholars of his work insist that Ariel and Caliban do not represent Latin America and the United States, respectively, other receptors of *Ariel* read it however they wish, even if, as Anderson Imbert states, that reading reduces the essay's nuances and contradicts the Uruguayan's intended meaning. As we will see later in this chapter, however, this interpretative act of making *Ariel* signify whatever the reader wishes, whether to praise, criticize, appropriate, or reject the essay or Rodó's tutelage, is precisely the legacy of *arielismo*.

The dialectic between the two Americas and their metaphorical characterizations based on Shakespeare's *The Tempest* would prove to be the most discussed feature, and point of criticism, of Rodó's essay. Rodó, however, was not the first Latin American writer who used Caliban as a metaphor for materialism and cultural imperialism, as Rubén Darío, in "El triunfo de Calibán" (1898), and Paul Groussac, in articles and speeches, anticipated this trend by several

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[6] José Miguel Oviedo and Orlando Gómez-Gil also advocate for a less dichotomous understanding of *Ariel* (Oviedo, *Historia* 328; Gómez-Gil, *Mensaje* 56).

[7] See Barthes's essay "The Death of the Author" (1967) and Foucault's "What is an Author?" (1969). For a discussion of the variety of readings *Ariel* has received, see Weinberg 63.

years.[8] While many readers have understood the Ariel/Caliban juxtaposition to represent, respectively, Latin America and the United States, others maintain that the dichotomy symbolizes reason (Ariel) and instinct (Caliban). It is evident from the first page of *Ariel* that reason, or rationality, terms that essayists of the time used interchangeably, is a key idea in Rodó's program:

> Ariel es el imperio de la razón y el sentimiento sobre los bajos estímulos de la irracionalidad; es el entusiasmo generoso, el móvil alto y desinteresado en la acción, la espiritualidad de la cultura, la vivacidad y la gracia de la inteligencia, el término ideal a que asciende la selección humana, rectificando en el hombre superior los tenaces vestigios de Calibán, símbolo de sensualidad y de torpeza, con el cincel perseverante de la vida (139).
>
> Ariel is the empire of reason and feeling over the base stimulus of irrationality; it is generous enthusiasm, lofty and disinterested motive in action, the spirituality of culture, vigor and grace of intelligence, the ideal objective to which a select portion of humanity rises, rectifying in the superior man the tenacious vestiges of Caliban, the symbol of sensuality and dimness, with the persistent chisel of life.

While Rodó recognizes the "strength and rectitude of reason" (169), he also cautions against embracing rational pessimisms. Rodó's neospiritualist criticisms of positivism, then, are not

[8] See Carlos Jáuregui's article, "Calibán, icono del 98: A propósito de un artículo de Rubén Darío" for a masterful chronology and analysis of the Caliban metaphor in Darío, Groussac, and Rodó.

rejections of reason, but rather an attempt to curb rational exclusivities to the detriment of subjectivity.[9]

As many critics have noted, the politics of reason are an important part of *arielismo* (Arias 104). The nature of Rodó's use of reason in *Ariel*, however, is not precise. For example, Julio Ramos connects Rodó's use of rationality with aesthetic culture (224). According to Ramos' reading, Rodó's concept of aesthetic culture is a rational, and therefore legitimate, replacement for utilitarianism. Medardo Vitier, however, argues that Rodó relies on the concept of reason to reinforce the idea of legitimate intellectual hierarchies in Latin American democracies (121-123). For example, Prospero states that "Racionalmente concebida, la democracia admite siempre un imprescriptible elemento aristocrático, que consiste en establecer la superioridad de los mejores…" 'Rationally conceived, democracy always admits an absolute aristocratic element that consists of establishing the superiority of the best…' (189). Rodó poses the legitimacy of a directive intellectual minority as a rational proposition. His elitism, however, does not lose site of benevolent endeavors. Dignity and justice are chimerical without heroic individuals capable of guiding society toward these ideals. Here, Rodó's unabashed recognition and praise of 'superior' individuals harkens to the heroisms highlighted by Carlyle and Emerson.

Throughout his writing career, Rodó was unwavering in his endorsement of legitimate hierarchies and their directive roles in society. It is little wonder, then, that scholars have pointed out the "función ideologizante" of *Ariel* (Rama 110) as well as Prospero's "paternalistic stance" (González Echevarría 19). In addition, the essay's "dialogical effect" (Aching 80; González

[9] Signs of Rodó's "homosexual panic" in his warnings against "sensuality" have been discussed by Montero in "Helenism and Homophobia" and "*Modernismo* and Homophobia."

Echevarría 21) makes the text seem like a conversation, when in fact it is a lecture.[10] Prospero's "voz magistral" reinforces Rodó's attempts to legitimate the directive role of an intellectual minority. For Rodó, democracy was dangerous only if its fascination with equality undermined the legitimacy of its directive intellectual class. This idea dates back to Tocqueville who lamented that the democratic system in France "has…been abandoned to its wild instincts" (7). The fear of egalitarian tyranny was almost an obsessive topic throughout Europe and Latin America during the late nineteenth century. Intellectuals and politicians throughout Latin America and Europe feared that complete equality would give way to mediocrity or, worse yet, dictatorships and coups fueled by pliable, popular sentiment. In fact, Comte, Renan, Taine, Carlyle, Emerson, Nietzsche, and Ibsen, all mentioned in *Ariel*, dedicated special attention to the matter (Torres-Rioseco 37-38). Furthermore, Gustave Le Bon's widely read *Les Lois psychologiques de l'évolution des peuples* (1894) and *La psychologie des foules* (1895) fueled Latin American elites' insecurities about the possibility of mob rule and their uncontrollable instincts. Rodó echoes Le Bon's ideas in *Ariel*: "La multitud, la masa anónima no es nada por sí misma. La multitud será un instrumento de barbarie o de civilización, según carezca o no del coeficiente de una alta dirección moral" 'The crowd, the anonymous mass is nothing by itself. The masses will be an instrument of barbarism or civilization, according to the degree to which it lacks or not a high moral leadership' (180).

Although *Ariel* frames aesthetic culture and legitimate hierarchies as rational cornerstones of Rodó's project, he insists on reconciling reason and the spirit (Williamson 305). *Ariel*, as well as the other essays I analyze in my dissertation, confront ideology and dogma in

[10] Prospero is the only person who speaks in the essay. Significantly, however, the youngest student, Enjolrás, speaks briefly to the other students at the end of the essay after they have left Prospero's office.

overt ways and emphasize the importance of critical thought and analytical autonomy. Furthermore, all the essayists in this study insist on reason, yet their texts reveal a variety of tense negotiations to accommodate religion and/or religiosity in their modernizing projects. Even though religion/religiosity appear antithetical to the rational, critical components outlined in *Ariel*, they too are essential factors of the neospiritual focus of *arielismo*.

According to Rodó, Latin American youth should reconcile "las cuatro faces del alma" ('the four faces of the soul'), which is to say the ideal, the real, reason, and instinct (156). In order to achieve this, youth must rely on an instinct inherited from the confluence of Greco-Roman civilization and Christianity:

> Del espíritu del cristianismo nace, efectivamente, el sentimiento de igualdad, viciado por cierto ascético menosprecio de la selección espiritual y la cultura. De la herencia de las civilizaciones clásicas nacen el sentido del orden, de la jerarquía, y el respeto religioso del genio, viciados por cierto aristocrático desdén de los humildes y los débiles. El porvenir sintetizará ambas sugestiones del pasado, en una fórmula inmortal. La democracia, entonces, habrá triunfado definitivamente. (193)
>
> Indeed, from the spirit of Christianity is born the feeling of equality, erroneously interpreted with a certain ascetic contempt of spiritual and cultural selection. From the inheritance of classical civilizations come the sense of order, hierarchy, and religious respect of genius, corrupted by a certain aristocratic scorn of the modest and weak. The future will synthesize both suggestions of the past into one immortal formula. Democracy will then have definitively triumphed.

Whereas earlier Rodó denigrated the instinct when it belonged to the masses, here he indulges in selective sources for an elite instinct. When Jean Franco observes that Rodó recommends a "transcendence of instinct" (159), she is referring to the animalistic drives that Rodó attributes to the masses. However, Rodó utilizes the idea of instinct as a vehicle to tap into the Greco-Roman and Christian spiritualisms that inform his project. Rodó's use of a spiritualist instinct is similar to Emerson's reworking of the instinct to fit his own religiosity. For example, Emerson insisted that a "spiritual instinct" was not only legitimate, but that it was rational. Although Rodó does not go as far as Emerson, the Uruguayan does strive to balance reason and instinct (Max Henríquez Ureña 224; Oviedo *Historia* 329).

Although Rodó rejected the dogmatism of the Catholic Church, he did not advocate any hostility towards religion. Rodó's anti-dogmatism harmonizes rational laicism and religious sentiments (Zum Felde, *Proceso* 55). In fact, Rodó supports a Christianity that pre-dates its codification and institutionalization. For Rodó, in order to understand humanity, it is necessary to understand the aesthetic and moral teachings of Jesus that so profoundly influenced it. Rodó sees a place for a Christian-derived spiritualism in modern life, but it should be free of its clerical, normative, and theological dimensions. Rodó asserts that the narrow classifications of the natural sciences have harmed the "spirit of religiosity" (187). For that reason, he seeks to validate the spiritual realms of existence by rejecting utilitarian applications of scientific paradigms to human life. Life, Rodó argues, must be acknowledged as more complex than just observation, quantification, and definitiveness. Furthermore, he rejects the absolutism that results from only assigning one scientifically based interpretation to Nature. In fact, Rodó turns positivism against itself when he cites Comte's assertions about the danger of people only seeing one side of things because it leads to deformed interpretations (155). In another moment of the

essay, Rodó states that Christian doctrinism is one of these one-sided interpretations whose insistence on asceticism ignores the aesthetic aspects of life (168). As we can see, the idea of "religiosity" helps Rodó criticize religious dogma while cherry picking the charitable, idealistic, and unifying elements that underlie it.

Similarly, Rodó seeks to reform the dialectical mindset that during the nineteenth century favored utilitarian applications of the natural sciences over metaphysical possibilities. For Rodó, utilitarian immediacy dissipates higher ideals. For this reason, Rodó's program seeks to dethrone positivism's tight grip on truth narratives by emphasizing the validity of a metaphysical spiritualism. This anti-dogmatic plan initiated a task of revaluating the critical criteria employed to analyze life and social processes that, as I will demonstrate throughout this study, remained a fundamental task in subsequent intellectual meditations in Latin America between 1910 and 1920.

Rodó's engagement with the United States is not dialectical in the sense he criticizes above. Rather, Rodó poses the U.S. as a materially centered culture, which, he insists, is a *symptom* of utilitarianism, not the *definition* of pure utilitarianism. In fact, Rodó recognizes various positive aspects of the United States. Rodó praises its access to public education, its liberty, unity, energy, individualism, and glorification of work. On the other hand, the Uruguayan condemns its Puritan inheritance that downplays the importance of beauty and time to pursue disinterested thinking and creativity. In addition, Rodó criticizes that country's infatuation with equality, which he feels subverts the legitimate inequalities inherent in any society. Above all, Rodó's criticism of the United States centers on its emphasis on materialism in sociopolitical, economic, and personal arenas, which subsequently frustrates the pursuit of higher spiritual ideals.

Rodó proposes a methodology that incorporates reason and spiritualism in order to warn Latin Americans against *nordomanía*, or a fascination with North American utilitarianism. Rodó famously wrote about the United States, "aunque no les amo, les admiro" (202). For Rodó, the United States successfully negotiates the sovereignty of the individual and inspires its citizens to participate in social processes. Rodó interprets this interconnectivity of individual and his or her culture as a formidable energy that keeps the United States from becoming a vulgar nation (203). Interestingly, Rodó's major criticism of the United States, its affinity for utilitarian immediacies, is also that country's greatest attribute: "tiene una eficacia admirable siempre que se dirige prácticamente a realizar una finalidad inmediata" 'it has an admirable efficiency as long as it directs itself practically to carry out an immediate purpose' (201). In other words, although Rodó claims that the United States is not as culturally refined nor as spiritual as Latin America, the former's ability to mobilize and act towards a clear goal, even if only utilitarian in nature, is an admirable quality, as long as Latin American nations do not emulate it.

In a similar way, Rodó's assertions regarding ideals and spiritualism in the United States are also not entirely uniform. According to Rodó, despite its inability to strive for non-utilitarian ideals, the United States is not devoid of spiritualism: "Ellos han sabido salvar, en el naufragio de todas las idealidades, la idealidad más alta, guardando viva la tradición de un sentimiento religioso…" 'They have figured out how to save the highest ideal among the shipwreck of all ideals, by keeping alive the tradition of religious sentiment…' (202). Although here Rodó considers the strong religious tradition in the United States a moderating influence of its utilitarian tendencies, he maintains that country still suffers from a "radical ineptitud de selección" (207). Rodó thought that the United States insisted on pursuing an egalitarian

democracy that refused to recognize legitimate hierarchies. According to Rodó, this incongruity frustrates pursuits of higher ideals outside the realms of utilitarianism.

As I have mentioned, readers and critics of *Ariel* have a tendency to mythologize Rodó's views of the United States in terms of a coherent dichotomous framework, as a spiritualist Ariel versus a materialist Caliban. However, we see here an uncomfortable and inadequate negotiation of assessing the United States in the foundational text of *arielismo*. Rodó does not denigrate the progress made by the United States. Rather, he argues that Latin American democracies will transform this progress into higher spiritual ideals:

> La obra del positivismo norteamericano servirá a la causa de Ariel, en último término. Lo que aquel pueblo de cíclopes ha conquistado directamente para el bienestar material con su sentido de lo útil y su admirable aptitud de la invención mecánica, lo convertirán otros pueblos…en eficaces elementos de selección. (216-217)
>
> The work of U.S. positivism will in the end serve the cause of Ariel. What that nation of cyclopes has conquered for the express purpose of material well-being and usefulness and its admirable ability for mechanical invention, other nations will convert into efficient elements of selection.

In short, Rodó offers an alternative program of modernization that challenges the notion that positivism begets modernity. According to an *arielista* paradigm, modernization is not exclusively economic, but humanistic as well.

5. Defining *Arielismo*

After its publication in 1900, *Ariel* became one of the most popular books in Latin America (Pedro Henríquez Ureña, *Las corrientes* 183). However, despite assertions to the contrary (Pérez Petit, *Rodó* 227; González Echevarría 17; Gómez-Gil, *Mensaje* 57), *Ariel* was not an immediate bestseller, especially in the way we understand that term today. This was due largely to understandable geographical and communicative obstacles of the time. But it is important to remember that even the Uruguayan reading public, Rodó's most immediate audience, did not initially embrace his essay (Lockhart 186). In fact, according to Carlos Real de Azúa, Rodó's essay was not widely read in Latin America during the first years after its publication (*Medio siglo* 53). Despite a slow start, however, Rodó's impressive self-marketing campaign vis-à-vis correspondence with numerous intellectuals throughout Latin America, in conjunction with new editions and critical reviews of *Ariel*, soon made it one of the most discussed books in Latin America of the twentieth century (Zum Felde, *Proceso* 62).

Rodó also sent copies of *Ariel* to literary magazines throughout Latin America. In addition, high profile Spanish intellectuals like Clarín, Juan Valera, and Miguel de Unamuno reviewed *Ariel*. After the first and second Uruguayan editions of the essay, subsequent editions were published in Santo Domingo (1901), Cuba (1905), Mexico (1907 and 1908), and Spain (1908) (Real de Azúa, *Medio siglo* 55-56).[11] Of all these editions, the one published in Valencia in 1908 was key because it popularized the essay not only in Spain and France, but also in Latin America, as Spanish publishing houses made their texts widely available in Latin America. After Rodó's death in Italy in 1917, Hugo Barbagelata and Francis de Miomandre included a French translation of *Ariel* in *Pages choisies* (1918), a collection of Rodó's work published in

[11] For a more complete publication history of *Ariel* after 1911, see Real de Azúa, *Medio siglo de Ariel* 56-58.

Paris by Librairie Félix Alcan. *Ariel* was translated into English and Portuguese in the early 1920s (Canfield).

Rodó's essay was influential beyond the limits of the literary world. For example, by 1908, student activists throughout Latin America, perhaps inspired by the fictionalized setting of Rodó's essay, a university classroom, adopted *Ariel* as a banner for the *Congresos de Estudiantes Latinoamericanos* that took place throughout Latin America between 1908 and 1920. These students integrated *arielista* rhetoric and precepts of unity, obligation, and action into their platforms. Rodó even spoke at the close of the first *Congreso de Estudiantes Latinoamericanos* in Montevideo in 1908 (Real de Azúa, *Medio siglo* 83). University students were the target audience of *Ariel* and Rodó's essay clearly resonated with student activists in Latin America. For example, in his analysis of university activism in the early twentieth century, for Ricardo Melgar Bao, an anthropologist and historian at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, *arielismo* was clearly an ideology that mobilized student activists in Argentina (1903-1906), Chile (1906), Peru (1909), Guatemala (1911), Mexico (1910, 1912, 1914), and Venezuela (1909-1912). According to Melgar Boa, Latin American student activists in the early twentieth century blended Rodó's idealistic message of empowerment, while casting aside the elitist implications of *arielismo*, with the realties and needs of the working class. Therefore, Melgar Boa's interpretation of the beginnings of Latin American student movements in the early twentieth century underscores the flexible and adaptive nature of various incompatible ideologies, such as *arielismo* and socialism.

While it is generally recognized that Rodó's essay was influential to student activists between 1900-1915, others have questioned its role in broader university reforms, such as the *Reforma de Córdoba* in 1918. The *Reforma de Córdoba*, carried out by student activists with

diverse ideologies at the Universidad Nacional de Córdoba in Argentina, achieved important reforms that would impact universities throughout the continent. Moreover, the *Manifiesto de Córdoba de 1918*, drafted by Deodoro Roca, one of the principle leaders of the student movement, is filled with *arielista* language and imagery. According to Mina Alejandra Navarro, the fundamental elements of the *Manifiesto*, that is, a cultural regeneration carried out from Latin America, derive from Rodó's *Ariel* (264-265). For instance, that document frames university youth as hopeful, heroic, spiritual, and committed to action and democratic reform (Roca). In addition, the *Manifiesto* advocates a synthesis of positivism and spiritualism as well as the unification of Latin American nations in reformative efforts. It is no coincidence, then, that key components of Rodó's *Ariel* appeared in the two most significant student endeavors in Latin America in the first two decades of the twentieth century, the *Congresos de Estudiantes Latinoamericanos* and the *Reforma de Córdoba*. However, Latin American student movements took a more radical shift away from *arielismo* and towards more militant stances on anti-imperialism, indigenous rights, and leftist issues in the 1920s and 1930s (Moraga Valle 203).[12]

According to Carlos Real de Azúa, '*arielismo*', a term first coined in Mexico in 1908 (*Historia visible* 127), reached its pinnacle in the decade of 1910. During this decade, young essayists throughout Latin America recognized themselves as *Ariel*'s target audience (Varela Petito 62), proclaimed, to varying degrees, Rodó as that generation's "guía de espíritus" (García Calderón 22) and wrote essays about, among many other things, Latin American identity. An entry in the *Diccionario de Filosofía Latinoamericana*, recently published by the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, offers a good working definition of *arielismo*: "El arielismo

[12] Amílcar Antonio Barreto claims that *arielismo* was a phenomenon of the 1930s, which manifests the chronological uncertainty that scholars have about the influence of Rodó's ideas (148).

expresa una visión idealista de la cultura latinoamericana como modelo de nobleza y elevación espiritual en contraposición a la cultura de los Estados Unidos como ejemplo de sensualismo y grosería materialista. El arielismo rodoniano está fundado en una concepción elitista: la minoría selecta de los mejores debe guiar a la sociedad siguiendo un ideal desinteresado, lo que redunda en una mayor unidad latinoamericana" '*Arielismo* expresses an idealistic vision of Latin American culture as a model of aristocracy and spiritual elevation in contrast to U.S. culture as an example of sensualism and materialist vulgarity. Rodó's *arielismo* is based on an elitist idea: a select minority of the best should guide society by following a disinterested ideal, which foster greater Latin American unity' (Alfaro Gómez). Definitions this precise of *arielismo* are rare, as the term is often used without explanation. However, Alfaro Gómez's definition includes key points that appear in *Ariel* and, therefore, believes they constitute *arielismo*. As we will see in the pages that follow, this inclusive definition does not correspond to the writers and works generally classified as '*arielistas*'.

There is a general, albeit rarely declared, consensus of the chronology of *arielismo*. First, there was a sort of propaganda phase in which Rodó sent copies of *Ariel* to intellectuals throughout Latin America and Spain, who commented the essay in books and articles (from 1900 to roughly 1910). Next, a pinnacle phase in which the so-called '*arielistas*', such as Francisco García Calderón, Carlos Arturo Torres, Manuel Ugarte, and others, published important essays that dealt with themes or attitudes that appeared in *Ariel*, usually in tangential ways (from approximately 1910 to 1920). Finally, a post-*arielismo* phase, in which we supposedly find ourselves today, that criticizes Rodó, *Ariel*, '*arielismo*', and the '*arielistas*' on numerous fronts. It is important to note, however, that the aforementioned chronological division is ultimately unsatisfactory, as conflicting '*arielista*' pledges and tirades were found in the same countries,

publications, and intellectual societies throughout the 1910s, 20s, and 30s. According to Medardo Vitier, Rodó's *direct* influence, and by implication that of *arielismo*, started to lose its vigor in Latin America around 1915 (117).

But, what is, or was, *arielismo*? Carlos Real de Azúa ponders if it was a systematic ideology or a general "repertoire of attitudes" with tangential connections to the plethora of topics in Rodó's *Ariel* (*Historia* 144)? Is it an ideology that reinforced a liberal, European-descended bourgeoisie? Or, alternatively, does it represent a neo-Romantic idealist doctrine for young people (Real de Azúa, *Historia* 144)? Or, is '*arielismo*' little more than a translation of French revolutionary thought (Real de Azúa, *Historia* 145)? Or, does there exist an *arielista* perspective? (Castro Morales 99). Or, is it an uncomfortable and constantly shifting byproduct of these? The mere articulation of these interrogations indicates the virtual impossibility of making clear a set number of coherent propositions and attitudes that could be defined as an '*arielista* ideology'. However, this critical endeavor has a long and interesting history that figures importantly into the our contemporary understandings of Rodó, *Ariel*, '*arielismo*,' and the '*arielistas*'.

Although critics frequently reference an *arielista* movement, generation, environment, ideal, or spirit in Latin America, there is little consensus about what it is and who are its proponents. As Carlos Real de Azúa ponders, if we acknowledge the existence of '*arielismo*', then there must logically be '*arielistas*' (*Historia* 140). The criteria for deciding who is and is not an '*arielista*' are very flexible and rarely explained. For example, most critics agree that Francisco García Calderón (Peru), Carlos Arturo Torres (Colombia), Rufino Blanco Fombona (Venezuela), and Jesús Castellanos (Cuba) are '*arielistas*'. On the other hand, critics have also frequently labeled the following Latin American writers as '*arielistas*': Víctor Andrés Belaunde,

José de la Riva Agüero (Peru), Manuel Ugarte (Argentina), Pedro and Max Henríquez Ureña (Dominican Republic), Pedro Emilio Coll, Manuel Díaz Rodríguez, César Zumeta (Venezuela), Emilio Gaspar Rodríguez, Fernando Lles y Berdayes (Cuba), Alfonso Reyes, José Vasconcelos, Antonio Caso, Justo Sierra (Mexico), Baldomero Sanín Cano, Miguel Jiménez López, Calixto Torres (Colombia), Joaquín García Monge, Carlos Gagini, Roberto Brenes Mesén (Costa Rica), Alcides Arguedas, Daniel Sánchez Bustamonte (Bolivia), Francisco Contreras (Chile), Gonzalo Zaldumbide, Alfredo Espinosa Tamayo, Alejandro Andrade Coello (Ecuador).[13]

Readers familiar with Latin American literature and history of the early twentieth century will no doubt object to seeing some of the aforementioned names included in the list of '*arielistas*'. Rest assured that I share their healthy skepticism. Of course, the problem with classifying writers as '*arielistas*' is that the label reduces the variety and richness of their body of work. For example, José Ingenieros' *El hombre mediocre* (1911) and *Hacia una moral sin dogmas* (1917) have been labeled '*arielista*' essays, yet the vast majority of his positivist and socio-biological work is antagonistic to the idealism implicit in *arielismo*. Similarly, my reading of even the most '*arielista*' texts, such as Francisco García Calderón's *Les démocraties latines de l'Amérique* (1912), will demonstrate that the stability of the '*arielista*' label is untenable even in its most assumed proponents. At this point, we should consider what could be a valuable question to this investigation: Did the so-called '*arielistas*' ever consider themselves as such?[14]

It is undeniable that many writers throughout Latin America felt an affinity with various aspects of Rodó's *Ariel*. For the most part, if we judge by the assertions of the two most '*arielista*' writers in Latin America, Francisco García Calderón and Carlos Arturo Torres, it is

[13] Of course, this is a partial list compiled of the most commonly-labeled '*arielistas*'. A list of all writers classified as '*arielistas*' would be exhaustive and span many years.
[14] The uses of *arielismo* are not unlike those of *modernismo* in that the latter included a whole canon whose individual members did not uniformly embrace the label '*modernista*'.

clear that they admired and tried to replicate Rodó's philosophy that synthesized positivism and spiritualism. However, García Calderón, Torres, nor any of the other '*arielista*' essayists ever self-identified as '*arielistas*' or wrote about '*arielismo*' as such. The fact that those writers did not adopt that label is significant because it implies that '*arielista*' was largely a posterior construction with a retroactive application, which, as I will point out soon, seems to be the case. More importantly, even the clearest proponents of *arielismo* distanced themselves in no uncertain terms from Rodó's '*arielista*' project. Consider the responses to *Ariel* by two Peruvian '*arielistas*', José de la Riva Agüero (1885-1944) and Francisco García Calderón.[15] In his 1905 undergraduate thesis in philosophy at the Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, José de la Riva Agüero, grandson of Peru's first president, José de la Riva Agüero y Sánchez Boquete, observes a disparity between Rodó's message and Latin American *mestizaje*:

> Si la sinceridad de Rodó no se trasparentara en cada una de sus páginas, era de sospechar que "Ariel" oculta una intención secreta, una sangrienta burla [...] Proponer la Grecia antigua como modelo para una raza contaminada con el híbrido mestizaje con indios y negros; hablarle de recreo y de juego libre de la fantasía a una raza que si sucumbe será por una espantosa frivolidad; celebrar el ocio clásico ante una raza que se muere de pereza! (263)
>
> If Rodó's sincerity was not perceptible in each one of his pages, it was to be suspected that *Ariel* hides a secret intention, a cruel joke […] To propose ancient Greece as a model for a race contaminated by the hybrid racial-mixing with Indians and Blacks; to speak about recreation and an open game of fantasy to a race that if it succumbs it will due to a frightening frivolity; to celebrate Classical

[15] See Osmar Gonzales's *Sanchos fracasados: los arielistas y el pensamiento político peruano* (1996) for a more indepth treatment of *arielismo* in Peru.

leisure before a race that is dying of laziness!'

Whereas Rivas y Agüero disqualifies *arielismo* on the basis of race, García Calderón, who, as I will show in Chapter III of this investigation, also held elitist, conservative, and racist opinions, also notes an incongruity between Rodó's idealism and the material circumstances of Latin American countries. In *La creación de un continente* (1913), generally cited as one of the most '*arielista*' texts in Latin American literature, García Calderón observes that "Rodó aconseja el ocio clásico en repúblicas amenazadas por una abundante burocracia, el reposo consagrado a la alta cultura, cuando la tierra solicta todos los esfuerzos, y de la conquista de la riqueza nace un brillante materialismo. Su misma campaña liberal, enemiga del estrecho dogmatismo, parece extraña en estas naciones abrumadas por una doble herencia católica y jacobina" 'Rodó advises Classical leisure pursuits in republics threatened by an abundant bureaucracy, repose dedicated to high culture, when the earth seeks all efforts, and from the conquest of riches comes a brilliant materialism. His very liberal campaign, enemy of narrow-minded dogmatism, seems foreign to these nations overwhelmed by a double Catholic and Jacobine inheritance' (257). These two examples of so-called '*arielistas*' distancing themselves from Rodó's project at key moments of '*arielismo*', in 1905 and 1913, are by no means the only examples of writers who at times approved of Rodó's idealism and at other times had their differences with aspects of his essay. In the following chapters of this study, I will highlight a plethora of instance of uncomfortable negotiations, resistances, and accommodations of an '*arielista*' project by Latin American essayists.

Although relatively brief, *Ariel* is a complex, eclectic essay full of intertextuality that glosses numerous themes. For this reason, it has been difficult for critics to articulate what exactly constitutes *arielismo*. As Romeo Pérez Antón notes, the term '*arielismo*' is essentially

polysemic (36). Similarly, I argue that *arielismo* has functioned as a sort of "catch-all" term (Oviedo, "The Modern Essay" 371) for essays that were written in the two decades following the publication of *Ariel* that deal, whether directly or indirectly, with similar themes. Or, to put it another way, *arielismo* has been a vaguely defined, all inclusive term, a kind of shifter of Latin American identity. Alberto Zum Felde defines *arielismo* with more precision: "la reacción del humanismo tradicional latino, de sus valores (o *idealidades*) intelectuales y estéticos, frente al seco positivismo y utilitarismo pragmático (éste, representado entonces por la América del Norte)" 'the reaction of traditional, Latin humanism, and its intellectual and aesthetic values (or *ideals*), opposed to dried up positivism and pragmatic utilitarianism (the latter represented at that time by the United States)' (*Índice crítico* 311). In contrast, according to Joaquín Roy, who considers the label of *'arielismo*' as a negative byproduct of Rodó's essay, defines '*arielismo*' as "a pervading trend that consists of a Latin American moral or spiritual superiority, rejecting measures of modern development, and consistently blaming the United States for all the ills of Latin America" (1501).

As Mabel Moraña notes, *Ariel*, and to a larger extent *arielismo*, elude easy and clear definitions (664). The challenge in summarizing what *arielismo* is lies in the vagueness of a plethora of key terms (such as spirit, morality, personality, religiosity) and the transcendent nature of the varied themes in Rodó's essay. The imprecise and loaded nature of these terms, as well as their combative implications in contested geopolitical, sociological, and philosophical terrains, in part explains the difficulty in articulating what constitutes *arielismo*. If *Ariel* is so many things, then how can *arielismo*, a derivative of the original text, be expected to be one phenomenon?

For Eduardo Devés Valdés, for example, the '*arielista*' label does not insinuate that those Latin American essayists to whom it has been applied wrote essays similar to Rodó's *Ariel* (35; Leal 376). Rather, there existed an *arielista* circuit or environment in which "una serie de autores, de ideas, de obras que de una u otra manera…fueron reunidos por la obra del uruguayo" 'a series of authors, ideas, works that in one way or another…were brought together by Rodó's essay' (Devés Valdés 35). Based on this imprecise criteria ("in one way or another") or tangential connections with *Ariel*, Devés Valdés argues that some essayists are '*arielistas*'. Martin Stabb's *América Latina en busca de una identidad*, although written in the late 1960s, remains one of the most direct attempts to understand what exactly constitutes *arielismo*. Like Devés Valdés, Stabb refers to "una especie de círculo interno de arielistas" ('a sort of internal circle of *arielistas*'), but also acknowledges the generalizations that result from efforts to characterize an '*arielista*' movement (63). To his credit, Stabb proceeds from this point, whereas many critics before and after him, in Latin America as well as the United States and Europe, tend to refer to *arielismo* as a coherent cultural movement with clear practitioners. To that end, Stabb identifies a number of commonalities shared by members of the *arielista* movement. For Stabb, *arielismo* is primarily an elitist worldview based on humanistic philosophy with anti-utilitarian and anti-positivist convictions (63). Aside from these four components, Stabb believes it is difficult to identify other common denominators of *arielismo*. For example, he denies that there is an '*arielista*' literary style or that anti-Americanist sentiment in Latin America owes its origins to Rodó's essay (64). Moreover, Stabb clearly tries to protect Rodó, the master, from critics of *arielismo*. Instead, Rodó's disciples, in their varied interpretations of the Uruguayan's text, deserve the brunt of the anti-*arielista* critiques that center on the issues of a pompous literary style, snobbery, and racism (Stabb 66-68). In fact, Stabb is

most critical of Carlos Arturo Torres and Francisco García Calderón, two essayists that the majority of critics who have written about this topic agree are the clearest adherents of *arielismo* (67-68). Perhaps the most revealing thing about Stabb's analysis of *arielismo* is that his willingness to label it a movement is complicated by his insistence that its defining characteristics in fact have very little to do with Rodó's essay. Moreover, how can *arielismo* exist, or have existed, if its primary practitioners are viewed as little more than distortions of a 'master' narrative? Is *arielismo*, then, nothing more than a negative by-product of *Ariel*? And if so, then how does this constitute a movement?

5.1 U.S. Arielism

Rodó's *Ariel* became immensely popular in Latin America. However, some studies argue that Rodó's text crossed the border north to the United States, where, as American historian Fredrick B. Pike maintains, "many Americans…sympathized with the Arielist credo" (194). Not only that, in *The United States and Latin America: Myths and Stereotypes of Civilization and Nature* (1992), Pike talks about a "turn-of-the-century spirit of American Arielism" (196). For Pike, as well as Margaret Lindauer, U.S. Arielism consists of a directive class who sees itself as the guardians of culture against crass materialism (Pike 194; Lindauer 121-128). In a more general sense, however, Pike, more so than Lindauer, interprets any positive comments made by someone in the United States about anything related to Latin America, no matter how superficial and quotidian, as evidence of U.S. Arielism. More importantly, the chronology that Pike establishes is problematic, as are the representatives of U.S. Arielism that he cites. For example, Pike refers to Theodore Roosevelt's Arielism, which revolves around a materialism/nature dialectic he reads in Roosevelt's *The Winning of the West* (1889-1896) (Pike 205). Theodore

Roosevelt is indeed an odd choice for a representative of Arielism. First, he embodies U.S. imperialism and expansionism in Latin America in the first decade of the twentieth century. In 1904, shortly after U.S. intervention resulted in the secession of Panama and the U.S. received rights to the Panama Canal, Rubén Darío famously denounced Roosevelt as an insatiable imperialist who lacks a moral and spiritual compass. It is curious that Pike reads Roosevelt's *The Winning of the West*, a multivolume work that frames war, conquest, and subjugation as necessary for development and progress, as an example of U.S. Arielism.

In addition to Pike's malleable definitive characteristics of U.S. Arielism, chronology is also a problem. Rodó's *Ariel* was published in 1900 and not translated into English until the early 1920s. *Ariel* was not a popular text in the United States at the turn of the century. In fact, the most direct challenges to Rodó's message at that time came from Latin Americans in New York. For example, Cuban writer and literary critic Francisco García Cisneros, who lived in New York for many years, exchanged letters with Rodó after the publication of *Ariel*. In those letters, García Cisneros contradicted Rodó's insinuations that the United States is a country essentially devoid of high culture. García Cisneros, as well as another Cuban living in New York, Eulogio Horta, were chroniclers of U.S. cultural and intellectual life, and both criticized Rodó's assertions in unfavorable reviews of *Ariel* in 1901. Pike also cites Henry Stimson, a former Secretary of War for the United States, as a practitioner of U.S. Arielism. According to Pike, Stimson's belief that material prosperity enables a directive class to be more altruistic is a "variation" of Arielism (255). The final representative of U.S. Arielism seems much less egregious than the bellicose figures of Roosevelt and Stimson: writer Waldo Frank. A prolific novelist and essayists, Frank often wrote about Latin America. In his book, *Our America* (1919), Frank paints the United States as less spiritual than Latin America, which perpetuates the

Ariel/Caliban significations outlined in *Ariel*.[16] Frank delivered lectures in Mexico, Peru, and Argentina in 1929 and continued to write about Latin America until the 1960s. While it is clear that Frank had read Martí and Rodó, it is less challenging to situate him as a practitioner of a U.S. Arielism than it is Roosevelt or Stimson. The appropriation of *arielismo* by Pike produces startling results. While the inclusion of Waldo Frank is understandable, seeing Theodore Roosevelt in Pike's roll call of U.S. *arielistas* is less convincing. In the end, speaking of a U.S. Arielism seems a stretch, especially if we take into account that Latin Americanists continue wonder if a Latin American *arielismo* existed.

5.2 History of *Arielismo*

About a century has passed since the pinnacle of *arielismo*. This does not mean, however, that its influence was restricted to the first two decades of the twentieth century. Its echo can still be heard in curricula, political agendas, and personal and collective identitary imaginings. The idea of *arielismo* deserves another look not just because of an arbitrary chronological coincidence, that is, the fact that I am writing a century after its reported pinnacle. It is relevant to consider the components that constitute *arielismo* because the term has larger, extra-literary implications. For example, Emir Rodríguez Monegal argues that more than just an elegant piece of prose, *Ariel* outlines a sort of cultural sociology for Latin Americans ("Introducción" 99). Moreover, *Ariel* and *arielismo* have continued to be a source, though not always identified as such, of a recurring set of ideas (or a powerful if vaguely defined *ideario*) throughout Latin American in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Contemporary uses of the idea of *arielismo* vary and permeate literary as well as geopolitical arenas. Today *arielismo*

[16] Perhaps Waldo Frank is who Margaret Lindauer had in mind when she states that U.S. Arielism as being particularly intense in the years following World War I (121).

primarily connotes a North/South dichotomy, a rhetoric of "us" versus "them." However, if such a dichotomy is evident in Rodó's text, its transformation into a central, overpowering 'message' does not account for the complex web of responses to *Ariel* during the last century. For example, Pedro Henríquez Ureña, one of the foremost supporters of Rodó's essay and project, speaks about *arielismo* as if it were a palpable presence in Latin America after its publication: "Durante muchos años, desde México y las Antillas hasta la Argentina y Chile, todo el mundo leyó y discutió el *Ariel*, y el 'arielismo' substituyó a la 'nordomanía', cuando menos entre muchos de los jóvenes" 'For many years, from Mexico and the Antilles to Argentina and Chile, everyone read and discussed *Ariel*, and '*arielismo*' substituted fascination with U.S. culture, especially among many of the young people' (183). In a similar way, Carlos Real de Azúa describes '*arielismo*' as a type of youth ethos (*Historia* 139). In his seminal book *Divergent Modernities*, Julio Ramos refers to a variety of defining characteristics of *arielismo*, such as the advocacy of spiritual, aesthetic, and moral matters in order to counteract the materialism espoused by modernity, and the cultural opposition of Anglo-Saxon and Latin (50-51; 156). Alan McPherson calls *arielismo* a "full-blown social and intellectual movement" (84). Moreover, Carlos Real de Azúa mentions "el eco de su mensaje ariélico" 'the eco of [Rodó's] *arielist* message' (*Historia* 133). Just as there are those who speak about *arielismo* as if it were a coherent movement with a series of defining characteristics, directly derived from key points in *Ariel* (Stabb 62-70), a counter critical trend also exists.

Since the end of World War I, there has been an ongoing process of "revisions and updates" (Real de Azúa, *Historia* 146) of *arielismo* and the *arielistas*. During this time, essentially all aspects of *Ariel* have been criticized at some point. Ideologically and aesthetically, critics, especially from the left, attack Rodó's classist worldview, which is rather

unharmonious despite Rodó's insistences that he advocates harmony, his rather hollow vacuous idealism, and his naïve religiosity (Real de Azúa, *Historia* 149). In addition, the historical changes in the following decades called into question the relevance of Rodó's view. As Carlos Jáuregui observes, *Ariel* was the product of a specific moment in time and therefore could not have anticipated pivotal moments like World War I, worker movements, and leftist revolutions (*Canibalia* 359). Indeed, when Rodó's message encountered socialist ideas in the 1920s, people began to differentiate between right-wing and left-wing *arielismos* (Devés Valdés 98-99). Not only that, acerbic critics attacked the foundations and implications of *arielismo* in the new decade. According to Hugo Torrano, whose attempt to rescue Rodó from attacts is manifest in the title of his book, *Rodó: acción y libertad: restauración de su imagen* (1973), in the post-World War I years it became fashionable to criticize Rodó and his work in derogatory and inexact ways (72). For leftist proponents, *arielismo*'s aristocratic mindset reinforced a hierarchical status quo based on social inequality. Moreover, Rodó's fascination with Europe, in conjunction with his erasure of indigenous cultures, led some critics to point out that the Uruguayan's call for a unity of purpose in shared ideals and in "the life of the mind," written in the style of a self-proclaimed *modernista*, ignored Latin American realities. In this critical vein, for instance, Peruvian socialist thinker José Carlos Mariátegui wasted no time in dismissing *arielismo* as anachronistic and out of touch with reality. In "La revolución socialista latinoamericana" (1929), Mariátegui affirms,

> Es ridículo hablar todavía del contraste entre una América sajona materialista y una América Latina idealista, entre una Roma rubia y una Grecia pálida. Todos éstos son tópicos irrremisiblemente desacreditados. El mito de Rodó no obra ya—no ha obrado nunca—útil y fundamentalmente sobre las almas.

> Descartemos, inexorablemente, todas esas caricaturas de ideologías y lugares y hagamos las cuentas, seria y francamente con la realidad. (119)
>
> It is ridiculous to continue to talk about the contrast between a materialist Saxon America and an idealist Latin America, between a blond Rome and a pale Greece. All these are topics irremissibly discredited. The myth of Rodó no longer works—it has never worked—in a useful and fundamental way on anyone's soul. Let's adamantly reject all those caricatures of ideologies and places and let's figure things out by engaging in a serious and frank way with reality.

Likewise, Uruguayan critic and historian Alberto Zum Felde, a critic of Rodó and his work since 1913, saw Rodó not as an emancipatory figure, but a conservative (*Proceso* 223).

Other Marxist writers in Latin America continued reworking the symbolic representations of Ariel, Caliban, and Prospero between 1930 and the 1970s. Take, for instance, the case of poet Juan Zorrilla de San Martín (1855-1931), who is in his own right, like Rodó, a mythical figure in Uruguay. His poem, *Tabaré* (1888), is the national poem for Uruguay and his face adorns the 20 peso note. In an essay entitled "Ariel y Calibán americanos," published in *Detalles de historia* (1930), Zorrilla de San Martín argues that Ariel is an "unstable" and ineffective symbol for Latin American unity (213). He also pushes back against Rodó's idea that the U.S. is less spiritual, altruistic, and culturally refined than Latin America (215-233). For that reason, he embraces Caliban because it symbolizes progress. Another poet, Peruvian Luis Humberto Delgado (1889-1967) also argues that Ariel is an antiquated metaphor for Latin America. In *El suplicio de Ariel* (1935), Delgado states that "La lámpara de *ARIEL* [*sic*], gasta sus fulgores en la tiniebla. La llama de aquella luz, permanece encendida en un credo que los gobiernos de la América republicana no comprenden" '*ARIEL*'s lamp wastes its glow in the darkness. The flame of that

light remains lit in a creed that the governments of American republics do not understand' (22). Likewise, Argentine writer Aníbal Ponce (1898-1938) refashions the metaphoric significations of the protagonists of *The Tempest* in a way that highlights the obsolescence of Ariel. In "Ariel o la agonía de una obstinada ilusión" in *Humanismo burgués y humanismo proletario* (1938), Ponce proposes Caliban as representative of the rebellion of the proletariat against a despot (Prospero). For Ponce, Ariel is nothing more than Prospero's slave.[17] These alterations and criticisms of *Ariel* by Mariátegui, Zum Felde, Zorrilla de San Martín, Delgado, and Ponce are significant, but the most devastating attack on *arielismo* took place in the 1940s.

According to Real de Azúa, Peruvian politician Luis Alberto Sánchez (1900-1994) is the critic most responsible for giving the term '*arielismo*' a negative, polemical connotation that it previously did not have (*Historia* 127). In *Balance y liquidación del novecientos: ¿Tuvimos maestros en nuestra América?* (1941),[18] Sánchez, a politician of the Peruvian Aprista Party who served as Vice President, Senator, and briefly as the Prime Minister of Peru, reassesses Rodó's influence on his generation. For Sánchez, this painful but necessary exercise in "spiritual hygiene" (27) reveals a paradox of *arielismo*. While the *arielistas* were idealistic and focused on regeneration, they feared social renovation that may unsettle the intellectual and social oligarchy for which the text was written (106). For Sánchez, then, *arielismo* was the expression of the status quo. For this reason, Sánchez recognizes the *arielistas* as authorities of aesthetics, but not of ethics (126). Sánchez's attack on the legacy of *arielismo* is devastating mostly due loosely-based criteria against which he defines *arielismo* and identifies the *arielistas*.

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[17] See Jáuregui, *Canibalia* 371-373 for more information about Ponce's engagement with *arielismo*.

[18] The anti-*arielista* critiques outlined in *Balance y liquidación* are anticipated in an article Sánchez wrote in 1933 called "El Anti-Rodó."

For example, in *¿Existe América Latina?* (1945), Sánchez, as he did earlier in *Balance y liquidación del novecientos*, lumps Rodó and *arielismo* in with diagnostic essays, like the pessimistic and positivist texts of Carlos Octavio Bunge, César Zumeta, and Alcides Arguedas. In fact, Sánchez declares that they are principle generators of an anti-*mestizaje* ideology: "Durante un período de la historia latinoamericana prosperó mucho la tesis de la 'degeneración' mestiza. Eran los días de Rodó y los arielistas. A fuerza de pretender crear una Grecia —o una Francia— imposible en nuestro suelo mestizo, se perdió de vista la realidad y se convirtió en doctrina sociológica lo que no pasaba de ser un sueño literario" 'During a period of Latin American history the thesis of the degeneration of the mixed-race people thrived. Those were the days of Rodó and the *arielistas*.' By pretending to create a Greece –or a France—impossible in our racially-mixed lands, they lost site of reality and converted what could not be more than a literary dream into a sociological doctrine' (Sánchez, *Existe* 108). In *Ariel* Rodó was explicit about the need to transcend the confines of positivism. At the same time, he did not deal with the issue of race in Latin America, other than to insist on its Greco-Roman lineage. This is why Sánchez's expansive list of *arielistas* is striking. Bunge's *Nuestra América* (1903), an essay that examines the ill effects of racial hybridization from a zoological and evolutionary perspective, could not be more ideologically and aesthetically different from Rodó's *Ariel*. Sánchez also argues that *Ariel*, which was published in 1900, was a direct influence on Venezuelan writer César Zumeta's *El continente enfermo*, which was published in 1899. Furthermore, by using *novecentismo*, *arielismo*, *modernismo* as synonyms, Sánchez simultaneously exaggerates the status of *arielismo* in order to criticize its expansive influence. These incongruities underscore the principle criticism of Sánchez's approach: he classifies virtually all writers and essays written

between 1900 (or even before) and the 1930s as '*arielistas*', even when their perspectives and works are antithetical to Rodó's.

For Real de Azúa, whose critical work views Rodó in a very positive light, Sánchez's reading of Rodó, *Ariel*, and *arielismo* are inaccurate. Sánchez's criticism were not really about Rodó or his text, but rather an obsession to "Fundar la paternidad rodoniana sobre el grupo –para él aborrecido—de sus "*arielistas*"... […] Y ha querido, lo que resulta inaceptable, encontrar en Rodó la fuente de los rasgos peores que éstos habrían portado" 'establish Rodó's paternity of the group –which he detested— of his "*arielistas*"… […] And he wants, which is unacceptable, to find in Rodó the source of the worst features that those writers had (Real de Azúa, *Historia* 129). While Real de Azúa's critiques of Sánchez's anti-*arielismo* are astute, the Uruguayan critic also has his blind spots with respect to Rodó. While Sánchez distorts the contours of *arielismo*, Real de Azúa does not critique Rodó's elitist attitudes and essential erasure of indigenous, black, and *mestizo* Latin Americans.

Carlos Jáuregui's recent interventions into *arielismo* in Bolivia in the 1950s are undoubtedly among the most valuable. In his 2004 article, "Arielismo e imaginario indigenista en la Revolución Boliviana: *Sariri: una réplica al "Arielismo" de Rodó* (1954)," Jáuregui deconstructs the criticisms of *arielismo* before, during, and after the Bolivian Revolution of 1952. For example, there were those, such as Bolivian writer and diplomat Raúl Botelho Gosálvez (1917-2004), who harbored anti-communist sentiments during the Cold War in 1950 and therefore identified Caliban not with a materialist spirit from the United States, but rather with the USSR (Botelho 17).[19] However, Bolivian writer Fernando Díez de Medina (1908-1990) offers a fascinating and contradictory critique of Rodó in *Sariri: una réplica al "Ariel" de Rodó*

[19] Venezuelan journalist Carlos Rangel makes a similar assertion (142).

(1954). Despite Díez de Medina's initial praises for Rodó, he insists that *arielismo* is not a viable option to adopt in the wake of the Bolivian Revolution of 1952:

> los sudamericanos de hoy, crecidos en la dramática perplejidad de dos guerras mundiales [...] en el umbral tal vez de una tercera se preguntan: ¿El arielismo es una utopía idealista o un instrumento de edificación colectiva? ¿Conservan vigencia las ideas del maestro, en el mundo actual sembrado de pasión y confusión? La democracia idealizada que predicó el pensador ¿coincide con el tumulto y el retraso de nuestra América mestiza? [...] la síntesis simbólica de Calibán y Ariel peca de simplista [...;] el 'arielismo' es un producto demasiado literario [...]. El idealismo estético, didactizante, de Rodó no es para nosotros lo que fue para nuestros padres [... y] carece de significación social. [... S]e necesitan herramientas mejor templadas que el finísimo estilete de 'Ariel', para construir la dura América presente. [... L]a palabra rodoniana no sirve en estos años convulsos. (11-13)
>
> the South Americans of today, brought up in the dramatic perplexities of two world wars […] in the threshold of perhaps a third ask themselves: Is *arielismo* an idealistic utopia or an instrument of collective edification? Are the master's ideas still applicable in the current world rife with passion and confusion? The idealized democracy that the Uruguayan thinker preached, does it coincide with the tumult and backwardness of our racially-mixed America? […] the symbolic synthesis of Caliban and Ariel is too simplistic […;] '*arielismo*' is too much of a literary product […]. Rodó's aesthetic and didactical idealism is not for us what it was for our parents [… and] it lacks social significance. […] More properly

> tuned tools than the Ariel's very thin stylus are needed in order to build a strong American present. […] Rodó's words are not useful in these convulsed years.

In his adept approach to Díez de Medina's text, Jáuregui demonstrates that despite these harsh criticisms, the Bolivian writer actually reconstructs a kind of replica of the symbolic protagonists in Rodó's essay. Instead of characters inherited from Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, however, Díez de Medina uses mythical figures from indigenous folklore. He replaces Ariel with Thunupa, Caliban with Makuri, and Prospero with Sariri (Jáuregui 161). Thunupa represents the State, liberal democracy, and the pedagogical and disciplinary teachings of a directive minority. Makuri symbolizes the masses, revolution, and class conflict. While Sariri sees the conflict between Thunupa and Makuri (Ariel and Caliban), he endorses the humanitarian and paternalistic stances of Thunupa aimed at educating the indigenous and working class masses and incorporating them into a disciplinary imaginary of citizenship. In this way, Jáuregui argues, *Sariri*, which is meant to be consumed as an "indigenist redefinition of *arielismo*" (161), actually recreates *Ariel*'s top-down worldview that centers on the man of letters disciplining the masses. In this way, *Sariri* is an *arielista* response to *arielismo* (Jáuregui 156).

Since the 1960s, other writers in Latin America and the Caribbean have reinterpreted Rodó's Ariel/Caliban dichotomy. For instance, in *Une Tempête* (1969) Martinican poet and playwright Aimé Césaire reinterprets Caliban as being representative of colonized peoples who defy their colonizers (Prospero). Probably the best known of these transformations is Cuban essayist and literary critic Roberto Fernández Retamar's *Calibán* (1971). In his meditation on Latin American identity, Fernández Retamar deconstructs *Ariel*'s idealistic and utopic foundations[20] and argues that Caliban, not Ariel, is the symbol for Latin Americans. Fernández

[20] See Becerra 106-107 for a discussion of idealism and utopia in Rodó's essay.

Retamar's reworking of the conceptual characters in *Ariel* has a clear anti-colonialist objective: "Prospero invaded the islands, killed our ancestors, enslaved Caliban, and taught him his language to make himself understood. What else can Caliban do but use that same language – today he has no other—to curse him, to wish that the "red plague" would fall on him? I know no other metaphor more expressive of our cultural situation, of our reality. […] –what is our history, what is our culture, if not the history and culture of Caliban?" (14).

In *Historia de la nación latinoamericana* (1968), Argentine politician and historian Jorge Abelardo Ramos (1921-1994) calls Rodó "el predicador del '*statu quo*'" (317). In contrast to other Latin American writers who blatantly denounce U.S. hegemony in Latin America, like Manuel Ugarte or José María Vargas Vila, Abelardo Ramos sees Rodó as a sort of coward whose meagre criticisms of the United States, i.e., that their citizens work hard towards materialist goals and embrace religiosity, are borderline compliments. Moreover, like many other critics of Rodó before him, Ramos ridicules the Uruguayan's elitism and its incompatibility for Latin American peoples: "El orador estetizante del Uruguay inmóvil se inquieta ante el genio emprendedor de los norteamericanos prácticos. No condena explícitamente las tropelías yanquis, sino su estilo pragmático. Propone un retorno a Grecia, aunque omite indicar los caminos para que los indios, mestizos, peones y pongos de América Latina mediten en sus yerbales, fundos o cañaverales sobre una cultura superior" 'The aestheticizing speaker from the motionless Uruguay worries about the undertaking spirit of the practical North Americans. He does not explicitly condemn the Yankee's outrageous acts, but rather his pragmatic style. He proposes a return to Greece, even though he omits pointing out the paths for Indians, *mestizos*, laborers, and servants in Latin America to meditate about a superior culture in their plantations, farms, or reedbeds' (317).

In *Del buen salvaje al buen revolucionario* (1976), Venezuelan journalist Carlos Rangel interrogates the myths that inform Latin American identity from a Marxist perspective that since the 1920s has been common. In a section dedicated to the Ariel/Caliban polarity, Rangel recognizes the importance of Rodó's essay in the history of ideas in Latin America, but calls it "un libro tan superficial y tan pomposo" 'such a superficial and pompous book' (137). In his deconstruction of *Ariel*, which involves juxtaposing quotes from Rodó's essay with frank translations in Marxist language, Rangel insists that the *arielista* myth owes its survival to misreadings of the Uruguayan's text: "Si alguien de veras se toma el trabajo de releerlo, probablemente repone el tomo sigilosamente en su sitio, con cierta vergüenza, por lo que revela no sobre los norteamericanos (que es prácticamente nada) sino sobre nosotros mismos" 'If someone really takes the time to re-read it carefully, s/he will quietly replace the volume in its place, with some shame, for what it reveals not about North Americans (which is practically nothing) but rather about ourselves' (138). Overall, Rangel argues that trying to pose Latin Americans as more spiritual and the U.S. as more materialistic is absurd because Latin American ruling classes, for whom Rodó's essay was written, have taken their cues about governance, culture, and economics from the United States (121, 138).

Rangel's criticisms of Rodó received an immediate and direct response from Uruguayan literary critic Arturo Ardao. In *Del mito Ariel al mito Anti-Ariel* (1977), Ardao maintains that Rangel, and other critics of Rodó, distorts *Ariel* to fit their agendas. Against this anti-*Ariel* trend, Ardao revisits the foundational trope of Rodó's text, the Ariel/Caliban dialectic, because he feels it is most responsible for misunderstandings and biases:

> En este punto llegamos a lo que es la clave de bóveda del mito Anti-Ariel en todas sus versiones: la equivocada creencia de que para Rodó América Latina es Ariel o

> la residencia de Ariel o está representada o simbolizada por Ariel; con el añadido, a la vez, de que Ariel mismo, para Rodó, representa o simboliza el sueño o el ensueño. Ello, en contraste con Estados Unidos, ciertamente simbolizado en su obra por Calibán, desde que es en efecto, a su juicio, "la encarnación del verbo utilitario." (*Nuestra América Latina* 133)
>
> At this point we arrive at what is the key to the vault of the Anti-*Ariel* myth in all its versions: the mistaken believe that for Rodó Latin America is Ariel o the residence of Ariel o is represented or symbolized by Ariel; with the addition, at the same time, that Ariel itself, for Rodó, represents or symbolizes the act of dreaming or fantasizing. All of this contrasts with the United States, which is certainly symbolized in his work by Caliban, since it is in effect, in his judgment, "the embodiment of the utilitarian verb."

Now, it is important to note that Ardao directs his reproach just as much at the '*arielistas*' as the 'anti-*arielistas*', as he believes both factions are equally responsible for perpetuating reductive interpretations of Rodó's essay based on the Ariel/Caliban polarity (*Nuestra América Latina* 133). Ardao, then, encourages a more nuanced reading of *Ariel* and its influence in Latin America. Despite his insistences, however, the practice of reading *Ariel*, or *arielismo*, in terms of a spiritual superiority of Latin America versus a utilitarian and materialist United States remains pervasive.[21]

Throughout the last sixty years, *arielismo* in an extra-literary sense has been synonymous with political liberation and cultural agency. For example, the anti-imperialism that became associated with *Ariel* and its legacy is certainly evident in the rhetoric of the Cuban Revolution,

[21] See, for example, a recent article about Rodó in the newspaper *El País* (Uruguay) entitled "Lo espiritual y lo político" which examines Rodó's legacy in terms of this dialectic (Courtoisie).

although, as it is well known, it proclaimed José Martí as its "intellectual author." More recently in the twenty-first century, some consider that in Hugo Chávez's rhetoric there are echoes of *arielismo*.[22] Take, for instance, the recently-deceased Venezuelan President's defiant anti-Americanism in March 2006, when Chávez directly addressed President George W. Bush as "Mr. Danger" (a character in Venezuelan writer Rómulo Gallegos's novel, *Dóna Bárbara*, 1929) and called him a litany of insults, such as ignorant, immoral, psychologically ill, a liar, a donkey, a coward, a murderer, a drunk, and the worst thing on the planet (BBC). Later, in September 2006, Chávez spoke at the United Nations in New York City, denounced President George W. Bush's imperialist campaigns, and called him "the devil" while crossing himself (Reals). These two instances are reminiscent of important themes in Rodó's essay in that Chávez openly denounces imperialism and views Latin America as spiritually superior to the United States (as Chávez crosses himself while calling Bush the devil) (Lomnitz 103). More recently, in December of 2011, Chávez called President Barack Obama a "clown" and an "embarrassment" (Weinger). In the wake of Chávez's death in March of 2013, two U.S. ambassadors were expelled from Venezuela due to unfounded claims of espionage. Despite Castro and Chávez's anti-imperialist stances that align them with a dichotomous understanding of *arielismo*, others see these two leaders as embodiments of Caliban (Duchesne Winter). Chávez, a self-identified *mestizo* and paramilitary soldier from a poor neighborhood, and very popular with the people, was certainly not the kind of leader that Rodó had envisioned for Latin American nations. Therefore, associating Chávez with *arielismo* shows the changes in signification that the term continues to undergo.[23]

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[22] See, for example, http://waytowonderlandnet.blogspot.com/p/textos.html.
[23] Others, such as Martín Santiváñez Vivanco, diferentiate between Rodó's antiimperialist discourse and that of Chávez.

Arielismo has also been adapted and incorporated into the armed conflicts during the last sixty years in Latin America. For example, some have called the guerrilla movements throughout Latin America, such as the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) in Colombia and the Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional in Chiapas, Mexico in the 1990s, "un arielismo con metralleta" 'a machine gun arielism' (Posadas). Similarly, bloggers, following Uruguayan intellectual Alberto Methol Ferré's lead, have identified leftist student movements, such as the Frente Estudiantil Revolucionario (FER), as "arielismo armado" ('armed arielism'). Very recently, Néstor Gorojovsky, administrator of a leftist listserv in Argentina, *Reconquista Popular* (*R-P*), speaks about the Lybian Revolution of 2011 as an example of *arielismo armado*. In a much less bellicose sense, John Beverley describes the resistance by some scholars in Latin America to adopt subaltern studies, elaborated in the U.S. academy, as a kind of *neo-arielismo*, that is, as gesture of defiance against the imposition of critical paradigms meant to study Latin American realities that originate in the United States (24). Just in the last decade, then, the term '*arielismo*' has become synonymous with anti-imperialism, whether military, cultural, economic, or political. In short, today '*arielismo*' is broadly interpreted as resistance.

Recent incursions into Rodó's essay by Latin American literary critics reveal Rodó as a sort of antiquated, but nonetheless significant, presence today. Between 2000 and 2002, many critics seized the opportunity read Rodó's essay from a new century. One of the most valuable collections of this type is *Arielismo y globalización* (2002), edited by Leopoldo Zea and Hernán Taboada, which is comprised of ten essays written by Latin American critics and published in Mexico. Most of the essays in this collection summarize key points of Rodó's *Ariel* and recognize its dynamic character as well as its paradoxes. However, efforts to consider the essay's relevance in Latin America in a new century are largely absent. A notable exception is

the article written by Uruguayan intellectual Alberto Methol Ferré. Methol Ferré frames *Ariel* within the context of the variegated forms of Latin American unity throughout the next century, emphasizing Rodó's influence on Ugarte and García Calderón, and ends his piece with Mercosur (Mercado Común del Sur), a free trade agreement among most South American countries established in 1991 (34). Now, Methol Ferré does not draw a direct genealogy between *Ariel* and Mercosur, but rather argues that they are two disparate pieces in a common continental history.

A valuable way of considering the influence of *arielismo* in Latin America today is to see how, or if, it informs the ongoing student movements in Chile. After all, the empowerment of youth is one of the primary components of *Ariel*. However, as we have seen, the Ariel/Caliban dialectic as well as the Rodó's elusion of the question of race are traditionally the essay's most polemic and commented features. The *movilización estudiantil chileno* (Chilean Student Movement), composed of groups such as the Federación de Estudiantes de la Universidad de Chile (University of Chile Student Federation) [FECh], Federación de Estudiantes de la Universidad Católica de Chile (Catholic University of Chile Student Federation) [FEUC], Federación de Estudiantes de la Universidad de Santiago de Chile (University of Santiago of Chile Student Federation) [FEUSACH], and others, began in 2006 and picked up steam in 2011 and 2012, when news outlets around the world covered the sometimes violent encounters between protestors and police. As of March 3, 2013, it was announced that the student movement is gearing up to forward their agenda in this election year. Days later, the first demonstration of 2013 on March 7 ended in confrontations with police and dozens of arrests. Their diverse platform calls for more transparency, augmented funding of

education by the State, larger access to education, and a renovation of the university as an institution of traditionalism and exclusivity.

The exponential growth in technology and social media has facilitates a sort of real time ethnography of the Chilean student movement. Twitter, Facebook, and other online forums published during or soon after important marches and events offer us previously unimagined access to student leaders and their platforms for the movement. *La Chispa* is one of the most informative and frequently updated sites administered by "estudiantes de la Universidad de Chile que buscan generar una corriente de pensamiento y acción revolucionaria que dispute el proyecto neoliberal de Universidad que hoy existe" 'students of the University of Chile who endeavor to generate a school of thought and revolutionary action that dispute the neoliberal project of University that exists today' ("¿Quiénes Somos?"). In an article from 2011, at the height of the Chilean student movement, graduate student Matías Marambio de la Fuente, examines the question if whether or not *neoarielismo* is an adequate label for the movement:

> Medio en serio y medio en broma, una de las consignas con las que salimos a marchas algunxs[24] compañerxs fue 'Neoarielistas indignadxs'. La pregunta era: ¿qué es el neoarielismo? Y, más aún, ¿qué tiene que ver con el movimiento estudiantil? Son preguntas estrechamente ligadas. Si entendemos, como yo entiendo, al neoarielismo como crítica latinoamericanista…de la hegemonía del saber utilitario, a la vez que como afirmación del valor fundamental de la educación/experiencia estética, entonces es posible vislumbrar algunas conexiones. No hay un vínculo natural entre neoarielismo y movimiento

[24] 'x' blurs the lines of gender by replacing the masculine 'o' and feminine 'a'.

> estudiantil, como tampoco lo hubo entre arielismo y reforma universitaria. Lo que sí hay, son posibilidades. (Marambio de la Fuente)
>
> Half serious and half in jest, one of the slogans that some comrades use in marches was 'Angry Neoarielists'. The question was: what is neoarielism? And better yet, what does it have to do with the student movement? They are closely connected questions. If we understand, as I do, arielism as a Latin Americanist critique of the hegemony of utilitarian knowledge, and at the same time as an affirmation of the fundamental value of an aesthetic education/experience, then it is possible to glimpse some connections. There is not a natural link between neoarielism and the student movement, just as there was not one between arielism and the university reform. What there are, are possibilities.

The possibilities highlighted in his article reveal important differences between his interpretation of *arielismo* and *neoarielismo*. First, Marambio de la Fuente clarifies that his interpretation of *neoarielismo* in the context of the Chilean student movement has nothing to do with the ruling classes guiding the masses in their image. Rather, *neoarielismo* is foremost a critique of neoliberalism, which institutes "a social order that sees any object as potentially privatizable and subject to the irrational logic of capital." Marambio de la Fuente recognizes that this coincides with Rodó's critique of *nordomanía*, or materialist obsession. In fact, the author calls for intellectuals to defend the validity of arts and humanities in university curriculum. Marambio de la Fuente's thoughts on *neoarielismo* offer some insight into the adaptation of Rodó's ideology to new circumstances. There are, then, clear ideological similarities, and significant disparities, between *arielismo* and *neoarielismo* (as explicated by Marambio de la Fuente). However, neither he nor any other participants in the Chilean student movement that I have found self-

identify as '*arielistas*' or '*neoarielistas*'. Even though Rodó and *arielismo* rarely figure into the Chilean student movement, Marambio de la Fuente addressed this topic for a reason. The platform of *any* student movement or activism could be correlated to *Ariel* in one way or another because of the imprecise and multi-layered nature of Rodó's essay. However, it is important to reiterate that the incorporation of *arielismo* into student marches in Chile were "half serious, half joking," which demonstrates an acknowledgment of Rodó as a precursor of the student movement, but ultimately obsolescent in matters of tangible reform in the twenty-first century. However, it is significant that in saying "half serious and half in jest" Marambio de la Fuente brings humor to the topic, which is lacking in Rodó and in much of the discourse generated by his text. In this way, Rodó and *Ariel* are recycled and repurposed in a post-modern gesture very much in line with the metamorphic history *arielismo*.

Although *arielismo* may seem passé, it continues to be used to describe protest movements around the world. Mina Alejandra Navarro argues that the *arielismo* that inspired the *Reforma de Córdoba* is manifest in the Arab Spring of 2010 in Tunisia, Egypt, and other countries in the Middle East, throughout Europe, evident in '*los indignados*' ('the outraged') in Spain, and student riots in London in 2012, as well as in the numerous Occupy movements throughout the world (265). In this sense, '*arielismo*' seems like a desire for change and reform, an expression of dissatisfaction and outrage, a challenge to the status quo, all articulated by youth.

6. Conclusion

The variegated significations of *arielismo* set up a complex, not to mention contradictory, paradigm through which diverse manifestations of spiritualism, materialism, emancipation, and

anti-imperialism are labeled as '*arielismo*'. As we can see, '*arielismo*' has been, since its inception, a flexible set of vaguely defined ideas, powerful perhaps precisely because of its onchoateness and imprecision. Rodó's seminal essay was critiqued not only by ideological opponents, but also by the very practitioners whom critics consider '*arielistas*'. Rodó's essay has held up quite well in the onslaught of attacks over the last century. While it is undoubtedly one of the most important works ever written in Latin America, its ideological coherency largely belongs to another era. Although today Rodó may be the "irritating, insufferable, admirable, stimulating, disappointing" uncle in the family portrait of Latin American literature, as Carlos Fuentes suggests (28), he has left his mark on Latin American consciousness.[25] This may be the ultimate paradox: *arielismo* is viewed as a thing of the past, but one that constantly reappears, in disparate forms, and throughout the globe, in the present. In the end, the labels '*arielismo*' and '*arielista*' are cultural products loosely based on, but ultimately removed from, Rodó's text.

The preceding exploration of *arielismo* in this chapter will contextualize the analysis of so-called '*arielistas*' at the height of '*arielismo*' in Latin America. An exhaustive analysis of all facets of *arielismo* in all essays classified as '*arielistas*' is beyond the scope of my dissertation. Therefore, in the following chapters I have selected the nucleus of some of the most often-cited *arielistas* (Francisco García Calderón, Carlos Arturo Torres, Manuel Ugarte, Carlos Vaz Ferreira), as well as an essayist who I argue has been included in this category without taking into account the complex web of correspondences and contradictions generated by Rodó's ubiquitous essay (Fernando Lles).

[25] See, for example, Oscar Montero's article, "Rodó en el aula latina," in which he observes the ways in which Latino/a students in the Bronx, New York have '*arielista*' perspectives.

Chapter III

Reason, Elitism, and Relativity: Carlos Vaz Ferreira, Carlos Arturo Torres, and *Arielismo*

1. Introduction

Rodó's emphasis on synthesizing the extremisms of positivism and spiritualism continued in varying forms in the writings of subsequent Latin American essayists classified as "*arielistas*." As it was for Rodó, the question of balance was a primary concern for Uruguayan philosopher and Carlos Vaz Ferreira as well as for Colombian politician and essayist Carlos Arturo Torres, both of whom have been, to varying degrees, placed under the "*arielista*" umbrella. Although their respective essays deal with different issues (Vaz Ferreira wrote about philosophy, pedagogy, and culture, while Torres' concerns were primarily political and national), both essayists address the roles of science and philosophy and advocate anti-extremisms based on critical autonomy. In this chapter, I will analyze the ways in which Vaz Ferreira and Torres engage with the *arielista* notion of balance of reason and spiritualism.

2. Carlos Vaz Ferreira, *Moral para intelectuales* and *Lógica viva*

Few Latin American writers have explored ideology and consciousness more meticulously than Carlos Vaz Ferreira (1872-1958). Despite his many years as an active educator and essayist,[26] as well as being recognized as one of the "founders" of Latin American philosophy (Romero 11), his work has not been widely read inside or outside of Latin America

[26] Vaz published the following essays: *Curso expositivo de psicología elemental* (1897), *Ideas y observaciones* (1905), *Los problemas de la libertad* (1907), *Conocimiento y acción* (1908), *Moral para intelectuales* (1909), *El pragmatismo* (1909), *Lógica viva* (1910), *Sobre la propiedad de la tierra* (1918), *Lecciones de pedagogía y cuestiones de enseñanza* (1918), *Conocimiento y acción* (1920), *Estudios pedagógicos* (1921 y 1922), *Sobre los problemas sociales* (1922), *Sobre feminismo* (1933), and *Fermentario* (1938).

(Zum 110; Pérez 121). Vaz Ferreira was a contemporary of Rodó, whose background in positivism he shared (Ardao *Introducción* 19). Moreover, Vaz Ferreira and Rodó were two of the principle exponents of the neospiritualist movement in Latin American at the turn of the twentieth century. While critics tend to situate Vaz Ferreira's work in a philosophical and universalist paradigm (Zum Felde 110), others have classified him as an "*arielista*" (Sánchez 115; Castañeda). In the following section, I will demonstrate how two of Vaz Ferreira's early essays tentatively subscribe to the *arielista* idea of a balance of positivism and neospiritualism, but also how the classification of Vaz Ferreira as an "*arielista,*" as Uruguayan literary critic Carlos Real de Azúa notes, is problematic because Vaz Ferreira's work does not explicitly offer a Latin Americanist vision, excludes references to the United States, challenges the Greco-Roman connection to Latin America that Rodó and others emphasized, and favors the intellect over the spirit (7).

2.1 Positivism and Spiritualism in Uruguay

The intense polemics between positivists and spiritualists in Uruguay since 1870 is well documented.[27] Since the mid-nineteenth century, the philosophical debates between positivists and spiritualists permeated and informed in important ways many realms of public and private life, such as education, politics, law, morality, religion, and literature (Ardao *Espiritualismo* 16). Between 1850 and 1875 scholasticism and spiritualism exercised directive roles in intellectual, spiritual, and moral matter in Uruguay. Between 1875 and 1900, however, positivism became synonymous with modernization (*Espiritualismo* 231). Proponents of spiritualism negated the legitimacy of positivism by attacking its Darwinian and Spencerian components (Villegas 46).

[27] The most meticulous examination of these debates is undoubtedly Arturo Ardao's *Espiritualismo y positivismo en el Uruguay*. See especially Chapters 10-13.

Positivists, in contrast, saw this effort as a negation of reality. This divide became acute in the Ateneo del Uruguay in 1880, where both schools framed their respective legitimacy in terms of a moral regeneration of the country (Zea 242).

The history of the positivism/spiritualism polemics is inextricably linked to primary stage where they played out, the University of Montevideo. Professors and students delivered impassioned papers and speeches condemning the dogmatic tendencies of each other's intellectual frameworks. The debates became institutionalized even further when the appointment of rectors was framed primarily in terms of whether or not the curricula they sought to implement advocated spiritualist positions or positivist ones. This dichotomy permeated the University, the intellectual and cultural center of Uruguay, for at least two decades (Ardao *Espiritualismo* 242).

By 1890 positivism had run its course in Uruguay as well as in Europe. In Europe, positivism was dealt a strong blow with the proclamation of science's "bankruptcy" in 1895. There was increasing consensus that the mechanical materialism and rational realism espoused by positivism were unsatisfactory. A neospiritualist philosophy led the charge against this dogmatic scientism and sought to restore autonomy to the subjective realms of individual existence outside of the rigidity of positivistic paradigms. They challenged positivism's determinism with a variety of idealistic propositions that borrowed from a wide array of sources, including Bergson, James, Carlyle, Emerson, Nietzsche, Guyau, Renan, Renouvier, and Boutroux. In Uruguay, the neo-spiritualist renovation gained momentum with the creation of the *Revista Nacional de Literatura y Ciencias Sociales* (1895-1897), edited by Daniel and Carlos Martínez Vigil, Víctor Pérez Petit, and José Enrique Rodó. Moreover, a commission

spearheaded by a young substitute professor, Carlos Vaz Ferreira, developed and implemented a philosophical reform of the University in 1896 (Ardao *Espiritualismo* 257-260).

The next year, at the age of twenty five, Vaz Ferreira was appointed the Chair of Philosophy, and delivered a paper entitled *La enseñanza de la filosofía* that according to Ardao marked a definitive triumph over positivism's reign (*Espiritualismo* 264). In that paper, Vaz Ferreira rejects the systematization and intolerance of spiritualism, materialism, and positivism. He also notes how these dogmatisms have stifled amicability and progress: "Yo tengo la convicción firmísima de que es esa concepción de las tres escuelas el origen primero de muchísimas rivalidades que han separado entre nosotros a hombres que merecían estimarse y comprenderse…" 'I have the firmest of convictions that it is that conception of the three schools that is the origin of so many rivalries that have separated among us men that deserve to respect and understand each other' (cited in Ardao *Espiritualismo* 268). Therefore, Vaz Ferreira sought to conciliate the divisive radicalisms that had characterized the intellectual atmosphere of the university. The principle way he accomplished this between 1896 and 1900 was through teaching classes about morality and logic in the University of Montevideo and organizing his lecture notes into two notable books: *Moral para intelectuales* (1908) and *Lógica viva: adaptación práctica y didáctica* (1910).

Vaz Ferreira realized the university's role as an informer of political activity, and, most of all, a creator of culture (Horowitz 67). For that reason, in *Moral para intelectuales* and *Lógica viva* Vaz Ferreira outlines common pedagogical, epistemological, and moral problems that underlie culture and encourages his university students to develop a critical independence so they do not feel compelled to *arrebañarse*, that is, to go with the herd.

2.2 *Moral para intelectuales*

In *Moral para intelectuales* (1909), Vaz Ferreira reviews various moral quandaries that university students who will enter different intellectual professions, such as law, medicine, journalism, civil service, and politics, will encounter. These professions carry with them unique moral circumstances because "para quienes han de dedicarse a una profesión intelectual o simplemente están destinados a una vida intelectual, la moral toma un muy especial carácter [porque] el crecimiento de la inteligencia complica extraordinariamente toda la moral" 'for those who will dedicate themselves to an intellectual profession o are simply destined for an intellectual life, morality takes on a very special character [because] the growth of intelligence complicates all morality in an extraordinary way' (195). Throughout this chapter, I will highlight the ways in which Vaz Ferreira consistently proposes using reason and logic to reveal the intellectual inadequacies of religion and the moral codes that derive from it.

In *Moral para intelectuales*, Vaz Ferreira underscores the ways in which each profession experiences unique moral problems. Law students should acknowledge the moral difficulties inherent in their profession and consider the exercise of law as either untouchable or restrictive of individual liberties. Medical students, who operate more independently than lawyers, must realize they are not infallible and should strive to balance reason and experience. Those who will become journalists have to recognize that due to a privileged access to a vast reading public, a lone journalist possesses the power to cause widespread fear or ruin reputations. More importantly, the press exercises a decisively influential role in society; it obligates people to "opinar todas las mañanas sobre un asunto, y, así por consiguiente, de ir opinando sobre todos los asuntos, con el fin de ilustrar a los demás y de imponer nuestro juicio. Todo esto se hace en la práctica con gran naturalidad, sencillamente, porque estamos acostumbrados a ello" 'give their

opinion about an issue every morning, and, therefore, opine on all issues, with the objective of illustrating to everyone else and imposing our opinion. All this is done in the most natural way, easily, because we are accustomed to it' (*Moral* 245). Journalists, then, must be mindful of their ability to shape public opinion. Vaz Ferreira's comments echo Cuban modernist poet and essayist José Martí's evaluation of the artistic and journalistic crisis of modernity. In "Prologue to the *Poem of Niagara*" (1882), Martí argues that the instability and speed of modern life no longer permit writers to carefully organize their thoughts before writing. For this reason, Vaz Ferreira encourages those studying to be journalists to recognize that they work with quick information and do not have the time to methodically verify what they publish. Vaz Ferreira, then, views journalism ambiguously; on the one hand, it can prepare people to write quickly, but, on the other, it can do this to the detriment of critical thinking abilities (*Moral* 250). It is important for students aiming to become public and civil servants or politicians to maintain their integrity in an atmosphere ripe with greed, corruption, cronyism, and emulation (*Moral* 258).

2.3 Progressives and Conservatives

Vaz Ferreira also highlights a disconnect between the titles of political parties and the policies they seek to implement. Both liberals and conservatives claim to act in ways that embody these labels, which is to say each party believes it is the party of progress, yet they sometimes act in ways that discredit the name by which they identify themselves. Vaz Ferreira considers this "una *anestesia* especial, intelectual y moral, para los absurdos y para los males que se respiran, que están en el ambiente, que son actuales, y dentro de los cuales nos hemos acostumbrado a pensar y a sentir" 'a special intellectual and moral *anesthesia*, for the absurdities and ills that we breath, that are in the current atmosphere, and in which we have grown accustomed to think and feel'

(*Moral* 291). In other words, the ways we think and act and the labels that we believe correspond to those ideas and actions, are illusory and indicative of what Vaz Ferreira calls an "espíritu retardatario" 'retrograde spirit' (*Moral* 294).

Politicians rarely consider the relativity of their convictions. Their "progressive" positions will appear absurd and even cruel to future generations. Just as they consider past policies vile, such as codified slavery, torture, or restriction of basic liberties, so too will their policies be scrutinized posthumously. Even a slight recognition of the relativity of their policies in their historical moment would help curb the fanatical and contradictory character of their actions and beliefs. Although Vaz Ferreira is critical of the contradictions of liberalism, he focuses more on the prevalence of conservative mentalities that sincerely believe they foster progressive ideas in schools and universities. He defines this *academismo* as "estar impermeable a toda clase de sentimientos, debido a raciocinios fáciles, abstractos o verbales" 'to be impervious to all types of feelings, due to facile, abstract, merely verbal reasoning' (*Moral* 297).

2.4 *Lógica viva*

Carlos Vaz Ferreira's *Lógica viva: adaptación práctica y didáctica* (1910) is an asystematic "estudio de la manera como los hombres piensan, discuten, aciertan o se equivocan—sobre todo, de las maneras como se equivocan" 'study of the way that men think, discuss, get it right or get it wrong—particulary the ways in which they get it wrong' (3). His essay participates in the contemporary "revolución o evolución más grande en la historia intelectual humana; más trascendental que cualquier transformación científica o artística, porque se trata de algo aún más nuevo y más general que todo eso: del cambio en el modo de pensar de la humanidad, por independizarse ésta de las palabras" 'largest revolution or evolution in the intellectual history of

humanity; more significant than any scientific or artistic transformation, because it has to do with something even newer and more general that all of that: that is, the change of humanity's way of thinking, by becoming independent from words' (*Lógica* 4). Vaz Ferreira deconstructs abundant scientific, pedagogical, philosophical, ethical, and quotidian examples that illustrate the varied ways in which false oppositions, "verbo-ideological fallacies," or the relationship between ideas and the words used to represent them, and other sophisms mislead uncritical thinkers. *Lógica viva* is a pedagogical text derived from courses Vaz Ferreira taught at the University of Montevideo. Although Vaz Ferreira and Rodó share a similar target audience, elite university students, Vaz Ferreira's classroom is not fictionalized like Próspero's classroom in *Ariel*. Vaz Ferreira was a life-long educator and university administrator and never sought to write a 'literary' text. All his work is pedagogical and philosophical and is inextricably bound to the classrooms in which he taught for many years.

Vaz Ferreira's distinguishes his target audience from others by emphasizing character. According to Vaz Ferreira, there are two varieties of character: one of narrow intelligence and another of ample intelligence. The juxtaposition of two types of character, one favorable and the other negative, interpellates an informed and intelligent community of readers. This rhetorical interpellation is meant as an incentive to readers of *Moral para intelectuales* and *Lógica viva*, that is, university students, to see themselves as the intended audience. In other words, Vaz Ferreira underlines a dichotomous concept of character and compels his readers to either see themselves as possessors of it or at least willing to strive for it.

For Vaz Ferreira, the person who possesses the negative variety of character is perhaps happier because s/he "no ve las complicaciones de su actitud, no siente dudas, resuelve todas las cosas sencillamente" 'does not see the complications of his or her attitude, does not feel doubts,

and resolves everything simply' (*Moral* 273). This resolution-centered character is unconscious and originates in "ciertas ficciones optimistas…que nos explican el cumplimiento del deber…como un acto que, no sólo no suscita ninguna duda, sino que se realiza en todos los casos de una manera casi maquinal" 'certain optimistic fictions…that explain to us the fulfillment of an obligation…as an act that, not only does not stir up any doubt, but that is done in every case in an almost mechanical way' (*Moral* 273). Vaz considers these "optimistic fictions" oppressive, ideological fabrications because they present morality and obligations as easily recognizable and easy to perform, but they are actually creations that benefit certain interests. Morality, Vaz Ferreira maintains, is complicated and propositions to the contrary propagate a type of "mystification" that equates the finality of an automatic and uncritical fulfillment of a moral obligation with its validity. In other words, the satisfaction is correlative with its execution, not its accuracy or rationale.

In contrast, the person with a "superior character" lives a much more problematic existence because s/he analyzes morality in terms of degrees and shades (*Moral* 274). For this reason, the "superior" kind of character cannot be as easily defined or approximated, and, furthermore, may even seem contradictory at times. Ideology thrives by eliminating doubts about the normalcy of the obligations and morality it encourages. Vaz Ferreira, then, negates alacrity and uniformity and instead recommends more complex critical thought that is independent and disinterested.

The critical independence that Vaz Ferreira recommends relies on scrutinizes a variety of cognitive dissonances, such as systematization, false oppositions, and a false pursuit of precision. Above all, Vaz Ferreira challenges any systematization of thought: "creer en la existencia de la fórmula única, esperarla o desearla, como algunos lo hacen; suspirar por "el que vendrá", por el

que ha de traer la fórmula: *la* fórmula; todo es una manifestación del paralogismo exclusivista en que caen los mejores espíritus" 'to believe in the existence of the only formula, to hope for and desire it, as some do; to long for "the one that will come", for the one that will bring the formula: *the* formula; everything is a manifestation of the exclusivist paralogism into which even the best spirits fall' (*Lógica* 25). Here the criticism of Rodó is unmistakable. In *El que vendrá* (1896), Rodó talks of an "yearning to believe" and awaits the arrival of a singular, almost supernatural, influence that will specify a new artistic formula to guide artists out of the doubt and emptiness of the modern era (Rodó *Vida nueva* 27).

For Vaz Ferreira, systems are not the legitimate crystallization of accurate knowledge obtained through meticulous inquiry, but stifling obstacles from which the mind must emancipate itself. Systematization is restrictive and deterministic. Furthermore, it is especially problematic for scientists and philosophers for whom systematization seemingly precludes modifications because this would imply a *comprehensive* invalidation of all facets of their initial ideas. This dogmatic inflexibility devalues gradual modifications of knowledge and privileges conviction over accuracy. Therefore, Vaz Ferreira engages with the Emersonian and Nietzschean idea that modern society offers systems and structures that denigrate individualism. For Vaz Ferreira, the constant critical evaluation of systems is a prerequisite for being an informed individual.

For Vaz Ferreira even a writing style may fall prey to the rigidity of systems, a trap he seeks to avoid by writing in a fragmentary style, offering only "ideas to keep in mind" based on a plethora of concrete examples, not a strict program of coherency (*Lógica* 88). Instead of "thinking with one lone idea," which is to say, making the analysis conform to a pre-conceived conclusion, Vaz Ferreira advocates a balance of disparate ideas, methodologies, and fields. This

critical liberty must be courageous and not regress into a herd mentality when its conclusions seem isolated because "cuesta al espíritu humano libertarse de la impresión de abandono en que le parece encontrarse una vez que lo dejan libre" 'it is difficult for the human spirit to liberate itself from the impression of abandonment in which it seems to find itself once they have let it free' (*Lógica* 93).

Vaz Ferreira also dismantles thinking according to systematic structures that depend on rigid dualities. Analysis of phenomena are frequently reduced, regardless of their nature and characteristics, to two predominant possibilities. Vaz Ferreira ridicules this reductive dichotomy because he asserts that it is impossible that there be only two primary causes responsible for something so complex take, for example, national independence (*Lógica* 11). He argues that the criteria employed for each side of the dichotomy is selective and therefore not indicative of its legitimacy. According to Vaz Ferreira, this type of reductionist practice permeates not only inconsequential interactions between people, but also policy debates in scientific, religious, political, and educational arenas.

Even pervasive matters like morality and religion are not exempt from this dichotomous thinking. For example, Vaz Ferreira points out that sociologists consider morality a code of solidarity, while biologists view it in terms of evolutionary struggle. Similarly, Vaz Ferreira contends that two dominant paradigms invariably monopolize the study of religion: animists, who view religion in supernatural and spiritual terms, and naturists, who emphasize the subjective and emotional aspects of the primitive nature of religion. According to Vaz Ferreira, the study of morality and religion, or of any phenomena for that matter, must not subscribe to dichotomous paradigms (*Lógica* 12).

Vaz Ferreira underscores the "living" facet of his program by negating the steadfastness of dichotomous thinking. Memorization and repetition of formulas based on dichotomies perpetuate an exclusivist attitude, which in turn induces hostility towards other perspectives. According to Vaz Ferreira, Spencer's *First Principles*, a widely-adopted text in Latin American schools and universities after 1870, is a noteworthy example of this trend (*Lógica* 18). Education, then, should equip students to detect false oppositions and empower them to act outside inflexible deterministic or ideological parameters.

Vaz Ferreira appreciates the human desire for precision of knowledge, but rejects the veneration of expediency. While we must strive for the ideal of accuracy, we should not sacrifice intellectual integrity in order to cement an idea or argument. In the modern era, expediency has become synonymous with precision. For this reason, Vaz Ferreira meticulously finds logical faults with the reasoning people employ to solidify their prefered conclusions. For example, Vaz Ferreira rejects attempts to scientifically explain psychology because the former is replete with subjective contingencies and other unpredictable factors that a rigid formula is incapable of accurately explaining (*Lógica* 60).

According to Vaz Ferreira, primary and secondary education normalizes an obsessive tendency to make a relative proposition definitive. Not only is this drive for precision a fallacy that simultaneously deceives teacher and students, but it also evident in the selective and schematic presentation and transmission of information. In other words, Vaz Ferreira argues that pedagogical institutions teach abstractly: "No es la realidad misma, lo que aprendemos: son esquemas simplificados" 'It is not reality itself, that which we learn: they are simplified outlines' (*Lógica* 65). This inauthenticity translates into a counterproductive pedagogy because it inadequately prepares students to notice and rectify the inaccuracies inherent in the world

because it participates in masking them. Therefore, Vaz Ferreira recommends that students endeavor to identify, in others as well as in themselves, this taught "psychologically falsifying tendency" that perverts not only a critical analysis of reality, but systematizes an incapacity to accurately *observe* it (*Lógica* 81). Education should not separate students from reality.

Vaz Ferreira frames the aforementioned tendencies of systematicity, false oppositions, and expediency in terms of reason and instinct. The caustic university debates in Uruguay, as well as in other parts of Latin America, associated reason with positivism and instinct with a metaphysical idealism. While positivists believe that reason and empiricism should be the exclusive criteria in analysis, neospiritualists advocate replacing them with an instinctual "common sense." Just as he did during the philosophical reforms at the University of Montevideo in 1896, Vaz Ferreira urges a degree of conciliation. He recognizes that the nineteenth century "exageró y unilateralizó la importancia, por ejemplo, de la ciencia y de la razón, sacrificándoles por una parte, los estudios humanistas…; por otra parte, los sentimientos, la intuición, y las demás facultades o funciones no racionales" 'exaggerated and made one-sided the importance, for example, of science and reason, sacrificing on the one hand, humanistic studies…; and on the other, feelings, intuition, and the other non-rational faculties or functions' (*Lógica* 32). Even though Vaz Ferreira appreciates the importance of reason, he maintains that its use comes with various preconditions. First, each participant must acknowledge that they are engaging in a *rational* discussion. Second, they must not adhere to any system or unilaterality of opinion. Lastly, the participants must engage in hopes of arriving at a disinterested truth instead of focusing on the triumph of their argument over another. Here Vaz Ferreira indicates that logic, under the aforementioned conditions, is indeed useful in analysis.

Although it is clear that Vaz Ferreira emphasizes reason and logic, terms he uses interchangeably, he also recognizes a place for a non-logical instinct. According to Vaz Ferreira, if a situation arises in which reason alone is insufficient, an "experimental or empirical instinct" may complement it (*Lógica* 127-128).[28] Vaz Ferreira's recognition of the instinct may appear to be at odds with *arielismo*'s emphasis on a spiritualist transcendence of instinct. As I pointed out in Chapter 1, however, Rodó's ideas about instinct are nuanced. For example, while Rodó, and other "*arielistas*" like Francisco García Calderón, associate instinct with irrationality, utilitarianism, and materialism (*Ariel* 53), Rodó does advocate a *spiritualist* instinct that connects Latin Americans to their Greco-Roman roots. For Rodó, there are different types of instinct; a dangerous instinct that manifests itself in the immitative tendencies of the masses and an ideal instinct that permits a select minority of the "legitimate human superiorities" (*Ariel* 26) to transcend mediocre influences. In contrast to the intangibility of Rodó's spiritualist instinct, Vaz Ferreira stipulates that any instinctual utility must derive from an empirical, that is, non-spiritual, experience or intuition. By insisting on a positivist understanding of instinct, Vaz Ferreira distances himself from the spiritualist foundation of *arielismo*. This disparity illustrates the pliable nature of the idea of instinct in Latin American intellectual history.

Although the question of instinct dates back to Aristotle and Saint Thomas Aquinas, it was a particularly prominent and contentious issue in scientific, religious, philosophical, sociological, and political discourses between 1870 and the early decades of the twentieth century (Evans 403). While explaining animal behavior in terms of instinct was not controversial, the idea of instinct and its role in informing human behavior bifurcated into two

[28] This early recognition of the confluence of mental processes and non-logical experience reinforces his assertion in 1938 that "Humanity learns little by reasoning. But by experience it learns nothing at all" (*Fermentario* 23).

antagonistic paradigms in the nineteenth century. On the one hand, providentialists held that God placed all instincts in humans, and, on the other, sensationalists, most notably Charles Darwin's grandfather, Erasmus Darwin (1731-1802), shifted the instinctual agency away from divine sources and onto the individual (Cziko 28-29). In the mid-nineteenth century, Charles Darwin refined the sensationalist perspective and more overtly challenged the "transcendental-theological conception" of instinct that claims that instinct is unalterable and divinely implanted in humans and animals (Shamdasani 191). For Darwin, instincts are biologically and psychologically inherited and therefore evolutive and open to natural selection.

In the 1870s, sociological, psychological, and political discourses adopted this materialist notion of instinct and employed it as a primary criterion in analyzing society. In Latin America, intellectuals and governing elites concerned with economic modernization frequently attributed the setbacks their respective nations faced in terms of the racial "inferiority" of many Latin Americans. The centerpiece of this racializing perspective was instinct. Instinct became a hegemonic keyword: 'good' instincts were those that corresponded to predominant national interests; all other instincts were seen as dangerous because they were unpredictable, uncontrolable, and anarchical. Thanks to the racializing theories like those of French social psychologist Gustave Le Bon, a pioneer in the field of social psychology in the late nineteenth century, 'inferior' races that possessed 'inferior' instincts were invariably blamed for frustrated geo-political projects in Latin America. "The masses" came to represent a separate, non-national entity that threatened order and progress, two of positivism's foundational keywords.

At the end of the nineteenth century, William James, later deemed the "Father of American psychology," recognized that instincts are not coherently separated from each other. James' emphasis on introspection, that is, "looking into our own minds and reporting what we

there discover" (James 185), led him to believe that there exists an immeasurable degree of overlap and independence of the instincts in each individual. In other words, James maintained that instinctual conflicts legitimated their alterability and adaptability. Like Vaz Ferreira, who openly admired the American psychologist, James denies the mutual exclusivity of instinct and reason.[29]

While some claim to rely on an instinctual radar[30] to perceive fallacy, Vaz Ferreira regards this assumption as one of the principle reasons that uncritical ideas are so easily propagated and codified. If an individual relies on an *uncultivated* instinct, s/he lacks the critical foundation necessary to not only perceive fallacy, but challenge and correct it. According to Vaz Ferreira, then, one must cultivate a "special instinct" vis-à-vis critical inquiry and rational thought (*Lógica* 15).

Vaz Ferreira maintains that an ideological reliance on "common sense" frustrates legitimate progress made by the use of reason: "El sentido común malo, ese que con tanta razón ha sido objeto del estigma de la filosofía y de la ciencia, el que ha negado todas las verdades y todos los descubrimientos y todos los ideales del espíritu humano, es el sentido común inconciliable con la lógica: el que no admite el buen razonamiento" 'The bad common sense, that one that has rightly been the object of stigma of philosophy and science, the one that has negated all the truths and all the discoveries and all the ideals of the human spirit, it is irreconcilable with logic: the one that does not admit good reasoning' (*Lógica* 90-91). Vaz Ferreira does not, however, ascribe total autonomy to reason and substantiates the role of an informed instinct:

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[29] For a lengthy treatment of James' views on instinct, see chapter 24 of his *The Principles of Psychology* (1890).

[30] In 2005, American television personality Stephen Colbert famously parodied instinctual knowledge by coining the term "truthiness," that is, feeling something is true or false irrespective of facts and evidence. That same year, Merriam-Webster's Dictionary selected "truthiness" as their Word of the Year.

> Pero hay otro buen sentido que viene después del razonamiento, o, mejor, junto con él. Cuando hemos visto y pesado por el raciocinio las razones en pro y las razones en contra que hay en casi todos los casos; cuando hemos hecho toda la lógica (la buena lógica) posible, cuando las cuestiones se vuelven de grados, llega un momento en que una especie de instinto—lo que yo llamo el buen sentido hiperlógico—es el que nos resuelve las cuestiones en los casos concretos. Y sería bueno que la lógica no privara a los hombres de esta forma superior de buen sentido. (*Lógica* 91)
>
> But there is another good sense that comes after reasoning, o, more accurately, together with it. When we have thoroughly examined the reasons for and against that exist in almost all cases; when we have made all logic (the good logic) possible, when the issues become a question of degrees, there is a moment in which a type of instinct—what I call the good hyperlogical sense—is the one that clears up for us the questions in concrete cases. And it would be good that logic would not deprive people of this superior form of good sense.

Vaz Ferreira's proposal of a logical instinct is not unique in its reworking of the concept of instinct in Latin American intellectual history of the early twentieth century. For example, I highlighted in chapter 1 that Rodó criticizes the materialist instinct of the masses, but praises a spiritualist instinct. Also, Mexican philosopher and founding member of the *Ateneo de la Juventud* Antonio Caso advocates a Bergsonian-style intuition in *La filosofía de la intuición* (1914). Caso's philosophical intuition, however, differs from Vaz Ferreira's logical instinct in that Caso's instinct is religiously-informed. Furthermore, Vaz Ferreira's acknowledgement of the instinct necessarily situates it within logical realms. To put it another way, Vaz Ferreira

maintains that instinct comes with a logical clause. In contrast, Caso sees intuition as irrational and autonomous from logical foundations. While Vaz Ferreira envisions a synthesis of reason and intution, Caso argues for their separation.

2.5 Morality and Religion

Reason and instinct were especially pertinent in the study and codification of morality in early-twentieth century Latin American societies. In Uruguay, the separation between Church and State was an important initiative in the first term of liberal President José Batlle y Ordóñez (1903-1907). For example, refrences to God and the Bible were removed from official documents. In 1906, the *Comisión de Caridad y Beneficencia Pública* (Charity and Social Welfare Commission), in order to "garantizar una completa libertad de conciencia contra imposiciones o sugestiones que la menoscabasen" 'guarantee a complete liberty of conscience against impositions or suggestions that may undermine it' (Rodó *Liberalismo* 6), removed all crucifixes from hospital walls, which sparked an extensive, public debate about progressive liberalism and religious freedom. Rodó reacted by calling the removal of crucifixes "un hecho de franca intolerancia y estrecha *incomprensión* moral e histórica, absolutamente inconciliable con la idea de elevada equidad y de amplitud generosa que va incluida en toda legítima acepción del liberalismo…" 'an act of frank intolerance and narrow moral and historical *incomprehension*, absolutely irreconcilable with the idea of elevated fairness and generous broadmindedness that is included in every legitimate meaning of liberalism…' (*Liberalismo* 5). For Rodó, a liberal *Colorado*, the most elected party in Uruguayan politics during the twentieth century, the idea of charity was inseparable from the image of Christ and for that reason should remain present in benevolent institutions (*Liberalismo* 8). Rodó urged moral tolerance and respect for religious

sentiment and Vaz Ferreira echoes this idea, albeit in a way that relativizes religious belief as something that may be personally useful, but intellectually and socially dangerous. For example, while *arielismo* emphasizes the spiritual realm of existence, Vaz Ferreira writes about the intellectual conflicts that religious belief and dogma pose. Vaz Ferreira's nod to religious tolerance has stipulations, that is, that religion be reserved for a very restricted, personal use and not compete for legitimacy with the intellect. Vaz Ferreira uses this general idea to minimize the utility of not only religious belief, but also to interrogate the supposed unformity of moral codes that derive from it.

Vaz Ferreira maintains that when morality claims to be rigid and well-defined that it has done nothing more than separate itself from the realities it claims to reflect. Rather, Vaz Ferreira rejects "geometical duties" based on an interested moral code. Here, however, he makes an important clarification: those who profess to know the parameters of a moral or social conscience are not hypocritical; rather, they are sincere, but this conviction does not legitimate their decrees. Systematizations of any class, Vaz Ferreira asserts, lead to exclusivities of perspective that are unable to benefit from a synthetic and disinterested methodology that considers more than just one aspect of reality, one thought, or one desired conclusion.

The systematization of moral codes overwhelmingly stems from religion (Luckmann 144-145). Although the very notion of "moral" is subjective and socially-created, religions around the world maintain their legitimacy vis-à-vis moral codifications. Vaz Ferreira, however, challenges the connection between religion and morality and classifies dogmatic religious systems as "los más cerrados de todos, los que más esclavizan la mente" 'the most closed of all, those that most enslave the mind' (*Lógica* 82). He also observes a consistent arrogance of some religious believers who consider themselves authentic practitioners of religious morality and

therefore are less strict in the application of moral codes to their own behavior. For these "elevated spirits," religion is the moral mechanism that curbs the "instintos o tendencias inferiores" of "uncultured spirits" (*Moral* 307). This moral aristocratism appears divisive and contradictory to the Christian ideals it claims to embody. On the other hand, Vaz Ferreira, a religious agnostic (Ardao *Introducción* 52), problematizes the view of religion as a predominantly ideological mechanism with subjugating objectives by underscoring the legitimacy of religious ritualism in the masses. He considers a society's religious practices innocuous: "la religión es sencillamente una serie de fórmulas, de ritos, de prácticas: algunas creencias puramente verbales, groseras, deformadas, que andan por la superficie del espíritu; y no me parece que tiendan a producir efectos demasiado hondos ni en el sentido del mal ni en el sentido del bien" 'religion is simply a series of formulas, rites, practices: some purely verbal, vulgar, deformed beliefs that are found on the surface of the spirit; and I do not think that they tend to produce any overly-deep effects neither in the sense of evil nor in the sense of good' (*Moral* 307).

Vaz Ferreira argues, however, that religion is dangerous when it is intellectualized. Such an idea seemingly subverts his advocacy for critical thinking throughout *Moral para intelectuales* and *Lógica viva*. While he affirms that religions do permit an equitable degree of intellectual autonomy, such as Protestantism's free examination and Catholic modernism,[31] Vaz Ferreira maintains that a faith uncomplicated by the influence of incompatible intellectual and moral ideas has socio-cultural benefits. When, on the other hand, a primitive religiosity must be

[31] Catholic modernists in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries advocated a break with the past and embraced secularist approaches derived from Enlightenment philosophy to interrogate the validity of dogmas.

legitimated by the criteria valued by modern psychology and science, it can have negative ramifications.

In other words, when proponents try to *modernize* primitive religiosity vis-à-vis scientific methods so as to solidify it as a vehicle for the propagation of a "superior" morality, it forces people to engage in a dangerous kind of mental gymnastics (*Moral* 309). Vaz Ferreira illustrates this by pointing out the intellectual and moral consequences of believing the Bible to be of divine origin instead of seeing it as an important historical, cultural, and aesthetic text. The insufficient and sometimes absurd explanations offered in the Bible, Vaz Ferreira claims, do not pose a problem for a religiosity unconcerned with the veracity and logic of that text. On the other hand, however, those who try to sanctify and politicize contemporary moral codes, and by implication their own attitudes and actions, by citing the divine nature of the Bible, are condemned to a perpetual sophistic process. For Vaz Ferreira, this corruptive reasoning amounts to intellectual torture that strips reason of its primordial components.

Believing in the divinity of the Bible also poses other moral problems. For example, Vaz Ferreira maintains that if a person believes that the Bible is a sacred document then s/he will go to great lengths to sanctify everything contained within it. A compromised reader feels obligated to find something redeeming in stories that seem to praise cruelty and injustice. S/he excuses the overt cruelties or contradictions so as to make them representative of a religiously-based morality. Vaz Ferreira observes this tendency to excuse the absurd in both Catholicism and Protestantism, but maintains that it operates in different ways in each sect. While Catholicism encourages belief and acceptance even in the face of impossibility or absurdity, Protestantism urges its practitioners to *prove* it is not absurd, which results in a wide range of complex negotitations destined for failure or inadequacy. Such a forceful accommodation of religion into

the scientific exigencies of proof contradicts the primary religious and metaphysical accusation against positivism, i.e., that belief is not logical and therefore science is unable to comprehend or represent it accurately.

Overall, Vaz Ferreira's principle criticism of the tendency to intellectualize sacred texts centers on an *a priori* obligation to put a moral spin on all Biblical narratives, no matter their nature, as a *prerequisite* for religious belief. Furthermore, the supposedly inherent morality religious texts depict must be placed on an even higher pedestal as representative of a divine or superior morality. Moreover, while Vaz Ferreira considers the purely ritualistic aspects of a faith community unobjectionable, he rejects the dogma that develops when what the ritual implies or symbolizes is verbalized and intellectualized (Thouless 570). For these reasons, Vaz Ferreira favors a de-intellectualization of religion by its adherents because otherwise it corrupts logic, which he views as an independent and inherently secular mechanism. In other words, by "de-intellectualize" I mean that Vaz Ferreira views religion as an innocuous and useful phenomena as long as its adherents avoid the temptation to legitimize the moral codes contained in their sacred texts by presenting them as reasonable and universal.

2.6 Metaphysics

Vaz Ferreira's validation of a cultivated legitimizes, to a certain extent, metaphysics. This renovated metaphysics, however, has stipulations. Traditional metaphysics has been primarily concerned with providing explanations for phenomena it is unable to accurately explain, but still insists on veiling this incapacity (*Lógica* 85). Although Vaz Ferreira argues that metaphysics is not precise, it is legitimate: "constituye y constituirá siempre la más elevada forma de actividad del pensamiento humano, mientras no pretenda tener el aspecto geométrico y

falsamente preciso que ha pretendido dársele…" 'it constitutes now and forever the most elevated form of activity of human thought, as long as it does not seek to have the geometrical and falsely precise aspect that it has sought to give to it… (*Lógica* 76). According to Vaz Ferreira, metaphysic's elasticity is valid because it has other uses than precision. The moral contributions made by metaphysics are relevant, but not when it seeks to define them. Instead, the success of metaphysics depends on its ability to suggest, offer hope, and alternative possibilities to counter rigid positivistic frameworks (*Moral* 311). Following Bergson and James' anti-mechanicist ideas, Vaz Ferreira sees the utility of metaphysics in bringing humanity into closer contact with the inherent dynamism of life.

Morality also has a uniquely psychological implication as it centers on human motives. For this reason, it is important to recognize that moral acts are not universally attributable to lone causes. A vast confluence of motives informs our conceptualizations of morality to varying degrees. A sincere conversation regarding morality, then, must necessarily include ignorance and oscillation.

2.7 Conclusion

It is evident that the subject matter in *Moral para intelectuales* and *Lógica viva*, like in many Latin American essays of the early twentieth century, is expansive and complex. Vaz Ferreira examines the confluence of knowledge, science, metaphysics, logic, intuition, language, philosophy of religion, ethics, ideology, and education. Furthermore, his comprehensive methodology that assimilates, rejects, or balances distinct points of view mirrors a Socratic method that presents problems in a meticulous manner, but does not offer a definitive way to

solve them (Haddox 597). Of course, the essay as a genre, as many have noted, is inherently imprecise.[32]

Vaz Ferreira wrote extensively about education and pedagogy. He was therefore able to speak of the pragmatic aspects of these issues because he was an active educator and university administrator for most of his life. For Vaz Ferreira, education and culture were inseparable issues. Although literary histories situate Vaz Ferreira's work in a primarily universalist and specualitive framework, it is likewise beneficial to frame Vaz Ferreira's early essays in the Uruguayan contexts to which they were inextricably bound. *Moral para intelectuales* and *Lógica viva* were quite literally edited class notes from the University of Montevideo. Although those essays deal with a plethora of foundational philosophical issues, Vaz Ferreira's insistence on a reasonable balance of competing ideas arose from bitter debates in Uruguayan universities and intellectual societies between positivists and spiritualists.

Although Vaz Ferreira presents his advice as reasonable, he realizes that knowledge sometimes begets alienation. In other words, a critical independence does not mean that the person who cultivates it is exempt from longing for the comforts of systematic thinking. Vaz Ferreira explains this event from a pedagogical perspective:

> cuando enseñamos a los hombres a pensar así, a primera vista sienten la impresión de que se los deja privados de algo que antes poseían; se sentían tan seguros y tan tranquilos con sus sistemas (consciente o inconscientemente), que, cuando los enseñamos a pensar de otro modo mejor, creen que se les ha quitado algo, y piden continuamente la fórmula, la regla, el sistema que les ahorraría el examinar los casos. Pero, en realidad, ninguna enseñanza del mundo es capaz de habilitar para

[32] For a discussion on the hybrid nature of the essay, see José Miguel Oviedo's *Breve historia del ensayo hispanoamericano*, especially pages 11-19.

> este último resultado; lo que puede hacer la enseñanza bien entendida, es dejar a las personas, habilitadas para pensar: no suprimir el pensamiento, sino enseñar a utilizarlo. (*Lógica* 81)
>
> when we teach people to think in this way, at first glance they may have the impression that they have been left deprived of something that they possessed before; they feel so sure and so calm with their systems (consciously or unconsciously), that, when we teach them to think in a better way, they believe that something has been taken from them, and they continually ask for the formula, the rule, the system that would save them the effort of examining specific cases. But, in reality, no teaching of the world is capable of preparing for the latter result; what a good understanding of teaching can do is enable people to think: not to supress thinking and ideas, but to teach how to use them.

Here Vaz Ferreira argues that once an assertion or belief is accepted as true, changing that mentality, even when it is presented with solid evidence or a changed social consciousness, is very difficult. For that reason, Vaz Ferreira emphasizes a critical frankness capable of confronting and reforming cognitive simplisms, while also acknowledging the power that systematic thinking exercises on young minds.

As I have suggested, Vaz Ferreira's insistence on a critical autonomy rooted in logic at times puts him at odds with *arielismo*. On the one hand, Rodó and Vaz Ferreira share a number of similarities: both interpellate university students and advocate, to varying degrees, a balance of positivism and spiritualism by praising reason and reworking the notion of instinct to make it, in Rodó's case, more spiritual, or, in Vaz Ferreira's case, more logical. There are, however, many clear differences that complicate Vaz Ferreira's association with *arielismo*. For example,

while Rodó traces the Classical spiritual genealogy of Latin Americans in order to morally orient university students, Vaz Ferreira encourages them to be weary of moral and spiritual directors of any kind. Moreover, Vaz Ferreira did not share Rodó's fascination with the classical world.[33] It is also important to note that the North/South paradigm through which *arielismo* is consistently read is absent in Vaz Ferreira's essays. Vaz Ferreira's concerns center on the intellectual development of individuals, not on the cultural or spiritual identity of Latin American nations. Lastly, Rodó and Vaz Ferreira differ with respect to their writing styles. Rodó's essay is full of metaphors and intertextuality, takes place in a fictionalized classroom, and is 'spoken' by an authoritative protagonist, while Vaz Ferreira addresses practical concerns of thinking and ideas in a straightforward manner in a *real* classroom.

In the midst of a strong neospiritualist current in Latin America in the early twentieth century, Vaz Ferreira insists on the validity of science and reason. Even the instinct that he validates is a special, rationally-based, cultivated one. Reason is his foundation. Vaz Ferreira incorporates vitalism (or spiritualism) *into* positivism. Therefore, instead of viewing Vaz Ferreira's early essays as indicative of "an anti-positivist vitalist rationalism" (Dussel 20), we can reconceptualize the Uruguayan's "vitalist rationalism," or "rational vitalism," as more of an attempt to acknowledge, in very limited circumstances, the role of non-logical experience as a *complement* to positivism, not a replacement for it.

3. Carlos Arturo Torres, *Ídola fori*, and *Arielismo*

Colombian history of the early twentieth century is rife with a number of serious geopolitical challenges. Exclusionary politics caused a series of civil wars, which in turn

[33] In fact, Vaz Ferreira later criticized the idealization of Greco-Roman civilizations because he argues that they were built on slavery (*Fermentario* 205).

frustrated international trade and provoked a severe economic recession. Moreover, those conflicts facilitated U.S. intervention into Colombian affairs, which resulted in the secession of Panama in 1903 and gave the United States proprietary rights of the construction of the Panama Canal. In the wake of these national catastrophes, Colombian writer and statesman Carlos Arturo Torres (1867-1911) published an essay entitled *Ídola fori* (1910) in which he advocated a national reconciliation that moves beyond hyper-partisanship and embraces wider democratic participation. In his prologue to *Ídola fori*, however, Uruguayan essayist José Enrique Rodó criticized Torres's anti-elitist conceptions. In this section, I will underscore the limitations of Rodó's elitist insistence by exploring the geopolitical exigencies in post-war Colombia that inform Torres's *Ídola fori*.

Torres was an active essayist, poet, and journalist.[34] Even though *Ídola fori* concentrates on political superstitions in Latin America, Torres's affinity for British thought is clear. Torres spent nearly a decade in England, writing *Ídola fori* while living in Liverpool as a consul of the Colombian government. He published a well-known book entitled *Estudios ingleses* (1906) in which he commented on, among other topics, Shakespeare, Byron, and Spencer (Salazar Cáceres 65). Moreover, *Ídola fori* borrows its title from one of the four idols that English philosopher Francis Bacon criticizes in his *Novum Organum* (1620), the idols of the Marketplace.[35]

Although largely dismissed today, *Ídola fori* is one of the most valuable documents of its time about the history of ideas in Latin America. Critics have read *Ídola fori* in contradictory ways. Although many critics extend it a brief, approbatory nod, the shadow of *Ariel* has essentially obscured its importance in the contemporary canon. Although we may think that this

[34] His works include *Poemas simbólicos* (1897), *La abadía de Westminster otros poemas* (1902), *Estudios ingleses* and *Estudios varios* (1906).
[35] Bacon identifies four kinds of idols: idols of the Tribe, idols of the Cave, idols of the Marketplace and idols of the Theater (Bacon 20).

omission is due to the non-literary nature of *Ídola fori*, as Torres's essay is expositional, even revered critical opinions of the essay in Latin America that do take a closer look at it downplay its importance. For instance, Medardo Vitier, an influential Cuban critic on Latin American intellectual history, criticizes *Ídola fori* for its excessive references to European ideas (157). In addition, in a seminal study on the Latin American essay, *Historia del ensayo hispanoamericano* (1973), U.S. academics Peter Earle and Robert Mead suggest that Torres is intolerant.[36] By contrast, a more recent reading by Colombian scholar Rubén Sierra Mejía regards *Ídola fori* a nonpolemical, serene text that demonstrates a clear concern for bipartisanship and national reconciliation in the wake of serious challenges to Colombia's sovereignty ("El intelectual" 212). Although critics disagree about the tone of Torres's essay, they generally accept that Torres was one of the clearest proponents of *arielismo* in Latin America (Altamirano 10; Devés Valdés 26).

Although they never met in person, Rodó and Torres praised each other's work in personal correspondence and literary articles. When Torres published *Ídola fori*[37] in 1910, Rodó wrote an enthusiastic article supporting it entitled "Rumbos nuevos." Although in this article Rodó celebrates Torres's message of tolerance, as well as other standard *arielista* facets of the essay, Rodó affords relatively little space to a direct analysis of *Ídola fori*. Instead, Rodó uses Torres's essay as a pretext to explicate, as he had done in *Ariel*, the neospiritualist movement in Latin America that seeks to supersede the confines of positivism.

In "Rumbos nuevos" Rodó enumerates various criticisms against positivism. However, Rodó also underscores positivism's favorable contributions to Latin American thought. For Rodó, a pure European positivism was not transplanted to Latin America; rather, a corrupted

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[36] "Torres no posee ni la tolerancia ni la elasticidad espiritual necesarias para comprender a los que defienden opiniones opuestas a las suyas. Está seguro de la verdad de sus aseveraciones y suele recibir la contradicción con el porte de apóstol mal comprendido" (Earle and Mead 57).
[37] The second edition of the essay (1916) is entitled *Los ídolos del foro*.

form concerned solely with utilitarian empiricism and material wealth surfaced. Rodó claims that by omitting higher ideals, positivism codified a contradictory emulation in the masses: "creyendo predicar la filosofía que habían aprendido, predicaban la imitación de su propia naturaleza" (43). To put it another way, positivism insisted that only science can reveal the real world. Those who accept the validity of this doctrine believe they are discovering the world the way it really is, which subsequently devalues any components outside the scientific realm.

While Rodó's criticisms of positivism mirror those he offers in *Ariel*, he specifies its invaluable contributions to intellectual life in the twentieth century:

> La iniciación positivista dejó en nosotros, para lo especulativo como para lo de la práctica y la acción, su potente sentido de relatividad; la justa consideración de las realidades terrenas; la vigilancia e insistencia del espíritu crítico; la desconfianza para las afirmaciones absolutas; el respeto de las condiciones de tiempo y de lugar; la cuidadosa adaptación de los medios a los fines; el reconocimiento del valor y del hecho mínimo y del esfuerzo lento y paciente en cualquier género de obra; el desdén de la intención ilusa, del arrebato estéril, de la vana anticipación. ("Rumbos" 46)
>
> The positivist initiation left in us, in speculative matters as well as practical and action-oriented ones, its powerful sense of relativity; the exact consideration of earthly realities; the vigilance and insistence of the critical spirit; mistrust of absolutist affirmations; respect for the conditions of time and place; the careful adaptation of means and ends; the recognition of the value, of the act itself and the slow and patient effort evident in every type of endeavor; scorn for gullible intentions, sterile outbursts and futile anticipations.

Rodó, however, sought to mobilize a young generation of Latin Americans to seek higher spiritual ideals outside the realm of positivism. For that reason, Rodó clarifies that this kind of idealism differs from its spiritualist and romantic predecessors in that it is informed by positivism, but not restricted by it. Rodó summarizes this evolution in the following way: "El positivismo, que es la piedra angular de nuestra formación intelectual, no es ya la cúpula que la remata y corona" 'Positivism, which is the cornerstone of our intellectual formation, is no longer the crown that defines it' ("Rumbos" 45). For Rodó and other '*arielistas*' like Francisco García Calderón, who wrote a prologue to the second edition of *Ídola fori* published in Madrid in 1916, Torres and his essay are indicative of this idealistic trend that steers positivism towards higher ideals.

3.1 *Ídola fori*

On the opening page of *Ídola fori*, Torres identifies the prevalence of uncritical ideas as a threat to Latin American societies: "Bien es sabido que Bacon llama "Ídolos del Foro" (*Idola Fori*) aquellas fórmulas o ideas —verdaderas supersticiones políticas— que continúan imperando en el espíritu después de que una crítica racional ha demostrado su falsedad" 'It is well known that Bacon calls Idols of the Marketplace those formulas or ideas—truly political superstitions—that continue to prevail in the spirit after a rational criticism has demonstrated their falsity' (17). *Ídola fori* applies Bacon's critical lense to Latin American democracies in order to denounce traps in thinking and understanding due to "criterios falsos producidos por el empleo inconsciente de términos que se imponen, cargados de un sentido ilusorio" 'false criteria produced by the unconscious use of terms that impose themselves, filled with an illusory

meaning' (Vitier 162-163).[38] This disconnect between the words used to indicate ideas and the actual relationship between these two elements is responsible for the persistence of political idols in Latin America because people all too readily lend their support to a leader or party without fully understanding the specifics of their political platforms. Far from *Ariel*'s highly literary construction of an idealized classroom, *Ídola fori* is a sociopolitical treatise written during an era of hyper-partisanship, violence, and economic decline, which is a state of crisis that has defined Colombian politics to this day.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, in addition to fifty nine local revolts, there were six civil wars in Colombia: 1860, 1875, 1876, 1885, 1895, and the *guerra de los Mil Días* (1899-1902) (Posada Carbó 62). The twentieth century dawned in the midst of an endless stream of national conflicts. The civil war commonly known as *los Mil Días* erupted in large part because of political and economic disparities between Conservatives, who favored a centralized, religious state, and Liberals, who preferred stronger regional governments and a separation of church and state. Between 1878 and 1898, the Conservative Party's *regeneracionista* program instituted an extreme centralism that gave the conservative head of state virtually unchallenged authority to appoint local and national officials, with Liberals largely excluded from government. For example, between 1888 and 1904 no liberals were appointed to the Senate (Fischer 77). President Rafael Núñez codified the regenerationist vision in a new Constitution in 1886, a document drafted by his predecessor, Miguel Antonio Caro, who in turn continued this policy until *los Mil Días*. The Constitution of 1886 was at odds with liberalism in that it sanctioned and institutionalized the power of the Catholic Church in national matters such as education and censure of dissidence, which is to say anyone who expressed anti-governmental, anti-religious,

[38] Vitier maintains that Torres offers an insufficient explanation of the theory of idols, which he believes accounts for the essay's inaccessibility for most Latin American readers (158).

and "immoral" sentiments in newspapers. However, the exclusivity of conservative political appointments relegated many liberal elite to industry and trade, and some got very rich in the international coffee market. By the mid-1890s, however, participating in the international market required monetary modernization, including adopting the gold standard. The conservative government, however, resisted and defended traditional agriculture and monetary policy, which stifled imports and exports (Fischer 77). Frustrated, many liberals took up arms to overthrow the government.

It goes without saying that *Los Mil Días* was devastating for Colombia. Approximately 100,000 people died in the guerrilla warfare that spanned much of the Colombian geography (Fischer 81).[39] The war ravaged Colombia's economy and plunged the country into a recession that lasted until 1910 (Fischer 40). In addition to the devaluation of the national currency on international markets, there was widespread robbery and corruption (Fischer 80). By 1902, the year in which a peace treaty was signed by conservative and liberal leaders on board the U.S. battleship Wisconsin, it was generally acknowledged that the costs of the conflict outweighed its possible benefits. In addition to the discernible political, economic, and civil catastrophes, many were concerned that the war had jeopardized the very national sovereignty the *Regeneración* had endeavored so diligently to construct (Sánchez and Aguilera 24).

As the latter stages of the conflict became concentrated in the Colombian isthmus of Panama, a liberal stronghold, the United States intervened citing article 35 of the Mallarino-Bidlack Treaty of 1846, which permitted the United States to ensure free transit (Fischer 92). Of course, President Theodore Roosevelt realized the strategic importance for the United States in the Panama Canal, which by that point was well under construction by a French company. In

[39] Colombian writer Gabriel García Márquez fictionalizes how these catastrophic events affected a small, isolated village called Macondo in his bestseller novel, *Cien años de soledad* (1967).

fact, ownership of the Canal was one of the most important facets of the peace accord (Fischer 94). With the support of the United States, Panama seceded from Colombia one year later. Soon after in 1904, the United States purchased the Canal and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers oversaw its construction until its completion in 1914.

Recognition by the United States of the internal ideological and political divide in Colombia, not to mention the Canal's strategic importance, no doubt led to U.S. intervention into sovereign Colombian territory. While this was widely recognized, many Colombians understandably viewed the geo-psychological severing of their nation by the United States as a calculated, imperialist maneuver. It is little wonder that many Colombians subsequently embraced the North/South paradigm of *arielismo*, which posed Latin American nations as culturally distinct from the United States and its materialist drives, as a national narrative (Fischer 96).

This historical context is essential when reading *Ídola fori* because in it Torres criticizes the political extremisms responsible for this national decline. In addition, Torres's essay is emblematic of a conscious post-war political and civil reconciliation. This was a platform forwarded by conservative President Rafael Reyes (1904-1909) that resulted in constitutional reforms in 1904 and 1905 that curbed the extreme centralism implemented by the Regeneration (Sánchez and Aguilera 23). Torres, as he had previously done at the height of political fanaticism at the outset of *los Mil Días*, participated once again in a conservative government as a Colombian consul in Liverpool.

3.2 Relativity, Evolution, and Serenity

In the wake of this geopolitical catastrophe, Torres seeks to correct the "herd instinct" that he insists precludes many Latin Americans from discerning the flaws in the political dogmas they so ardently defend. Torres challenges this cognitive dissonance by proposing a serene, critical independence based on the Spencerian notions of relativity and evolution, which he examines from a historicist perspective: "La marcha del pensamiento humano en veinte años ha demostrado hasta donde pueden complementarse, ampliarse y rectificarse conclusiones que parecían definitivas y hasta dónde alcanza, según la gráfica expresión del mismo Spencer, a evolucionar el sistema de evolución" 'The course of human thought in twenty years has demonstrated how much conclusions that used to seem definitive can be complemented, amplified, and rectified, and how it has managed to, according to the graffic expression of Spencer himself, evolve the system of evolution' (22). Certainty and fixed criteria, then, are illusory and Torres underscores this idea by highlighting the discrepant interpretations that the same event or historical figure receive in different time periods: "quien pretenda descubrir al través de los anales humanos y a la luz de un juicio predeterminado el hilo continuo de un principio dado en sus desarrollos históricos,…se vería extraviado en un dédalo de imposible orientación" 's/he who seeks to discover the continuous thread of a given principle in its historical developments through the anals of human history and by the light of a predetermined opinion,…would be lost in a labyrinth of impossible orientation' (91-92).

A principal objective in *Ídola fori* centers on subverting the idea of dogmatic certainty that incites violence and tyranny: "hay el fanatismo de la religión y el fanatismo de la irreligión; la superstición de la fe y la superstición de la razón; la idolatría de la tradición y la idolatría de la ciencia; la intransigencia de lo antiguo y la intransigencia de lo nuevo; el despotismo teológico y el despotismo nacionalista; la incomprensión conservadora y la incomprensión liberal" 'there is

religious fanaticism as well as irreligious fanaticism; superstitions of faith as well as of reason; idolatry of tradition as well as of science; intrransigence of the old as well as of the new; theological despotism and national despotism; conservative and liberal incomprehension' (26). Torres argues that fanaticisms are illogical and detrimental because every facet of existence is subject to change. Although he admired Spencer, Torres laments that the predominant "thought shapers" of the modern epoch, which is to say the evolutionary theories of Darwin and Spencer, have become strict dogmas in virtually all areas of existence and knowledge: "La moral, la política y la sociología buscaban allí sus orientaciones definitivas; la historia, la literatura y la estética se modelaban sobre aquellas nociones que, verificadas en un orden, exclusivo de hechos científicos, el de la anatomía, aparecían como el fin de todos los fenómenos vitales en todos los dominios del conocimiento" 'Morality, politics, and sociology searched there for its definitive orientations; history, literature, and aesthetics molded themselves on those notions that, verified in one order, exclusive in scientific facts, that is, anatomy, appeared as the end of all vital phenomena in all domains of knowledge' (67). Torres challenges these scientific dogmatisms by arguing that scientific truths, far from being static, incessantly fluctuate. He cites two contemporary thinkers whose ideas have modified or expanded evolutionary theories: French biologist and naturalist René Quinton (1866-1925) and French philosopher Henri Bergson (1859-1941).

Torres highlights the ways in which Quinton and Bergson rework the theory of evolution in order to signal the alterability of science as well as relativize the idea of certainty. For Torres, modernity necessitates dynamic rather than static ways of thinking, and he maintains that progress should be measured not by the quantity of certainties but by the number of conceptions that are open to or have experienced modification (Torres 27). The danger of convictions, Torres

claims, is that they halt action and devalue accuracy. This is why Torres proposes a critical independence unrestrained by science and mysticism as a viable method for harmony and progress: "El mostrar lo caduco de lo que se tiene generalmente por definitivo y la falibilidad de lo que se tiene generalmente por dogmático, es llegar, no a la liberación del pensamiento y a la plenitud de la vida, porque ésta es una meta inaccesible, pero a lo menos a las sendas de ascensión que a ella conducen" 'Showing the outdatedness of that which is generally held as definitive and the fallibility of that which is generally held as dogmatic, is to arrive, not at the liberation of thought and the prime of life, but at least to the uphill paths that lead to it' (74). This critical independence should not, however, translate into conviction; rather, it should accept the inexistence of coherent narratives and embrace constant modification. Torres calls the freedom to think critically and independently "the rotation of ideas," which oscillates in the form of "demoliciones y restauraciones sucesivas e incesantes" 'successive and incessant demolitions and restorations' (103).

It is important to note that Torres's methodology of interrogating idols coincides with Nietzsche's "philosophizing with a hammer," which in *The Twilight of the Idols* (1888) means tapping idols to ascertain if they are empty or substantive. The symbolism of their respective tools utilized for this inquiry is likewise indicative of their respective attitudes. For example, Nietzsche's hammer represents a demolishing, destructive tool, yet Torres insists that "el emblema del espíritu de rectificacion es un cincel, no una piqueta; su mensaje es de perfeccionamiento, no de aniquilación" 'the emblem of the spirit of rectification is a chisel, not a pickaxe; its message is of perfection, not of annihilation' (275). In this way, Torres situates his program between two philosophical extremes, between, on the one hand, the destructive nihilists whose deterministic views surrounding, for example, the superiority of certain races and, on the

other, those who cling to inflexible dogmas because they are unwilling to accept the inevitable modifications of existence. This middle ground rejects the radicalism of the former and seeks to reform the "mental stagnation" of the latter by emphasizing evolution and independence. Above all, Torres's program seeks to replace the preconceived and predetermined nature of "las convicciones tradicionales e inquebrantables" with "las convicciones racionales y perfectibles" 'traditional and unshakeable traditions with rational and perfectible convictions' (278).

3.3 Certainty and Religion

While it is clear that Torres advocates a critical independence capable of eluding "la tendencia a levantar a la categoría de inconcusa verdad la idea consagrada por la moda o por la fe hermética en la predicación de nuestros directores espirituales" ("the tendency to raise the idea consecrated by fashion or by the hermetic faith in the preaching of our spiritual directors to the category of indisputable truth"; 21-22), he argues that religion is socially useful and therefore not incompatible with modernization. His negotiation of this disparity, however, is not entirely coherent. Throughout *Ídola fori*, Torres references Benjamin Kidd's sociological ideas in order to elude having to confront problematic issues like this one. In *Social Evolution* (1894), Kidd isolates religion from reason and underlines the importance of the former's role in achieving social progress. By focussing on the sociological importance of religion and not its rational veracity, Kidd avoids directly addressing the antagonisms between reason and religion. It is important to note that Torres compromises his insistence on balance or finding a middle ground when he addresses the correlation between religious belief, individual action, and social

progress. Following Kidd's lead, Torres maintains that belief translates into the pursuit of higher ideals and for this reason disbelief, even if rooted in or as a result of rational inquiry, is invalid:[40]

> Puede afirmarse que entre una creencia errada y la falta total de toda creencia, un espíritu comprensivo no vacilará jamás; en las vegas ardientes de nuestros ríos, no desbrozadas aún por el hacha del colono, crecen las plantas viciosas y las yerbas malditas envenenan el aire con sus efluvios de muerte; empero un día será que penetre el arado allí y del suelo exuberante que el esfuerzo del labrador transformó, brote la cosecha de bendición; allí está la reserva del porvenir. (27-28)
>
> It can be affirmed that between a wrong belief and the total lack of all belief, a comprehensive spirit will never hesitate; in the bright red, fertile plains of our rivers, not yet cleared by the colonist's axe, depraved plants and damned herbs poision the aire with their aroma of death; however, a day will come when the plow will penetrate there and from the lush ground that the laborer's work transformed, a harvest of blessing will emerge; such is the promise of the future.

While Torres was emphatic about the necessity of reason in democractic projects and outlined the perils of being guided by ideology, his alacrity to put a positive spin on the religious mentality and ideology he criticizes is understandable. In addition to the antipositivist philosophical wave that swept Latin America at the turn of twentieth century, Catholicism was institutionalized in the Colombian government by conservatives. Opposition to conservatives, then, was equated to an opposition to Catholicism.

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[40] Incidentally, Vitier does not consider Torres a man of action due to the contemplative nature of his essay (170).

The Regeneration program instituted a totalitarian system in which the State and the Catholic Church became an inseparable entity. This was a brilliant political tactic by conservatives because it made any challenge to the State's authority tantamount to an allegation against the legitimacy of the Catholic faith, or at least this was the counter argument conservatives had in their quiver. Although liberals were outraged at the constitutionalized persecution of scientific and intellectual thought, the censorship of newspapers expressing anti-conservative ideas, and the Church's stewardship of public education, they, as a party, were not irreligious (Sánchez and Aguilera 21). Rather, the liberals saw the Regeneration's "Christianization" of the Colombian government as counterproductive to the cultural and economic aims of a modern democratic society. For conservatives like Rafael Núñez, science, without religion, is unable to see the big picture, "la verdadera verdad" 'the true truth' (Jaramillo Uribe 448). One way, then, to read the ideological divide between conservatives and liberals in Colombia during this time is in terms of science and religion.

While liberals reject the Catholicization of the Colombian State, Torres, like Rodó in *Ariel*, recognizes the importance of the social utility of a faith-based, Christian ideal. Furthermore, Torres, citing Maeterlinck, trivializes the supposed clarity and division of what constitutes religious belief and reason by amalgamating them into one very convenient, not to mention ambiguous, phenomenon: "ese fluído extraño que llamamos pensamiento, inteligencia, entendimiento, razón, alma, espíritu, potencia cerebral, virtud, belleza, saber, porque posee mil nombres, bien que sea una sola su esencia" 'that strange fluid that we call thought, intelligence, understanding, reason, soul, spirit, brain power, virtue, beauty, knowledge, because it has a thousand names, even if it is only one essence' (203). Torres' emphasis on tolerance and

harmony at times causes him to be on all sides of an issue, especially one as loaded as religion in late nineteenth century Colombia.

With respect to the disparity between religion and individuality, Torres embraces Spencer's proposed conciliation of science and religion as a goal of modern humanity. In *Ídola fori*, Torres does not associate changing one's beliefs with a rejection of religiosity. On the contrary, Torres argues that Christianity has flourished precisely because people have been willing to embrace change. In order to support this claim, Torres recounts the story of Saul of Tarsus, a Pharisee who while on his way to Damascus to persecute Christians, experiences a divine revelation which subsequently transforms him into Saint Paul, one of the most important Christian apostles. This event, according to Torres, regenerated the world (45-47).[41]

Torres recognizes the social utility of religious belief and the moral code it propagates. Both Vaz and Torres seek to counteract the affinity for expeditious certainties. While Vaz unabashedly explores the legitimacy of institutionalized religion and religious dogmas, Torres is less overt. In fact, Torres' emphasis on serenity and constructive criticism precludes him from accomplishing a direct or confrontational analysis of the religious morality that operated so pervasively in the Colombian state. Torres points out that discussions of morality are largely framed by two dichotomies; Guyau, who considers morality as plentiude, and Nietzsche, who views it as an ideological limitation. Both perspectives, however, are concerned with a better future, thus morality is not a static concept relegated to a particular historical moment, but is inherently evolutive.

Both Rodó and Torres use French philosopher Ernest Renan's writings about religion and morality in order to advocate for the retention of religious sentiment in modern life. Renan

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[41] There are two sources for the narrative of Saint Paul's conversion. Cf. "First Epistle to the Corinthians," 9:1 and 15:3-8, and Acts 9, 22, and 26 of the King James Bible.

rejected the divinity of Jesus Christ in his *La Vie de Jesus* (*Life of Jesus*) (1863). Morever, in his seven-volume masterpiece, *Histoire des Origines du Christiansme* (*History of the Origins of Christianity*, 1863-1881), Renan paid special attention to social history of early Christianity, which, when coupled with this disbelief in the divinity of Jesus Christ, solidified his standing as a controversial religious historian from a theological standpoint. Despite his theological objections to Christianity, Renan defended the societal utility of religiosity, or religious feelings. Renan was in a way the perfect reference for Torres, as well as Rodó, to utilize while walking the tightrope strung between religion and reason because while Renan distanced himself from the sacred cornerstone of the Christian religion, he did not denigrate its historical, sociological, and psychological value. Torres manages to simultaneously play critic and defender of religion by aligning himself with Renan.

As we can see, one of the preferred ways Torres negotiates the delicate middle ground between reason and religion is by letting other writers do it for him. With respect to religious morality, Torres relies heavily on Belgian writer Maurice Maeterlinck's analysis in his essay "Our Anxious Morality" (1907) to make his point for him. In this essay, Maeterlinck points out the secularizing novelty of the modern era; many people are abandoning religion without replacing it with another one (109-110). The authenticity of religious moral codes is at the heart of this matter:

> The hour seems to be striking at which many will ask themselves whether, by continuing to practise a lofty and noble morality in an environment that obeys other laws, they be not disarming themselves too artlessly and playing the ungrateful part of duptes. They wish to know if the motives that still attach them to the older virtues are not merely sentimental, traditional and illusionary; and

> they seek somewhat vainly within themselves for the supports which reason may yet lend them. (Maeterlinck 111-112)

For Maeterlinck, humans are inherently moral beings. Maeterlinck maintains that even a negation of morality is in itself a new morality. The question then becomes: should morality be logical or intuitive? For Maeterlinck, a moral framework, regardless of whether or not it is a positivistic morality based on reason or a religiously-informed, intuitive morality, is an inevitable feature of existence.

Although, like Torres, Maeterlinck advocates restoring "normal distances" between these two poles, he clearly favors a religiously-derived morality over a scientifically-informed one. According to Maeterlinck, morality does not have to conform the rigidity of the natural sciences because even some natural phenomena, such as germ theory, are illogical (121). Maeterlinck opines that a morality disproportionately-informed by scientific reason, or "good sense," is insufficient to sustain morality. Instead, morality depends on imagination or "mystic reason" that predates scientific knowledge: "There is in us, above the reasoning portion of our reason, a whole region which answers to something different, which is preparing for the surprises of the future, which is awaiting the events of the unknown" (Maeterlinck 130). In Maeterlinck's estimation, morality should not be held to the standards of intelligence and examined in terms of strict moral precepts, rather it should be seen as a spiritual ideal directed towards moral aspirations (140-153). Maeterlinck's negation of a logical morality facilitates Torres' own interrogation of the infallability of science's legitimacy.

3.4 Legitimate Inequalities, The Masses, and Hero Worship

Torres's advocacy for an intellectual freedom free from certainty does not coincide with a Nietzschean-like individualism. In contrast, Torres sees individual development only within the larger social framework. Following English sociologist Benjamin Kidd, Torres asserts that "de la integración de las conciencias individuales surge una conciencia colectiva, diferente de cada una de las que la forman y superior a la suma de todas ellas" 'from the integration of individual consciences arises a collective conscience, different from each one of the ones that form it and superior to the sum of all of them' (115). In the same way, Torres denies the mutual exclusivity of individual freedom and national solidarity, an idea that was outlined by French politician Henri Bérenger in *La conscience nationale* (1898).[42] National cohesion, much like the modern rhetoric surrounding bipartisanship, implies transcending party loyalties for the greater good. According to Torres, the prevalence of a herd mentality accounts for the diminished propensity of the freedom to interrogate and criticize political parties (127). Torres blames the uncritical acceptance of and devotion to a political party for the facility with which violence erupts in and frustrates Latin American democracies.

The ideas of inherent change lead Torres to engage in a suggestive negotiation when he deconstructs the respective roles of an intellectual aristocracy and the masses in the post-war Colombian national project. A central component of *Ariel* and *arielismo*, informed by Bérenger and Gustave Le Bon, portrays the masses as unable to transcend their instinctive impulses.[43] Torres echoes this notion by dehumanizing the masses: "el impulso de las multitudes representa cuanto hay de más inconsciente e irrazonado en las acciones humanas;…querer allegar un átomo

[42] Bérenger's ideas also influenced Rodó, who mentions Bérenger's *L'aristocratie intellectuelle* (1895) in *Ariel* (Cf. Rodó *Ariel* 191).
[43] For Rodó, there are two types of instinct; a dangerous instinct that manifests itself in the imitative tendencies of the masses and an ideal instinct that permits a select minority of the "legitimate human superiorities" (*Ariel* 26) to transcend mediocre influences.

de razón a esas impulsiones instintivas sería tanto como pretender discutir con el terremoto o convencer al ciclón…" 'the impulse of the masses represents how much thoughtlessness and irrationality there are in human actions' (Torres 132). Such a correlation reveals an elitist attitude that, in addition to denying legitimate agency to the masses, fears their unbridled impulses.

Like Rodó, Torres attributes to the masses a primitive instinct that precludes them from defining a moral compass as well as from generating 'reasonable' courses of action within a national framework. The crowd's *inconsciencia* accounts for its pliability with respect to base emotions such as violence (132). Although "spirit" became a key word after *Ariel*, its definition was flexible. Torres cites Gustave Le Bon's widely influential *Psychologie des Foules* (1895) to call into question the very existence of the crowd's spirit and conscience. If these do exist, Torres maintains, "son un espíritu informe y una conciencia obscura y primitiva de donde la verdad y la justicia no emanan sino raza vez, en ráfagas momentáneas, en inspiraciones tornadizas y efímeras…" 'they are shapeless spirit and an obscure and primitive conscience from where the truth and justice do not emanate except in rare cases, in momentary gusts, in fickle and ephemeral inspirations' (133). Torres proposes a thinking elite to fill the critical void left by what he considers the mass's innate tendency to follow the herd, which has been responsible for the widespread violence and dictatorships that have occurred throughout Latin American republics. Throughout history, Torres argues, steering civilization toward higher ideals has been the obligation of "las mentes superiores que se han atrevido a tener razón contra los demás…" 'superior minds that have dared to be right against everyone else' (135).[44] Such outstanding individuals are capable of envisioning the future and therefore their primary task is, and always

[44] For example, Carlyle, Nietzsche, Emerson, and William James all claimed that only exceptional men *create* history (Torres 165).

has been, to pass "la antorcha de la verdad sobre el espeso manto de tinieblas en que las multitudes se envuelven obstinadamente para negar la luz" 'the torch of truth over the thick cloak of darkness in which the masses stubbornly cover themselves in order to deny light' (134).[45]

For Torres, a successful democracy means having a directive intelligentsia that can divulge validated ideas and actions via a "cultivated criterion." Although Torres recognizes the divisive implications of his ideas surrounding equality and legitimate hierarchies, he states that they are less extreme because they do not coincide with the *scientific aristocratism* of the nineteenth century that gave way to racialized diagnostics. Significantly, although Torres insists on the validity of intellectual hierarchies, he also disdains what he calls *herolatría* (hero worship), a concept borrowed from Scottish writer Thomas Carlyle. In *On Heroes and Hero Worship* (1840), Carlyle examines six varieties[46] of "great men" throughout history, such as Mohammed, Dante, Shakespeare, Luther, Rousseau, Cromwell, and Napoleon, and, as the following passage illustrates, casts them as almost supernatural beings:

> [The hero] is the living light-fountain, which it is good and pleasant to be near. The light which enlightens, which has enlightened the darkness of the world; and this is not as a kindled lamp only, but rather as a natural luminary shining by the gift of Heaven; a flowing light-fountain, as I say, of native original insight, of manhood and heroic nobleness;—in whose radiance all souls feel that it is well with them. (Carlyle 4)

Although his endorsement of the directive roles of a sanctioned intelligentsia seemingly participates in Carlyle's hyperbolic hero fascination, Torres attempts to stabilize this by

[45] Note how this description mirrors Carlyle's hero worship.
[46] The six kinds of heroes are: divine, prophet, poet, priest, man of letters, and king.

validating the progressive roles that anonymous individuals and groups have played throughout history.[47] Imagining a nation frequently involves mythologizing one figure (for example, Bolívar, Napoleon) and projects onto this person all the accomplishments of a collective effort. According to Torres, this mythologizing tendency is a selective history that privileges hero worship without acknowledging the participation of those people and groups whom national histories and popular narratives overlook. Torres, then, inverts his earlier assertions regarding the incapacity of the masses to participate in national pursuits and insists that "son las masas el granito esencial de la grandeza de las naciones" 'the masses are the essential grain of the greatness of nations' (188).

According to Czech political theorist Miroslav Hroch, collective memory and equality are two key features of nation-building processes (79). While for Hroch these two facets are not mutually exclusive, Torres interrogates popular myths that inform cultural memory in order to grant agency to and incorporate a larger percentage of the population in the reconstruction of Colombia. Of course, the incongruity between Torres's initial denigration of the masses and his subsequent calls to reject "toda especie de directores de conciencia o de directores de pensamiento" ("every type of directors of conscience and thought"; 188), manifests the oscillative and paradoxical nature of assessing and assigning roles in a post-war national reconstruction.[48]

For Torres, national projects substantiate a directive, intellectual class whose rationalizing programs seek to educate the masses so that they are able overcome the instinctive

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[47] British writer Carne Ross analyzes a recent resurgence of this idea in the Occupy Wall Street movement in the United States in his *The Leaderless Revolution: How Ordinary People Will Take Charge and Change Politics in the 21st Century*.

[48] Vitier opines that this negotiation is unsatisfactory because he believes that the references Torres provides in hopes of subverting Carlyle's hero worship actually reinforce it (168).

and egotistical drives that Torres claims are responsible for the corruptions of democracic efforts in Latin America. The existence of a directive intelligentsia does not, however, translate into a repudiation of those they seek to educate: "Si la Naturaleza niega a los débiles el derecho a la vida, el espíritu democrático, sentido supremo del espíritu cristiano, en nombre de una equidad superior al ciego y brutal fatalismo de las cosas, ofrece la esperanza de la rehabilitación al caído, y al paria la posibilidad de la ascensión" 'If Nature denies to the weak the right to life, the democratic spirit, supreme sense of the Christian spirit, in name of a superior justice to the blind and brutal fatalism, it offers the hope of rehabilitation to the fallen, and to the pariah the possibility of ascent' (Torres 202). It is clear, then, that like Rodó, Torres simultaneously engages with conservative ideas of legitimate hierarchies and with liberal, neo-idealistic individualism that is successful only when the ideas it propagates achieve a "virtual," which is to say hegemonic or taken-for-granted, existence in society (303).

Although in "Rumbos nuevos" Rodó applauds Torres's emphasis on equilibrium, Rodó criticizes the Colombian for his insufficient recognition of the importance of legitimate hierarchies. Rodó observes a discrepancy between, on the one hand, Torres's advocacy for a directive class and, on the other, his protestations against hero worship. According to Rodó, "al impugnar la superstición aristocrática, [Torres] no reconoce todo su valor de oportunidad a la obra de instituir, en el alma de estos pueblos, el sentimiento de la autoridad vinculada a las legítimas aristocracias del espíritu, para la orientación y el gobierno de la conciencia colectiva" 'by refuting the aristocratic superstition, [Torres] does not fully recognize the value of instituting, in the soul of these nations, the feeling of authority lined to the legitimate aristocracies of the spirit, for the orientation and government of the collective conscience' ("Rumbos" 48). For Rodó, Torres went too far in attempting to encourage collective

participation in imagining the Colombian nation. Despite Torres's clear repudiation of the masses in certain moments of the essay, Rodó felt it necessary to insist once more, as he had done consistently since *Ariel*, on the absolute legitimacy of a directive intellectual class.

In other words, Rodó recognizes the importance of equilibrium with respect to positivism and spiritualism, but he is firm in his dichotomous, elitist division between a privileged minority who charts the course for society and the crowd, who should follow their lead because it is unable to generate any substantive sociopolitical progress on its own. While Rodó commends Torres's balanced approach in *Ídola fori*, the Uruguayan feels that the Colombian takes his emphasis on balance too far. Specifically, Rodó criticizes Torres for calling what the Uruguayan considers to be legitimate intellectual authorities an "aristocratic superstition" (Torres 165). However, it is important to remember that unlike Rodó, Torres writes his essay in the midst of a national crisis and therefore does not have the luxury of speaking metaphorically or restricting who can and cannot participate in the reconstruction of post-war Colombia. In other words, in the years following the divisive military and political struggles, in the years following *los Mil Días* Torres sought to avoid the exclusionary policies that spawned the divisive military and political struggles that ravaged Colombia.

3.5 Conclusion

Although *Ídola fori* is one of the most widely-read mediums for sharing universal intellectual currents in Latin America in the decade of 1910, literary histories rarely offer more than a quick aside about it. Moreover, critics who have commented Torres's essay view it in an ambivalent manner. For example, as already mentioned above, while Medardo Vitier praises Torres's ability to incorporate a wide variety of scientific, philosophical, and political ideas into

Ídola fori, he laments that these derive from predominantly European sources (165). Due to Torres's "application" of European ideas to Latin American realities, Vitier classifies the Colombian's Americanism as "indirect" (157).[49] In addition, from the perspective of two important U.S. commentators of the Latin American essay, Earle and Mead, Torres is anything but moderate and calm like *Ídola fori*. Despite these critical assertions that date from the 1940s and 1970s, more recent critics such as Sierra Mejía tend to read *Ídola fori* as a very balanced and serene essay written to quell an era dominated by violence and division. Torres's emphasis on peace and cooperation will undoubtedly be attractive to readers who live in bitterly hyper-partisan political environments, or near rapidly-shifting borders, today. Moreover, Torres stipulates that a successful democracy depends on reason, tolerance, and inclusion. In his estimation the revolts and civil wars in Colombia were fueled by the divisive political ideas and ideologies of a few politicians. The problem was not primarily a power-hungry *caudillo*, although Torres was critical of this strong man too, but rather uncritical ideas used by interested parties. Although Torres underscored the importance of rational ideas, he did so by focusing on serenity, relativity, and sociability (Jaramillo Uribe 443).

For over a century, Torres has been essentially dismissed by critics of Latin American literature. When scholars do mention him, they generally label him an '*arielista*'. His connection with *arielismo* is evident from Rodó's prologue, which suggests that both essayists shared a similar pedagogical mission. However, each essayist wrote from very different places and in vastly distinct circumstances: Rodó writes from a small, wealthy country on the verge of

[49] It is curious, however, that Vitier does not apply the same standard to Rodó's *Ariel*, an essay that engages with an enormous quantity of European ideas, but cites very few Latin American sources.

an expansive social democracy, while Torres finds himself in the economic and cultural aftermaths of a civil war. In other words, Rodó's spiritualism was too vague and simplistic for the post-war necessities of Colombia, which required utilitarian and practical pursuits (Sierra Mejía *Carlos Arturo Torres* 23-25). Rodó overlooks the plethora of geopolitical realities that inform cultural production in Colombia in the post-war period. Civil wars, a contentious political system, and the succession of Panama with the intervention of the United States, necessitate a different reading of Torres's essay outside a strictly *arielista* paradigm.

As I have pointed out, Torres's principle disjunction with Rodó's *arielismo* lies in the notion of legitimate hierarchies. Initially, Torres validates Rodó's elitist vision in no uncertain terms. Subsequently, however, he argues against the exclusivity of *Ariel* by insisting that all members of a nation, not just the select intellectual minority, deserve to participate in determining the direction of their countries. Rodó's restrictive view of democracy is incongruous with the geopolitical realities in post-war Colombia that necessitated a more inclusive vision for democratic participation. In other words, Torres realized from first hand experience that exclusivity and hyper-partisanship are synonymous and counterproductive for democratic projects. Therefore, Rodó's continentalist discourse that advocates an elitist, spiritualist transcendence of material realities and utilitarian endeavors contrasts sharply with Torres's role as a man of state trying to navigate and reconcile the complexities of a highly polarized political situation in Colombia.

4. South American *Arielismo*: Uruguay and Colombia

The essays by Vaz Ferreira and Torres that I have presented in this chapter lend themselves nicely to an interrogation of *arielismo* because although they share some similarities

with *arielismo*, they differ from it in notable ways. As I have shown, while Vaz Ferreira and Torres joined Rodó and participated, to different degrees, in the neospiritualist critique of dogmatic positivism, Vaz Ferreira relativized religiosity that was important to *arielismo* and Torres had to separate himself from *arielismo*'s unapologetic elitism. For instance, for Vaz Ferreira, religion in and of itself is innocuous, but it must not interfere with logic. In this way, Vaz Ferreira privileges the intellect over religious instinct and feelings. In contrast, Torres has to juggle his diplomacy on the one hand and his challenges to political ideologies that are counterproductive to modernization efforts in Latin America on the other. In other words, Torres challenges conservative and Catholic centralism while at the same time validating religious sentiments. Torres achieves this by redefining 'nationalism' as a combination of religious sentiments and patriotic feelings. As I have highlighted, Torres' concerns were primarily national and therefore more problematic to accommodate within an elitist *arielismo*. On the other hand, Vaz Ferreira wrote about intellectual and educational issue in a university setting.

The thematic, geographic, and socio-historical differences between Vaz Ferreira and Torres and their respective essays illustrate the complexity of studying Latin American writers as a coherent unit. Moreover, they signal the imprecise nature of the term '*arielismo*'. In this chapter, I have pointed out the coincidences between *Moral para intelectuales*, *Lógica viva*, *Ídola fori* and *arielismo*. However, I have also emphasized that applying the term '*arielismo*' to these essays does not take into account the variegated differences that complicate this classification.

Chapter IV

Resistance, Paradox, and Globality in Latin American Anti-Imperialist Literature

1. Introduction

In this chapter, I scrutinize the paradoxical engagements with *arielismo* by two of its most often-cited adherents, Argentine Manuel Ugarte and Peruvian Francisco García Calderón. In the first section of this chapter, I put Ugarte's early essays in dialogue with Slovenian philosopher Slavoj Žižek's idea of psychoanalytical disavowal in order to shed light on the ways in which the Argentine negotiates his disparate shifts between, on the one hand, an anti-ideological, epistemological autonomy and, on the other, an advocacy for a retention of Catholicism as an anti-imperialist defense system. I then explore how García Calderón's Pan-Latinist rhetoric in *Les démocraties latines de l'Amérique* (1912) contradicts the kind of cultural autonomy inherent in *arielismo*. My reading of Ugarte and García Calderón's respective texts, by focusing on the pertience of geopolitics, questions the limitations of the *arielista* label that critics generally apply to them. More importantly, I explore a series of paradoxes that suggest that anti-imperialist resistance and cultural autonomy are not clear-cut issues in Latin American intellectual history of the early twentieth century.

2. Anti-Imperialism and a Latin American Postcolonial Paradigm

A number of recent studies recognize Latin American literature's uncomfortable engagement with postcolonial studies (Beverly, Molloy, Colás, Ortega, Natali). In their introduction to *Colonialidad y crítica en América Latina: bases para un debate* (2007), Mabel Moraña and Carlos Jáuregui summarize the conflict in this way:

> La historia latinoamericana puede leerse, en efecto, como el relato de innumerables instancia de absorción, resistencia, negociación y adaptación de modelos epistemológicos que, creados desde y para otras realidades culturales, casi siempre desconocen la especificidad y los particularismos de la región: su inalienable diversidad étnica, cultural, lingüística, económica… De esta manera, el postcolonialismo ha sido visto, en muchas ocasiones, como una nueva forma de 'colonización por la teoría'… (11)
>
> Latin American history can in effect be read as the account of innumerable instances of absorption, resistance, negotiation, and adaptation of epistemological models that, created in and for other cultural realities, almost always ignore the region's specificity and particularities: its inalienable ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and economic diversity... In this fashion, postcolonialism has been seen, on many occasions, as a new type of 'colonization by theory'…

To be sure, the puzzle of postcoloniality does not have clear-cut pieces. Nor is the framework of postcoloniality a lone puzzle capable of being 'solved' much less deconstructed from one cultural context and reconstructed in another in the same way. Rather, we should keep in mind that, as Trinidadian writer and postcolonial theorist C.L.R. James affirms, "The content moves, develops, changes, and creates new categories of thought" between differing locales (cited in Colás 383). Therefore, here I do not aim to enter into the debate about whether or not postcolonial theories are suitable for Latin American contexts. Nor do I intend to copy postcolonial theories elaborated in other cultural contexts and paste them onto Latin American intellectual history. However, I agree with Marcos Natali in that there are "correspondences and productive contrasts" between postcolonial perspectives that originate in distinct times and

places (314). Certainly a close reading of Latin American texts produced in postcolonial/ neocolonial/imperialist circumstances will contribute significantly to enriching, as well as problematizing, the mosaic of postcolonial studies.

Much of the debate surrounding the viability of reading Latin American texts as "postcolonial" centers on the diversity of Latin American countries and their respective heterogeneous circumstances. How, then, can one speak of a uniquely "Latin American postcoloniality"? After acknowledging this reservation, critics who reference a Latin American postcoloniality tend consider to either the post-Independence period of most Latin American countries in the early 19th century, with the exception of Cuba and Puerto Rico, or, alternatively, the (post-)dictatorship era of the Latin American 'boom' writers. I want to situate my reading of Latin American postcoloniality in between these two time frames because, as Emily Rosenberg avers, reading postcolonialities in Latin America need not be restricted to the immediacy of the respective dates of independence of Latin American countries (498). Rather, according to Rosenberg, "being 'postcolonial' is broader than any particular geographical or temporal site" (498). In other words, when does a "postcolonial condition" end?[50] What characteristics or events demarcate its finality or transition into 'authentic' autonomy, whatever that may mean? Perhaps when a nation is invited to the G8 Summit one can be safely considered past "postcolonial"? Mary Louise Pratt asks, "Is "postcoloniality" a state which has been achieved, or one to which we aspire?" ("Neocolony" 460). This conundrum becomes even more challenging when we consider not the historical circumstance of a lone country, but of an entire region, as Latin American writers such as Rodó, Manuel Ugarte, Francisco García Calderón, and many others in the early twentieth century did. Moreover, those discourses were written a

[50] For a discussion of the politics of the term 'postcolonial' and its complicated applications based on chronology, see McClintock.

century after independence started its disparate route throughout Latin American countries, which provided a chronologically significant, even if arbitrary, moment to meditate on, as the English translation of one of García Calderón's essays reads, Latin America's "rise and progress." According to Ángel Rama, the centenary celebrations between 1910 and 1922 served a unifying function in which Latin American nations imagined themselves as part of a collective and by doing so Latin America "consolida su pertenencia a la economía-mundial occidental y construye su reconocible imagen contemporánea" 'consolidates its place in the Western world economy and constructs its recognizable contemporary image' (83). Of course, the geopolitical reality of U.S. interventions precipitated numerous essays written by Latin Americans between 1898 and 1912, and throughout the early 1920s, intent on diagnosing what they saw as the obstacles to the continent's progress, which were generally described in racial and geographical terms. Their frameworks were invariably comparative as their primary concern was assessing Latin America's place in a globalized context. The United States necessarily played a lead role in those meditations.

There were numerous U.S. interventions in Latin America in the early twentieth century, be they military, political, economic, or a combination thereof. Although it falls outside the scope of this study to elaborate on the distinct nature and circumstances of each intervention, the quantity speaks for itself: Cuba (1898, 1906, 1912), Colombia (1903), Dominican Republic (1904), Mexico (1905), Honduras (1905, 1907, 1911), Panama (1908), Nicaragua (1910, 1912). It goes without saying that U.S. expansionism in Latin America was frequent and in some cases, such as Cuba, sustained. Moreover, the fall-out from those interventions, in their respective contexts, was often catastrophic. It is not strange, then, that Latin Americans both inside and outside of those intervention zones responded with anti-imperialist writings. U.S. interventions

in Latin America and the Caribbean were fracturing the cultural and geopolitical imagination of Latin Americans who envisioned themselves as parts of a greater whole. Or, this situation necessitated seeing oneself as part of a larger community, as José Martí's advocated after sensing U.S. expansionist sentiments during the First International Conference of American States (commonly referred to as the First Pan-American Conference) in Washington, D.C. in 1890.[51]

This is why the theme of the future of Latin America was so prevalent by the beginning of centenary celebrations of independence. Ugarte writes *El porvenir de la América española* in 1910. Soon after, García Calderón mounts a large-scale examination of Latin America in *Les démocraties latines de l'Amérique*, which was written in 1911, published in French in 1912, and translated into English the following year as *Latin America: Its Rise and Progress*.[52] Throughout the following pages, I will demonstrate that Ugarte and García Calderón undertook complicated processes of resistance and adaptability in trying to answer this central question: What was Latin America's place in the contemporary world?

In this chapter, following Edward Said (2) and others, I do not propose a clear division between modernity, postcolonialism, and anti-imperialism. Rather, the early twentieth century in Latin America can be read as a conflictive coexistence between and among these, and other, paradigms. My theoretical approaches here greatly benefit from a number of contributions collected in a remarkable volume edited by Mabel Moraña, Enrique Dussel, and Carlos Jáuregui entitled *Postcoloniality at Large: Latin America and the Postcolonial Debate* (2008). In addition, I also read Ugarte and García Calderón's respective essays in conjunction with a variety of postcolonial theories elaborated in other cultural contexts (Homi Bhabha, Frantz Fanon, and W.E.B. DuBois). While such theories are not directly applicable to Latin America,

[51] See chapter 5 of Oscar Montero's *José Martí: An Introduction*.
[52] All subsequent references are to this translation of García Calderón's work.

as they are elaborated by oppressed races in unique historical and cultural contexts, they do offer suggestive ideas that enrich our understanding of a Latin American "anti-imperialist subjectivity" (Hardt and Negri 229) in that Ugarte and García Calderón's respective oscillations between resistance and appropriation problematize the coherency and bifurcation generally attributed to anti-imperialist literature in Latin America. Moreover, their texts manifest how they envision resistance, in Ugarte's case, or appropriation, in García Calderón's case, which cause them to undertake paradoxical negotiations that complicate their views on reason and religion, materialism and utilitarianism, and alterity and globality, which in turn, I will argue, complicate their respective associations with *arielismo*.

3. Ideology, Religion, and Anti-Imperialism in Manuel Ugarte's Early Essays, 1903-1910

"Vale más arrastrar el desprestigio diciendo la verdad,
que conseguir el aplauso repitiendo a sabiendas el error común."
Manuel Ugarte, *Enfermedades sociales* (1907)

Argentine writer Manuel Ugarte is typically associated with his Latin Americanist, anti-imperialist, and socialist writings (Quinziano 50, 61; Earle and Mead 69). Indeed, his extensive travel and passionate speeches throughout Latin America as well as in New York garnered him a reputation as a bold intellectual who personally delivered a Latin American denunciation to the United States. While these are undoubtedly salient features of his work, expounded most notably in his essays *El porvenir de la América española* (*The Future of Latin America*, 1910),[53] *Carta abierta al Presidente de los Estados Unidos* (*An Open Letter to the President of the United*

[53] Ugarte entitled the first edition of this work *El porvenir de la América española*. However, subsequent editions carried the title *El porvenir de la América latina*. The shift in adjectives is indicative of tensions between Hispanism and Latinism in early twentieth century Latin American cultural history.

States, 1913), *Mi campaña hispanoamericana* (*My Latin American Campaign*, 1922), *La Patria Grande* (*The United Continent*, 1922), and *El destino de un continente* (*The Destiny of a Continent*, 1923), other facets that underlie his continentalist efforts, such as the importance of resisting epistemological hegemony by cultivating a subjective autonomy rooted in critical thought and positivism.

Ugarte's anti-imperialists writings center on the precarious state of Latin American cultural and national autonomy (Delaney 74). However, Ugarte also recognizes that resisting imperialism is not strictly geographical and political, but also epistemological. Ugarte argues that the nature and validity of knowledge and the invested interests behind it should be scrutinized. Furthermore, Ugarte believes that imperialist efforts are successful not only due to the might and determination of the imperialist power, but, as Jason Borge notes, they are also facilitated by a traditionalist, totalitarian mentality of the oppressed (4). Geopolitical emancipation, then, must be preceded by an examination of and emancipation from epistemological ideologies and conventions.

In his early essays, Ugarte enumerates the epistemological obstacles to Latin America's autonomy and geopolitical progress. In *Crónicas del bulevar* (1903), Ugarte laments the ideological environment in which superstition, imitation, and instinct frustrate progress. In 1904, Ugarte views society through a Spencerian lense and encourages immediate socialist reforms in Latin America in *Las ideas del siglo*. Between 1905 and 1910 Ugarte's scrutiny of the obstacles to his Latin Americanist project becomes more complex and more difficult to negotiate. In *Enfermedades sociales* (1905), Ugarte criticizes religious, scientific, and social dogmas and rejects the emulation of foreign models, as well a religiously-influenced educational system that emphasizes tradition and memorization over critical autonomy and modernization. In 1910,

Ugarte publishes one of his best-known works, *El porvenir de la América española*. In this text, Ugarte juggles, on the one hand, the necessity of an undogmatic critical autonomy and, on the other, a respect for religious convictions and their utility in achieving national solidarity and progress.

In this chapter, I examine the discrepancies surrounding Ugarte's rhetoric on ideology and religion that appear in his early essays (1903-1910). First, I highlight Ugarte's proposal to use critical autonomy to interrogate epistemology and ideology. According to Ugarte, traditionalism, superstitions, and memorization represent a threat to modernization, critical independence, and continental progress. In addition, Ugarte argues that humans created religion out of psychological uncertainty. For that reason, he considers the influence of contemporary religious hegemony antithetical to what should be the progressive aims of politics and education in Latin America. However, due to the threat of imperialist incursion from the United States, Ugarte insists that Catholicism serves an essential unifying function for Latin Americans to achieve material modernization and geopolitical sovereignty. Ugarte's ambivalent views surrounding religion pose it as both an obstacle for national solidarity and progress *and* the key to achieving them. I argue that Ugarte glosses over these inconsistencies due to the urgency of his anti-imperialist, Latin Americanist project (Hodge Dupré 139).

3.1 *Arielismo* and Ugarte

Argentine critic Norberto Galasso, one of Ugarte's most prolific contemporary commentators, asserts that Ugarte's prominent reputation as an anti-imperialist, a socialist, and/or an "*arielista*" sometimes precludes more nuanced readings of his work ("Prólogo" 12). It is undeniable that many Latin American youth enthusiastically embraced Ugarte, as they did

with Rodó, as a "gran alertador de la conciencia de América" ("great whistleblower of America's conscience"; Carrión 80). Also, Ugarte is one of the Latin American writers most frequently caught in *Ariel*'s widely-cast net. Rodó and Ugarte began their publishing ventures around the same time (1895-1896) and both strove for the unity of Latin America (Galasso "Prólogo" 14). Despite these similarities, critics view Ugarte's relationship with *arielismo* in a variety of conflicting ways. For example, some critics classify Ugarte as an "*arielista*" but do not make any explicit connection between Ugarte and Rodó (Roig 58; Altamirano 10; Moreiro 565; Krauze 39; Pakkasvirta 84). Other critics take a more neutral position and argue that *Ariel* influenced or inspired Ugarte's essays (Franco 162; López and Guillermo 45; Barrios 37). José Miguel Oviedo, on the other hand, considers Ugarte's work a synthesis of various intellectual currents: "llevó el mensaje arielista al encuentro con las ideas socialistas europeas y la doctrina antiimperialista" 'he joined the Arielist message with European socialist ideas and the anti-imperialist doctrine' (*Historia* 116). In contrast to Oviedo, Jason Borge argues that Ugarte's essays try to "disentangle imperial conflicts from the realm of *arielista* essentialism, and…implicat[e] Latin American elites as complicit in its crimes codified by the Roosevelt Corollary" (4). Other critics downplay Rodó's influence on Ugarte and reject altogether the *arielista* label that others attribute to him (Stabb 168; Beorlegui 87).

These diverging opinions regarding Ugarte's affiliation with Rodó and *arielismo* underscore a critical indecisiveness with respect to how to view Ugarte's work. Of course, I am not arguing for essentialist classifications of any writer's work, much less a body of work as plethoric as Ugarte's. To be sure, Ugarte's essays constitute a very valuable contribution to the fields of Latin American history, cultural studies, politics, and literature. It is precisely for this reason that his classification as an '*arielista*' deserves new scrutiny.

3.2 Imperialism and Emulation

Ugarte's reputation as an anti-imperialist was well known not only in Latin America, but also in Europe and the United States. For example, he was recognized in the United States as, in the words of Samuel Guy Inman in his *Problems in Pan Americanism* (1921), "the most persistent and most active of all the Yankee haters in Hispanic America" (333). Ugarte's direct challenges to U.S. hegemony in Latin America were indeed among the most candid and enduring. The bulk of his anti-imperialist texts fall between 1901, the year in which he published two short, but important, pieces entitled "El peligro yanqui" ("The Yankee Danger") and "La defensa latina," and 1923 with the publication of *El destino de un continente*. After the 1913 inauguration of President Woodrow Wilson, who publicly differed from the dollar diplomacy of his predecessors Roosevelt and Taft, Ugarte published "Una carta abierta al Presidente de los Estados Unidos" from Peru. In this document, Ugarte denounces the exploitative conduct by U.S. companies and governmental representatives in Latin American countries in recent years. Unfounded complaints, he claims, have been used as pretexts for political and economic intervention and monopolization. Ugarte's denunciations were not timid, but direct. Although Ugarte interprets U.S. presence in Latin American nations as transgressive and opportunistic, he also lays some of the blame at the feet of Latin Americans themselves.

Although Ugarte and Rodó were concerned about Latin American sovereignty and imperialism, whether cultural, in Rodó's case, or political and economical in Ugarte's, each essayist analyzed those topics in different ways. In *Ariel*, for example, Rodó appeals to the 'superior' spirituality of Latin Americans as a way of resisting what he refers to as materialist *nordomanía*, or a fascination with the wealth of the United States (196). However, Ugarte is more accusatory and calls attention to a number of stark contrasts between the United States and

Latin America in order to underscore ways in which Latin Americans themselves facilitate imperialist incursion from the North. He emphasizes this point in a variety of ways that juxtapose a utopic vision of the United States and Latin America's intellectual and political dystopia. First, while Latin America is "fractured" into twenty nations, the United States is "un régimen eminentemente federal, bajo una sola bandera, en una nación única" 'an eminently federal regime, under one flag, in one nation' (*El porvenir* 130).[54] Second, youth in the United States, in contrast to those in Latin America, do not have to contend with stifling intellectual atmospheres, antiquated pedagogies, a fragmented cultural conscience, and geographical isolation (*El porvenir* 173).[55] While educational philosophy in the United States emphasizes initiative, critical thinking, and freedom from dogmas in order to produce citizens who can think accurately, act accordingly, and, most importantly, in conjunction with one another, Latin Americans memorize and repeat formulas inherited from other parts of the world and do not see themselves as part of a larger continental collectivity. For these reasons, Ugarte insists that "superior" Latin American youth shed the mental atavisms and geographical seclusions that frustrate the unification of Latin American countries in order to resist U.S. imperialism (*El porvenir* 239).

Ugarte also reminds Latin Americans that their political sovereignty and geographical borders are not unalterable: "La fisonomía de las naciones no es una cosa eterna y glacial que conserva a través de los siglos la misma posición y el mismo aspecto" 'The physiognomy of nations is not an eternal and glacial thing that conserves the same position and aspects throughout time' (*El porvenir* 166). *El porvenir de la América española* was published in the

[54] Of course, Ugarte overlooks divisive legislative landmarks in the United States such as Plessy v. Ferguson in 1896, which upheld the constitutional basis for racial segregation in the United States.

[55] Rodó also refers to the "painful isolation" of Latin America (*Ariel* 152).

wake of a series of geopolitical challenges to Latin American sovereignty. For example, the *Guerra de los Mil Días* ended with the establishment of Panama in 1904, which was overseen by the United States military. Moreover, the United States politically and/or militarily intervened in affairs in Mexico, Honduras, Cuba, Panama, the Dominican Republic, and Nicaragua between 1905-1910. Moreover, *El porvenir de la América española* surfaced on the brink of what would be an avalanche of subsequent U.S. interventions throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. It is no wonder why Ugarte highlights the tenuous nature of geographical demarcations and national autonomy in Latin America. According to Ugarte, a successful resistance requires that Latin Americans view themselves as a "homogenous whole" (*El porvenir* 166). For this reason, Ugarte challenges the psychological and pedagogical obstacles that he feels complicate or inhibit the formation of a unified, continental identity.

3.3 Diagnosing Latin America's Intellectual Ills and Prescribing Rational Nonconformity

Franco Quinziano notes that there is a clear emphasis on the relationship between mental autonomy, national independence, and resisting imperialism in Ugarte's early essays (50, 57). The critical emancipation that Ugarte advocates depends on a young intellectual minority willing to interrogate and replace illogical or outdated ideas. According to Ugarte, Latin American youth who are "in agreement with their conscience" (*Crónicas* 84) must forge an atmosphere that replaces traditionalism and formulas with the circulation of rational knowledge. For instance, in *Crónicas del bulevar* (1903) Ugarte criticizes Latin America's affinity for imitation and a reliance on instinct to the detriment of reason. A lack of analytical meditation, rooted in a "native laziness" (*Crónicas* 73), facilitates the acceptance of whatever idea is most conveniently available. Conformity, Ugarte believes, is more valued than original, rational thought in Latin

America, and this *modus operandi* is normalized to the point that "Las gentes que se conforman con la costumbre, pasarán siempre por gentes honradas. Se llama hombre de bien al que imita a los demás" 'The people that conform to custom will always pass for honorable people. Whoever imitates others is considered a good man' (*Crónicas* 74).

Ugarte also laments that the perception of objectivity is so easily constructed, manipulated, and reproduced in Latin America. According to Ugarte, a superficial understanding of information, and a subsequent proliferation of it, manifest an absence of a "voluntad de saber" ("will to know") that discourages the pursuit and value of truth (*Crónicas* 77). In other words, Latin American youth learn how to internalize superficial, uncritical explanations, or do what satisfies their own self-interest most easily. Overall, Ugarte maintains that superficial ideas are responsible for superficial character. The above ideas offered in *Crónicas del bulevar* establish the nonconformist base that permeates Ugarte's subsequent essays until 1910.

In *Las ideas del siglo* (1904), Ugarte embraces Spencerian notions of evolution and transition in order to frame Latin America as "un organismo movible, en perpetua evolución" 'a moving organism in perpetual evolution' (5). Ugarte uses this evolutionary paradigm to argue that if nature is never stagnant, then neither is human life. Human inaction is unnatural because it is antithetical to how nature operates. Endless "transitional states" (*Las ideas* 5), then, constitute human history. Ugarte's central question, therefore, is whether or not Latin Americans will "permanecer inmóviles en medio de la general renovación, atados a fórmulas de sus antepasados y condenados a volver a vivir y a seguir viviendo eternamente lo que ya vivieron otros?" 'remain immobile in the middle of the general renovation, tied to their ancestors' formulas and condemned to relive and continue eternally living what others already lived?' (*Las*

ideas 5). Interrupting the historical continuity of tradition and ideology is an essential component in effecting transition. Ugarte believes that people must realize that "mil atávicas supersticiones filosóficas, políticas y sociales retienen a la casi totalidad de los seres humanos en un estado inferior, atados a cosas cuyo valor es convencional y ficticio…" 'a thousand atavistic, philosophical, political, and social superstitions keep almost all humans in an inferior state, tied to things whose value is conventional and fictitious' (*Las ideas* 8).

In *Enfermedades sociales* (1907), Ugarte elaborates a more comprehensive analysis of what he perceives to be the personal and social impediments in Latin America that restrict the kind of evolution outlined in *Las ideas del siglo*. Many critics situate *Enfermedades sociales* within the series of 'diagnostic' essays written near the turn of the twentieth century (Braham 124; Lemogodeuc 40; Aínsa 70).[56] Other critics concur, but assert that Ugarte participates in a process of racialization similar to that found those seen in essays by Carlos Octavio Bunge or Alcides Arguedas (Funes 138; Marini Ruy 224). Although Ugarte diagnoses the problems he perceives in Latin American societies, he, unlike those writers just mentioned, denies that race accounts for the differences in individual aptitudes: "La ciencia dice que todos, con excepción de los enfermos y los baldados, han nacido con una organización cerebral semejante. Si unos pueblos demuestran tener mayores preferencias por una cosa que por otra, ello depende de la educación que vienen recibiendo" 'Science tell us that everyone, with the exception of the sick and disabled, are born with a similar cerebral organization. If some nations demonstrate greater preferences for one thing over another, it depends on the education that they receive'

[56] The list of usual suspects includes *Manual de patología política* (1899) by Agustín Álvarez (Argentina), *El continente enfermo* (1899) by César Zumeta (Venezuela), *Nuestra América* (1903) by Carlos Octavio Bunge (Argentina), *Pueblo enfermo* (1909) by Alcides Arguedas (Bolivia), and *O parasitismo social e evolução na América Latina* (1903) by Salvador Mendieta (Brazil).

(*Enfermedades* 113). Whereas Bunge and Arguedas rely on positivism to justify their racializations, Ugarte employs it to undermine such interpretations. It is curious, then, that Ugarte's *Enfermedades sociales* has been so widely lumped in with social Darwinist essays like Bunge's *Nuestra América* and Arguedas's *Pueblo enfermo*. It seems likely that the title of Ugarte's text is responsible for this. Ugarte's criticisms of Latin American societies in *Enfermedades sociales* center on ideas and education, not race. It is important to note, however, that Ugarte is not exempt from racializing minority populations in Latin America. He clearly does so in *El porvenir de la América española*, but not in *Enfermedades sociales* (Merbilhaá 210).[57]

In *Enfermedades sociales* Ugarte highlights a number of societal 'ills' that frustrate Latin American progress. Although Ugarte's denunciation of the hegemonic perpetuation of frameworks of knowledge is a central issue in his essays, he also lays the blame for the stagnant intellectual atmosphere on unbridled optimism that allows people to "sustituir a la realidad viviente y a las certidumbres visibles los deseos y las aspiraciones de los sueños" 'substitute the living reality and visible certainties with the desires and aspirations of dreams' (*Enfermedades* 40). In other words, Ugarte maintains that when optimism becomes both a means and an end in a collective psychology, it takes on an ideological function that inhibits substantive progress. This is another way that Ugarte differs from Rodó. In *Ariel* Próspero tells his students that they will be the precursors of a cultural and spiritual renovation that will come to fruition at a later time. In contrast, Ugarte emphasizes the immediacy of reformative efforts. In this way, Ugarte grounds the spiritualist insistences of *arielismo* in concrete realities.

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[57] For more a thorough treatment of Ugarte's racializations in *El porvenir de la América española*, see Margarita Merbilhaá's article "Claves racialistas y reformistas en la invención de un nacionalismo continental. *El porvenir de la América latina* (1911), de Manuel Ugarte."

According to Ugarte, one of these concrete realities that is prevalent in the contemporary age is a widespread fear of confronting newly discovered facts. Ugarte argues that humanity inevitably chooses the course of action or belief that is most comfortable, even against the common widsom that suggests the relativity of those conventionalisms. Ugarte blames the facility with which people accept the equation that what is most common is therefore true on "La moral vetusta basada en proposiciones inexactas y apoyada por rancios silogismos…" 'Ancient morality based on inexact propositions and supported by antiquated syllogisms' (*Enfermedades* 147). A traditional morality, he argues, "está en innegable contradicción con nuestra época experimental, en que la ciencia destruye día a día lo que aún subsiste de las interpretaciones ingenuas en que se complacieron nuestros padres, y en que nuestra actividad interrogativa va precisando por medio de deducciones y acercamientos, la verdadera esencia y la exacta finalidad de todas las cosas" 'is in undeniable contradiction with our experimental epoch, in which science destroys day after day what still subsists of the gullible interpretations that pleased our parents, and in which our interrogative activity specifies the true essence and exact finality of all things through deductions and approaches' (*Enfermedades* 147).

In *Enfermedades sociales* Ugarte relies on positivism to replace obsolete knowledge and confront the validity of conventionalisms. Traditions that are out of touch with the contemporary age must be renovated or replaced through the use of reason. Ugarte, then, advocates a reformed morality, or

> una nueva moral que sea el producto de la ciencia triunfante, una moral hecha de constataciones y de esperanzas y de progreso, que resulta al propio tiempo una emancipación para el hombre y una barrera opuesta a las regresiones posibles, una moral de fundamentos y no de fórmulas y de palabras; una moral sin castigos pero

> con responsabilidades, una moral altruista que, sin sacrificar a los individuos, los amalgame en una coordinación serena y alta. (*Enfermedades* 147-148)
>
> a new morality that is the product of the triumph of science, a morality made from verifications, hopes, and progress, that at the same time is an emancipation for humanity and a barrier opposed to possible regressions, a morality of fundamentals and not of formulas or words; a morality without punishment but with responsibilities, an altruistic morality that, without sacrificing individuals, combines them in serene and lofty cooperation.

At the center of Ugarte's pedagogical message is the idea that in order for Latin American youth to emancipate themselves and their nations from intellectual and military imperialism, they must break the chains of the past (Quinziano 56). Ugarte's diagnosis of the social maladies in Latin America in *Enfermedades sociales* centers on the issue of pedagogy. According to Ugarte, Latin America cannot rely on its educational systems to motivate progress because they refuse to interrogate and reform traditional elements of its methodologies and teachings that are antiquated for new historical challenges. A defining characteristic of this new era is the relativity of knowledge: "Lo que nos mueve es hacer notar la vetustez de fórmulas que todavía circulan. Porque lo que resultaba explicable en aquellos tiempos, no lo parece hoy" 'Making people aware of the antiquity of formulas that still circulate motivates us. Because what was easily explained in other times, is not today' (*Enfermedades* 183). Therefore, heredity of thought and subsequent atavistic action ensure that the past dominates present attempts at renovation, thus requiring an even more extensive effort to combat ideology: "Nacemos a la vida intelectual ceñidos por un pasado, que, desde luego, no es imposible sacudir, pero que esteriliza nuestros primeros ímpetus, obligándonos a gastar las mejores energías en una tarea de

deseducación…" 'We are born into intellectual life restricted by a past that, of course, is not impossible to shake off, but that sterilizes our first impulses, forcing us to waste our best energies in the task of unlearning' (*Enfermedades* 181).

Ugarte rejects a uniform curriculum focused on memorization and formulas because it is out of touch with the contemporary era. Instead, Ugarte affirms that Latin Americans would benefit more by fostering initiative, creativity, and accepting that movement and change are inevitable ingredients for ushering in the future. Ugarte's recommended pedagogy consists of overcoming the temerity of discovering new truths. The dichotomy between reason and faith is central in this situation: "Imponer dogmas científicos, religiosos, o sociales es *entrar matando*, es preparar a los pueblos para la fe y no para el libre examen" 'To impose scientific, religious, or social dogmas is to *enter killing*, it is to prepare nations for faith and not for free consideration' (*Enfermedades* 184).

Ugarte argues that a Latin American education is essentially the translation and implementation of the panoptic fear promulgated by religious authorities, which he labels "una empresa de deformación moral" 'an enterprise of moral deformation' (*Enfermedades* 186). Latin American education has a hegemonic character that subjugates projects aimed at liberation: "inconscientemente, por respeto a la tradición y por apego a las fórmulas, se sigue aplicando en nuestra aurora de libertad el mismo método que sirvió en otros siglos para prolongar las tinieblas" 'unconsciously, for respect of tradition and for adherence to formulas, we keep applying in our dawn of liberty the same method that served to prolong the darkness in other centuries' (*Enfermedades* 192).

Until now, I have detailed Ugarte's criticisms of what he perceives as "la nociva atmósfera" ("the harmful atmosphere") of Latin America in which the most conventional

assertion equals the most factual veracity. I have also pointed out that Ugarte's emancipatory project, which he outlines in his early essays, seeks to reform the "lack of general orientation" (*El porvenir* 199) in Latin American societies through an informed and modernized pedagogy that animates rational analysis and critical independence free of dogmas. I will now turn my attention to the ways in which Ugarte contradicts his own secular program of critical autonomy in *El porvenir de la América española*.

3.4 Imperialism and the Sociology of Latin American Catholicism

El porvenir de la América española is a lengthy analysis of the confluence of social, cultural, and economic factors in Latin America (Barrios 87). Ugarte wrote the essay at a time when the United States military occupied parts of the Dominican Republic and Nicaragua, which illustrated the urgency of his anti-imperialist message (Carrión 105). Ugarte's views on the role of religion in this anti-imperialist effort, however, have gone largely uncommented. As I have been emphasizing throughout this study, a deliberate attempt to balance positivist rationalism and neospiritual irrationalism was a prevalent intellectual tendency in the early twentieth century Latin American essay. Ugarte dismisses the importance of balance in his early essays because he advocates immediate progressive sociocultural and economic reforms based on positivism. In *El porvenir de la América española*, however, Ugarte embraces a more nuanced analysis of religion that walks the middle ground between, on the one hand, "the respect that sincere convictions demand" and, on the other, "the liberty of judgment that the state of modern knowledge imposes" (*El porvenir* 273).

Whereas in *Enfermedades sociales* Ugarte decries the influence of religion in education and politics, in *El porvenir de la América española* he insists that there is more to religion than

just its oppressive hegemony. Despite Ugarte's emphasis on the importance of positivist reason and critical interrogation of conventions in *Enfermedades sociales*, he views religion as innocuous and useful in *El porvenir de la América española*. Note his inclusive definition of religion: "La masa enorme de creencias, acatamientos, tradiciones, idealismos, ceremonias y jerarquías que hemos convidado en llamar religión" 'The enormous mass of beliefs, observances, traditions, idealisms, ceremonies, and hierarchies that we have decided to call religion' (*El porvenir* 273). Ugarte divides religion into four types: deism, ritualism, clericalism, and morality. In the following section, I will argue that in *El porvenir de la América española* Ugarte undermines the foundation of his critical project by excusing religion's ideological function that he so clearly rejects in *Crónicas del bulevar*, *Las ideas del siglo*, and *Enfermedades sociales*. Therefore, Ugarte's concern for national cohesion and progress precludes him from engaging in the kind of critical assessment he advocates throughout his early essays.

According to Ugarte, the origins of deism (a belief in a supernatural creator who does not intervene in human affairs) are existential. Psychological uncertainty and fear motivated early humans to search for a supernatural force capable of explaining their existence: "Aislados en medio de la noche, sobrecogidos por la inmensidad que nos circunda, absortos ante los enigmas del universo, los seres han buscado una explicación, una voluntad y un fin…" 'Isolated in the middle of night, terrified by the immensity that surrounds us, absorbed by the enigmas of the universe, humans have searched for an explanation, a will, a purpose…' (*El porvenir* 274). Moreover, a belief in a supernatural entity physically unified and emotionally sustained warriors in battle (*El porvenir* 274). As Peter Berger points out, religious sentiments and imaginings have been successful throughout history because they are capable of making the apparently unstable and isolated aspects of existence seem stable and part of a larger plan (89). Ugarte asserts that

the passage of time and the repetition of ritual have cemented the psychological legitimacy and social utility of deistic religiosity.

Even though Ugarte's sociological approach to the origins of religiosity highlights the constructive role of human psychology and cognition, which Freud called the "psychical origin of religious ideas" (38), he does not denigrate the sentiments that motivated humans to create religion: "No sé si todavía tenemos dentro de nosotros una chispa de pánico que agitó a los trogloditas soprendidos en plena selva por las manifestaciones de lo sobrenatural, pero me parece que no cabe nada más noble dentro de los gestos posibles" 'I do not know if we still have within us a spark of panic that stirred the amazed troglodytes in the middle of the jungle with supernatural signs, but I do not think that there is anything more noble out of all possible actions (*El porvenir* 274-275). While Ugarte appears to be in agreement with Peter Berger that religion forms false consciousness (Berger 87), he validates the uncertainty that led humans to create religion in moments of fear. In other words, Ugarte realizes what Berger calls the "world-building potency of religion" (133).

I read Ugarte's ambivalent affinity for a deistic religious sentiment as indicative of his overarching concern for a unified Latin American resistance to U.S. hegemony. Even though Ugarte concedes that religious belief was a human fabrication, he nonetheless recognizes its utility as a cultural signifier capable of integrating people in a common cause. As Charles Taylor points out, religion has incredible power to provide a sense of common identification (43). Benedict Anderson agrees and points out that religious affiliation "served as the basis of very old, very stable imagined communities" (169). Prominent sociologists such as Jürgen Habermas and Robert Bellah also underscore religion's success in animating its adherents to perform what American sociologist Robert Wuthnow calls "socially integrative functions" (Wuthnow 90).

Moreover, Brian Porter notes that religious affiliation is many times synonymous with national affiliation (289). In addition, Peter Berger argues that religious affiliation provides solidarity when faced with chaos (Berger 51).

While Ugarte's justification of deism appears contradictory to his urgings of critical autonomy, as he admits that a divine creator was a fabrication of the human psyche, but subsequently says deism is not a superstition, he validates the social utility of religious belief. The idea is simple: if Catholicism facilitates a common worldview around which Latin Americans unite, their respective nations can more effectively stave off U.S. imperialism. Ugarte also sees religious sentiment as a vital link in a longer chain: religiosity, however one defines it, can facilitate material and political progress. Ugarte presents deism as an example of affirmation: "De aquí que los países en que el deísmo predomina en su forma a la vez más humana y más pura que sean los que marchan a la cabeza de la especie, y de aquí que las naciones meridionales donde coexisten las dos formas de la negación—el fanatismo religioso y el ateísmo—, carezcan a menudo de la rigidez y la austeridad que son las condiciones esenciales de la victoria" 'This is why in countries in which deism predominates in its most human and pure form that they are the ones that lead the species, and also why southern nations where two forms of negation coexist—religious fanaticism and atheism—, they often lack the rigidity and austerity that are essential conditions for victory' (*El porvenir* 275-276).

Ugarte also notes the indispensability of religious ritualism to Latin American nations in an ambivalent way. According to Peter Berger, religion "locates" human phenomena within a cosmic framework by relying on ritualism's ability to "remind" people about religion's legitimation (35). Although Ugarte recognizes ritualism's utility, he likewise underscores its capacity for deception and oppression. For example, Ugarte emphasizes the importance of a

shared system of beliefs reinforced through religious rituals that serve as "apoyo para los seres y un estímulo para la virtud" 'support for humans and incentive for virtue' (*El porvenir* 279). On the other hand, however, Ugarte highlights the hegemonic aspect of ritualism by citing Tolstoy's idea that "enseñamos como una verdad santa lo que sabemos que es imposible y que no tiene sentido alguno para nosotros…" 'we teach as a sacred truth what we know is impossible and has no meaning at all for us' (*El porvenir* 277).

I read Tolstoy's appearance in Ugarte's essay as a sort of approbatory nod to a critical autonomy that recognizes the fabricated nature of religious belief and ritualism. Nevertheless, Ugarte moves beyond Tolstoy's criticisms of religion and links a consistency of religious rituals to a strong nationalism: "Hay muchas probabilidades para que un país que dedica un día por semana a las súplicas resulte un país de deber y de responsabilidad, y por lo tanto, un país sólido" 'It is very probable for a country that dedicates one day a week to prayer is a country of duty and responsibility, and therefore a solid country' (*El porvenir* 279). National cohesion, then, trumps doctrinal veracity and ritualistic efficacy. Ugarte recognizes a pure ritualism (a distinction he does not define in the text) as a prop that provides "entusiasmo, mayor generosidad y mayor ímpetu para trabajar en favor del bien común y facilitar el encubramiento de la especie" 'enthusiasm, greater generosity and fervor to work for the common good and facilitate the elevation of the species' (*El porvenir* 280). Thus, for Ugarte, disbelief, fanaticism, adulterated religion, or an absence of religion translate into a lack of character, responsibility, and initiative that strips the social realm of its constitutive elements. While his use of quotes by acerbic critics of religion like Tolstoy and Maximilien de Robespierre serve to acknowledge a deformation of religious character, teachings, and institutions, Ugarte embraces the role of religious rituals in

socialization and nationalization processes in Latin America in *El porvenir de la América española*.

Ugarte's anti-clerical opinions are less ambivalent than his views on deism and ritualism. The anti-clerical trend had by then had a long history and thus was not considered overtly taboo at the time of the publication of *El porvenir de la América española* in 1910 (Klaiber 157). Ugarte bemoans that some religious authorities implement religious norms for their own benefit. This intrusion into and monopolization of education and politics, Ugarte believes, frustrates Latin American progress and liberty. Furthermore, Ugarte insists that religion and politics be separated because the former is a sacred, spiritual realm and the latter is a quotidian reality. In the end, Ugarte concludes that religion should not influence politics.

As we have seen, despite his anti-clerical views, Ugarte supports the role of religious belief and rituals in Latin American civil society. Ugarte's views on morality are also religiously informed. Although he notes the possible independence of morality and faith, Ugarte believes that a morality that is a product of individual consciousness is less likely to be as legitimate as a religiously-derived one. However, practicing a religious morality should not mean a blind acceptance of theological morality (*El porvenir* 281). As I will show below, Ugarte's treatment of the concept of morality, like that of religion in general, is also ambivalent.

For Ugarte, morality must focus on action and progress, and he argues that those who negate possibilities and resign themselves to defeat would benefit more by believing in moral action and responsibility. Despite its mobilizing effects, Ugarte admits that the modern concept of morality is outdated and contradicts "the spirit of the current moment" (*El porvenir* 282). Even though he highlights the incompatibility of an antiquated religious morality and the modern epoch, Ugarte is reluctant to distance morality from its religious manifestations: "entre los

errores de la doctrina y los de los que la defienden, hay que confesar que no cabe por ahora en el Sur una moral que no tenga por base la que fue cuna de nuestra civilización" 'between doctrinal errors and the ones of those who defend it, we have to confess that there is no place right now in the South for a morality that does not have as its base the doctrine that was the cradle of our civilization' (*El porvenir* 283). Although Ugarte consistently underscores the non-supernatural origins of Christian belief and indicates the corruptibility of its rituals by its institutions and clerics, he nevertheless asserts that a Latin American "moral nationality" must continue to be, at least until the threat of imperialism has passed, a Catholically-derived one (*El porvenir* 124).

In a curious turn at the end of *El porvenir de la América española*, Ugarte states that the goal for religious renovation in Latin America should not be combating its doctrines, but rather separating it from politics and thus reducing religion's influence on everyday life. The discrepancy here, of course, lies in the fact that he repeatedly maintains that religion is a necessary mechanism of cohesion and progress, yet at the end of *El porvenir de la América española* he argues that its influence should be excluded from the political arena. This uncomfortable negotiation seems to indicate that religion is socially advantageous, but politically harmful. Ugarte glosses over the critical gaps in his analysis because he believes religion is useful in combating imperialist efforts: "La religión es necesaria para los pueblos y especialmente en la etapa por la cual atraviesan actualmente las repúblicas hispanoamericanas" 'Religion is necessary for nations and especially in the time through which the Hispanic American republics are currently passing' (*El porvenir* 285).

Above all, Ugarte's anti-imperialist agenda explains his advocacy for religion in Latin America: "En la campaña para contrarrestar la infiltración norteamericana, el catolicismo tiene que ser una de las fuerzas de resistencia y de apoyo. Los pueblos conquistadores que quieren

desnacionalizar y absorber a otros grupos comienzan por atacar las creencias" 'In the campaign to oppose North American infiltration, Catholicism has to be one of the forces of resistance and support. Conquering nations that want to denationalize and absorb other groups start by attacking beliefs' (*El porvenir* 285). Therefore, in Ugarte's continental project, a unified religious code is a cornerstone of the anti-imperialist defense system. Again, Ugarte does not interrogate the veracity of religious doctrines and practices, rather he concentrates his analysis on their sociological and geopolitical functions in Latin America.

3.5 Fetishistic Disavowal and Irrational Rationalism

Slavoj Žižek's idea of disavowal may help shed light on why Ugarte overlooks contradictions surrounding rationality and religion. For Žižek, disavowal is the idea that "I know very well, but I act as if I don't know" (Žižek, "On Ecology"). Disavowal, then, functions as both a recognition and an abnegation, which Žižek calls "one big fetishistic denial" (*First as Tragedy* 37). Žižek applies the idea of disavowal to a plethora of situations of crisis that range from the global financial crisis of 2008 to ecology catastrophes. Disavowal is a subjective instrument of dealing with crises, a sort of self-imposed hegemony: "While crises do shake people out of their complacency, forcing them to question the fundamentals of their lives, the most spontaneous first reaction is panic, which leads to a "return to basics": the basic premises of the ruling ideology, far from being put into doubt, are even more violently reasserted" (Žižek, *First as Tragedy* 18). In a similar way, a perceived crisis, U.S. imperialism in Latin America, compels Ugarte to knowingly curtail the rational base of his early intellectual project and reinforce religion's ideology.

As we have seen, Ugarte's underlying, as well as overt, calls for renovation and modernization in his early essays seek to make the social and historical moment more conducive to an intellectual liberation achieved through rationality and nonconformity. Ugarte's disavowal of religion in *El porvenir de la América española*, then, excuses religion's authority, conventions, and hegemony. In other words, Ugarte extols a primitive religiosity while advocating breaking the intellectual and social chains of the past. This incongruity illustrates the tension that Latin American intellectuals in the early twentieth century experience when attempting to balance scientific reason, neospiritualist belief, and urgent geopolitical concerns.

I have centered my analysis on the disparity between Ugarte's early interrogations of ideology and religious dogma between 1903 and 1907 and his subsequent validation of religious belief in 1910. While in *Crónicas del bulevar* (1903) and *Enfermedades sociales* (1907) Ugarte clearly rejects the epistemological, social, and religious atavisms that frustrate Latin American modernization, in *El porvenir de la América española* (1910) he curbs his acerbic criticisms and insists on the importance of a unified religious belief system as a defense against imperialism. In other words, in 1910 he overlooks the ideological nature of religious dogma that a few years earlier he ardently denounced. This shift is also evident in Ugarte's paradoxical use of the idea of instinct. For example, Ugarte condemns the conventionalisms that stem from instinct in *Crónicas del bulevar*. In *Enfermedades sociales*, however, he encourages Latin American youth to rely on their instincts in order to realize the relativity of conventional truths. As we saw in Chapter 3 with Rodó and Vaz Ferreira, instinct is what you make it. According to Ugarte, if instinct perpetuates conventionalism, one should rely on reason. Subsequently, however, Ugarte embraces instinct if it plays a part in unmasking ideology.

Ugarte's 1910 approval of religion offers a paradoxical message that can be read like this: "Break the chains of the past! Now put them back on because they will unite us!" For Ugarte, then, religion may be what philosopher and political theorist Herbert Marcuse calls "the irrational element in its rationality" (17). Although Ugarte recognizes the ideological nature of religious dogma and institutions, he insists that Catholic religiosity is practical for its social functionality. Therefore, Ugarte sees religion as intellectually irrational, but also socially rational. This change of perspective seems to undermine Ugarte's strong insistences on critical autonomy and reason in his early essays. On the other hand, however, this disavowal also underscores the complexity of negotiating reason and religion in a time of intense U.S. involvement in Latin America.

My reading of Ugarte's disavowal of religious hegemony in Latin American during frequently-executed U.S. expansionist policies underscores the tension between intellectual rationality and urgent geopolitical necessities. While his early writings communicate a desire to strengthen the connection between reason and action, he also realized a common religious code, despite its unfavorable societal ramifications, could do more good than harm. In this way, he and Rodó are on the same page, even if perhaps on different paragraphs, so to speak. As Ottmar Ette points out, for Rodó "el catolicismo constituía, además de la comunidad lingüística de las lenguas románicas, el segundo pilar de la ideología panlatinista que, bajo la tutela de Francia, tanto impacto había tenido en el llamado 'Nuevo Mundo' durante la segunda mitad del siglo XIX. También para Próspero, el cristianismo debía seguir constituyendo una de las bases imprescindibles para una identidad latinoamericana" 'Catholicism constituted, in addition to the linguistic community of Romance languages, the second pillar of Pan-Latinist ideology that, under the tutelage of France, had had such an impact in the so-called 'New World' during the

second half of the nineteenth century. Also for Próspero, Christianity should continue to constitute one of the essential bases for a Latin American identity' (58). The importance of Christianity in Rodó's project is very visible in *Ariel*, where it is seen as a belief system that encourages ideals (168), fosters superior moral conduct (190) and a restraint against utilitarianism (209). In this way, Rodó tries to rescue some of Christianity's essence and spiritual lessons. In contrast, Ugarte is more interested in a pragmatic use of religion. While Ugarte does echo Rodó's embrace of religion as a cultural unifier, the Argentine does not engage with Pan-Latinist rhetoric. For Ugarte, intellectual sacrifices have to be made for the sake of Latin American autonomy. In the following section, I will underscore a variety of ways in which Francisco García Calderón's Pan-Latinist ideology problematizes the issue of autonomy.

4. The Paradoxes of Latin American Postcoloniality and Pan-Latin Globality

No Latin American writer after Rodó is more synonymous with *arielismo* than Francisco García Calderón (González 92; Oviedo, *Historia* 112; Moreiro 567-568; García Morales). Although the list of '*arielistas*' varies, there is virtual consensus that he is one of them. Although they never met in person, Rodó and his "favorite disciple" (Rodríguez Monegal 166) maintained a rich epistolary relationship between 1903 and 1913. Despite the fact that García Calderón was one of the most important Latin American writers in the early twentieth century, Rodríguez Monegal notes that critics tend to either ignore or gloss over the nuances of his essays by reading them through an *arielista* lense (167).

Today, a century after the publication of his best-known essays, *Les démocraties latines de l'Amerique* (1912) and *La creación de un continente* (1913), García Calderón's reputation continues to be as an '*arielista*'. In 1927, Gabriela Mistral wrote that she considered García

Calderón "heredero efectivo y quizás único del uruguayo" 'Rodó's effective and perhaps only heir' (16). In an anthology of the Peruvian's essays published in 2003, Teodoro Hampe Martínez reinforces this reputation by referring to García Calderón as the "arielista peruano" 'Peruvian *arielista*' (21). These two examples are indicative of an abiding critical praxis that epitomizes García Calderón and his essays as "*arielistas*."

On the one hand, García Calderón's association with *arielismo* is logical. García Calderón is certainly representative of *Ariel*'s target audience. Born into a wealthy political family (his father was briefly the President of Peru) that moved to Paris as a young man, García Calderón studied with Henri Bergson, was friends with Émile Boutroux (to whom he dedicated *Les démocraties latines de l'Amerique*), and became perhaps the most important disseminator of European neospiritualist philosophy for Latin American readers in the early twentieth century. Rodó and García Calderón became epistolary friends and commented each other's work in letters, literary magazines, and books. For example, Rodó wrote a prologue for García Calderón's first book, *De Litteris* (1904). Also, in a 1904 letter, Rodó praised García Calderón's intellectualism, idealism, and spiritualism (Rodó, *Obras completas* 1436). Rodó's personal correspondence with Pedro Henríquez Ureña in 1906 also reveals that Rodó considered García Calderón a promising young Latin American writer that would orient Latin America towards higher ideals: "[García Calderón] es de la aproximación de espíritus tan bien dotados y orientados de donde puede surgir el impulso de vida para la crítica, y, en general, para la literatura de la América nueva" '[García Calderón] is of the approximation of truly blessed and oriented spirits from where the impulse of life for criticism, and, in general, literature of the new America can emerge' (Rodó, *Obras completas* 1439). It is clear, then, that Rodó considered García Calderón one of his disciples.

My approach to García Calderón resists a critical tendency that situates his writings within an *arielista* framework. However, I am not the first to problematize this correlation. For example, Emir Rodríguez Monegal has already highlighted important disparities between García Calderón and *arielismo*: "A diferencia de su maestro, García Calderón registra la incongruencia de recomendar el *ocio clásico* a naciones en formación; de proponer una democracia aristocrática en medio de la barbarie y el caciquismo; de predicar liberalismo en tierras de fanatismo" 'In contrast to his teacher, García Calderón notes the incongruity of recommending *classical leisure* to nations in formation; of proposing an aristocratic democracy in the middle of barbarism and despotism; of preaching liberalism in fanatical lands' (168). Moreover, José Miguel Oviedo calls García Calderón a "curious case" because his work "represents a perverse extension of the *Arielista* fascination with Europe" ("Modern Essay" 371-373). In the following pages, I follow Oviedo's lead and examine the ways in which García Calderón's use of Pan-Latinist rhetoric complicates his association with *arielismo*. Whereas in *Ariel* Rodó recognizes the spiritual and intellectual legacy of the classical world in Latin America, he insists on cultural autonomy over mimicry of the United States. In this way, *Ariel* is an anti-imperialist text, as noted by many of its readers. However, as I will argue, García Calderón's uses Pan-Latinism not as a vehicle for anti-imperialist resistance, but rather as a rhetorical mechanism that urges more European influence in Latin American affairs.

4.1 García Calderón and *Les démocraties latines de l'Amerique*

Francisco García Calderón Rey lived a wealthy and privileged life. His father, also named Francisco García Calderón (1883-1953), was a prominent lawyer and politician in Peru who, for a brief time during the War of the Pacific between Chile and the alliance of Peru and

Bolivia (1879-1883), was President of Peru. García Calderón (the son) finished his studies in philosophy and letters at the Universidad Mayor de San Marcos in 1903, published a well-received volume of literary criticism entitled in *De litteris* in 1904, and was praised by a giant of the literary world, José Enrique Rodó. However, in 1905 García Calderón's father died and not long after Francisco tried to commit suicide by jumping off a bridge in Lima. He survived relatively unscathed and, soon after in 1906, the family moved to Paris, where García Calderón began a career as a diplomat and continued to be an avid writer. In addition to well-known essays like *De litteris* (1904), *Les démocraties latines de l'Amerique* (1912), and *La creación de un continente* (1913), his work appeared in literary magazines throughout Latin America, such as *El Comercio* (Lima), *El Fígaro* (Havana), and *La Nación* (Buenos Aires). Most of his work, however, was published in Paris, including, *La Revista de América* (1912-1914), a journal he edited. Although García Calderón lived in France for forty years and often wrote in French, he wrote almost exclusively about Latin America, even if through a Pan-Latinist lense, which is evidenced by the title of *Les démocraties latines de l'Amerique*. Unlike Rodó's *Ariel*, for example, García Calderón's examination of Latin America and its place in the contemporary world in *Les démocraties latines de l'Amerique* was not intended for Latin American consumption, but for a French reading public, first, and, with the English translation published in New York and London in 1913, for readers in the United States and Great Britain, two imperial powers. A Spanish translation of *Les démocraties latines de l'Amerique* would not appear until 1979.[58]

We must not ignore what Walter Mignolo calls the "*locus* of enunciation" (*Darker Side* 13), that is, the geographical and cultural site from which a text is produced. García Calderón

[58] Translated by Ana María Julliand and published in Caracas by Biblioteca Ayacucho.

had lived in Paris since 1906, where he and his brother, Ventura (1886-1959), assumed consulary posts for the Peruvian government. Francisco quickly became entrenched in elite intellectual, social, and political circles. He interacted with the premiere French intellectuals of the day, such as Henri Bergson, Émile Boutroux, Gustave Le Bon, and Alfred Fouillée, to name only a few. He also frequently wrote in French and published the majority of his texts, in both Spanish and French, in Paris. In addition to his best-known essay, *Les démocraties latines de l'Amérique* (1912), García Calderón published other texts in French: *Le Pérou contemporain: étude sociale* (1907), *Les courants philosophiques dans l'amérique latine (1908), Les Conditions sociologiques de l'Amérique latine* (1908), *El dilemme de la guerre* (1919), *Panaméricanisme économique: les plans de la conférence panaméricaine de Montevideo et la conférence économique panaméricaine de Santiago du Chili* (1920), *Le Théâtre argentin* (1928), and *L'avenir de la Société des nations: discours* (1938).

Les démocraties latines de l'Amerique is one of the best-known of García Calderón's texts. The essay is largely dedicated to political history and is divided into five books or sections. The first book explores the colonial, independence, and industrial eras of Latin American history and begins with a psychological analysis of the conquering and conquered races. Book two deals with political ecology in Venezuela, Peru, Bolivia, Uruguay, and Argentina. Book three offers the same approach to Mexico, Chile, Brazil, and Paraguay. Book four examines Colombia, Ecuador, Central America, the Dominican Republic, and Haiti. Book five expands its scope to political, literary, and philosophical ideas in Latin America. Book six cements García Calderón's Pan-Latinist ideology and highlights the various geopolitical threats facing Latin America, that is to say, imperialism from the United States, Germany, and Japan. García Calderón dedicates book seven to four principle problems facing Latin America, the

problems of unity, race, politics, and economics. In the conclusion, García Calderón weighs a variety of possibilities and predictions about the future of Latin America, its culture, and its key geographical location in a key moment in the history of globalization, that is, the opening of the Panama Canal, an event that symbolized the triumph of U.S. imperialism and one that would bring nations of the world closer together and most likely into conflict.

The scope of *Les démocraties latines de l'Amerique* is expansive, but in no way superficial. The text is over 400 pages in length and is one of the most ambitious early-twentieth century cultural and historical analyses of Latin America and its place in the contemporary world. There are, then, numerous points of entry into the text. An in-depth analysis of each of the seven books of *Les démocraties latines de l'Amerique* is beyond the scope of this study. My objective here is to focus on the complex ways in which García Calderón imagines Latin America as an essential part of Pan-Latinity and assesses its place within a global paradigm. For these reasons, my approach to *Les démocraties latines de l'Amerique* centers on the foreword, book six (Pan-Latinity, geopolitical dangers), book seven (Latin America's problems), and the conclusion. Although there will be tangential references to other parts of the text when pertinent, I concentrate on the aforementioned sections because they offer the most substantive considerations surrounding autonomy, imperialism, globality, and Latin America.

The need to locate Latin America is clear from the onset of García Calderón's foreword:

> There are two Americas. In the north, the "Outre-Mer" of Bourget, is a powerful industrial republic, a vast country of rude energies, of the "strenuous life." In the south are twenty leisurely states of unequal civilization, troubled by anarchy and

> the color problem.[59] The prestige of the United States, their imperialism, and their wealth, have caused those restless Latin republics of the South to be forgotten and underestimated. The name of America seems to be applied solely to the great imperial democracy of the North. (*Latin America* 15)

This subaltern positioning of Latin America is a frequent trope in García Calderón's essays and plays a fundamental role in the objective of *Les démocraties latines de l'Amerique*: "We propose to draw up the balance-sheet of these Latin republics: this is the aim of this book. We interrogate the history of these states the reasons for their inferiority and their prospects for the future" (*Latin America* 16). *Les démocraties latines de l'Amerique* explores numerous 'problems' (geographical, racial, political, economic, etc.) that, according to García Calderón, explain Latin America's "inferiority."

4.2 The Race Problem

García Calderón reads Latin America primarily through a racializing lense. Simply put: race is the culprit and cause of other political and economic problems that stifle Latin America's progress: "[Race] explains the progress of certain peoples and the decadence of others, and it is the key to the incurable disorder which divides America" (*Latin America* 351). Following the footsteps of well-known racializing theories elaborated by French social psychologist Gustave Le Bon, Latin American sociologists Carlos Octavio Bunge and Alcides Arguedas, and English eugenicist Karl Pearson, all of whom he cites in the text, the Peruvian proliferates idealized notions of racial purity and blames miscegenation of a "strange lineage" for a range of issues

[59] It is noteworthy that the translator of *Les démocraties latines de l'Amerique*, Bernard Miall, translates *le métissage* [*mestizaje*] as "the color problem," which reflects the Peruvian's views of race in Latin America. I have made some adjustments to Miall's translations based on the original French text because I disagree with some of his translations.

facing Latin America (*Latin America* 351). García Calderón does not hesitate to embrace theories of degeneration and the various categories generated by this well-known line of racist thinking and apply them directly to what he considers to be 'inferior' races in Latin America, that is, indigenous, blacks, and the combination thereof.

Although indigenous people are portrayed as isolated, exploited, and decaying populations that learn to love their oppressed condition (*Latin America* 354), it is blackness that bears the brunt of García Calderón's racialized culpability. For García Calderón, the race problem in Latin America is overwhelmingly a problem of blackness: "The black race is doing its work and the continent is returning to is primitive barbarism" (*Latin America* 362). Indeed, blackness is the lead protagonist in García Calderón's envisioned race war that 'degenerate' races wage on white Latin Americans. According to García Calderón, enslaved Africans transported to Latin America are the epitome of barbarity: they are "primitive creatures, impulsive and sensual. Idle and servile, they have not contributed to the progress of the race" (*Latin America* 355). Not only does García Calderón conveniently blame blackness for not contributing anything to an idealized notion of Latinity, which overlooks, of course, the variegated ways in which slavery and other forms of exploitation benefitted upper-class, white families and their descendents, he presents what Santiago Castro-Gómez calls an "aristocratic imaginary of whiteness" (277), which symbolizes civilization, as under attack from blackness (read 'barbarism'). Note the telling racialized and gendered description of the colonial origin of blackness in Latin America: "The African woman satisfied the ardor of the conquerors; she darkened[60] the blood of the race" (*Latin America* 355). This is not only a preposterous description of sexual acts perpetuated on slave women by their enslavers, even though there were

[60] *assombrir* can also mean to 'cast a shade over,' which suggests a more apocalyptical influence of blackness, which undoubtedly fits in with García Calderón's racializing critiques.

no Africans in the territory we now call Latin America when Spain was conquering it. It inverts the active/passive, or transgressor/victim, dichotomy and attributes the transgressive role to the enslaved. Despite being enslaved and forced to participate in the process of miscegenation, the African woman is portrayed as actively infecting her white-skinned enslavers with her negativity, that is, her dark skin color. Also, projecting all the negativity he associates with blackness on a lone slave woman, while recognizing conquerors, in the plural, gives the latter a sense of individuality, while presenting a lone archetype as if she was indistinguishable from all other African slaves.

García Calderón's interprets blackness in Latin America as an "invasion" throughout *Les démocraties latines de l'Amerique* (358). However, his use of adjectives to describe blackness oscillates between, as we just pointed out, active assailants and passivity. For example, in noting the relationship between blackness and its "depressing influence on the American imagination and character," García Calderón maintains that blacks corrupt creole blood with "elements of idleness, recklessness, and servility which are permanent" (355-356). Furthermore, he avers that the 'inferiorities' inherent in blackness inevitably show themselves in miscegenation. Those negative characteristics include weakness, ignorance, an absence of "moral feeling," violence, and anarchy (358-359). Of course, the standards that García Calderón sets for enslaved peoples in the past, whose ancestors experience discrimination in the present, is quite unattainable. Not only are enslaved peoples with painful histories of colonialism and degradation at the hands of oppressors blamed for somehow frustrating the projects of the beneficiaries of their oppressors, García Calderón also suggests that blacks are "revenged for their enslavement in that their blood is mingled with that of their masters" (359). One of the many paradoxes in *Les démocraties latines de l'Amerique*, and indeed in the Peruvian's body of work, is the incongruity between, on

the one hand, a portrayal of blackness as an unabiding force that stubbornly persists not only in skin color but in personal attributes and aptitudes and, on the other, its status as synonymous with inferiority and weakness. For a supposedly vitiated, 'degenerate' race, blackness seems to be so vital and invigorated so as to corrupt the standard of civilization, i.e., Latin whiteness. In this way, García Calderón projects onto blackness both biological inferiority and superiority, a paradoxical diagnosis of deficiency and consumption, which, by the way, continues to permeate racists discourses to this day.

García Calderón insists that the race problem, which is, as we have seen, primary a problem with blackness, is responsible for other sociocultural and economic problems. Basing his observations on the law of concomitant variations, elaborated by John Stuart Mill in *A System of Logic* (1843),[61] García Calderón identifies "a necessary relation between the numerical proportion of blacks and the intensity of civilization" (357). While glossing over the tremendously-profitable venture of slavery that enriched white Latin Americans in their private and professional lives and funded the national projects they spearheaded, the Peruvian correlates the presence of blackness with economic insecurity. This is another example of the contradictory weak/vital dichotomy in *Les démocraties latines de l'Amerique*. The logic is as racist as it is simplistic: the more blackness present, the less economic stability:

> Wealth increases and internal order is greater in Argentina, Uruguay, and Chile, and it is precisely in these countries that the proportion of blacks has always been low; they have disappeared in the admixture of European races. In Cuba, San Domingo, and some of the republics of Central America, and certain of the States of the Brazilial Confederation, where the children of slaves constitute the

[61] "variables that change together are connected as cause and effect, or they have a single cause" (Trahair 425).

> greater portion of the population, internal disorders are continual. A black republic, Haiti, demonstrates by its revolutionary history the political incapacity of the negro race. (357-358)

Proposing blackness as the principle scapegoat for the economical and political challenges facing Latin America is, of course, reductive, misguided, and outrageous. So too is proposing 'whitening' as their remedy. However, this is precisely the avenue García Calderón takes: "In South America civilization is dependent upon the numerical predominance of the victorious Spaniard, on the triumph of the white man over the mulatto, the black, and the Indian. Only a plentiful European immigration can re-establish the shattered equilibrium of the American races" (362). Here, García Calderón revives, not that it was by any means extinct at the time, a nation-building discourse that calls for the Europization of Latin America, which was infamously articulated by Domingo Faustino Sarmiento in *Facundo: civilización y barbarie* (1845). His advocacy for whitening of the Latin American continent exemplifies Aníbal Quijano's concept of the coloniality of power in which white elites following independence kept the racial hierarchies established during the conquest and colonization in place and envisioned themselves in the image of Europe (438).

4.3 The Economic Problem

The race problem and the economic problem are interconnected in *Les démocraties latines de l'Amerique*. Despite the facility with which he equates blackness with barbarism (both cultural and financial), García Calderón also recognizes the role played by the influx of foreign capital in the economic challenges facing Latin America. Here, García Calderón highlights the paradox of abundant natural resources and a lack of capital and economic autonomy in Latin

America due to foreign investment and monopolization. In this sense, *Les démocraties latines de l'Amerique* anticipates a series of Latin American meditations centering on that paradox, from José Carlos Mariátegui's *Siete ensayos de interpretación de la realidad peruana* (1928) to Eduardo Galeano's *Las venas abiertas de la América Latina* (1971), a copy of which was given to U.S. President Barack Obama by Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez at the Fifth Summit of the Americas in Trinidad and Tobago in 2009. In addition, recent documentary films, such as Stephanie Black's *Life and Debt* (2001) and Oliver Stone's *South of the Border* (2009), have shown a wider global audience the ways in which the policies and practices of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank consistently saddle the region with insurmountable debt, thereby making economic dependency more acute and virtually insuperable.

The Peruvian does not elude the genealogy of financial colonialism in Latin America. The paradox resides in the fact that foreign loans both funded revolutions for independence from Spain, but the subsequent debt burden was so great, coupled with unwise use of the loans by political elites, that it afforded foreign interests "privileged positions" in Latin American politics and economics (*Latin America* 379). He admits that European capital is responsible for the modernization of infrastructure and political stability where they exist in Latin America, however, "the new continent, politically free, is economically a vassal" (*Latin America* 382). These critiques, if we read them as such, come off as discordant when juxtaposed with the seemingly unmitigated praise García Calderón projects onto Western Europe, especially the Latin countries. However, the Peruvian does recognize that without Europe, Latin America countries would not be 'independent' or have any vestiges of stability such as transportation and trade. Furthermore, he proposes *more* European, specifically Latin, involvement in Latin

America, through immigration, as the remedy for both the race problem and the economic problem, which he views as largely one in the same.

On the other hand, however, this idea illustrates what Slovenian philosopher Slavoj Žižek calls the paradox of the chocolate laxative. The chocolate laxative is a relatively recent product that one ingests to relieve constipation. Of course, chocolate is an ingredient that causes constipation. In this way, the chocolate laxative is paradoxically "a product containing the agent of its own containment" (Žižek, *Homo Sacer*). By framing Europe as an economic exploiter of Latin America as well as its vehicle for development, García Calderón seems to paradoxically prescribe the agent of the continent's containment. In their seminal work, *Empire* (2000), Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri summarize of this mentality of economic development in this way: "Since this is how the dominant economies developed, it must be the true path to escape the cycle of underdevelopment. This syllogism, however, asks us to believe that the laws of economic development will somehow transcend the differences of historical change" (Hardt and Negri 284). García Calderón, then, does not advocate total autonomy from outside influences, like Ugarte does, for example, but rather promotes a Pan-Latinist ideology in order to not only reconstruct Latin American identity as white, Latin, and European, but, in more materialist terms, improve Latin America's place on the slope of "the pyramid of global constitution" (Hardt and Negri 309) in a moment of geopolitical uncertainty.

4.4 Pan-Latinity and Globality

Pan-Latinism, the idea that all Latin peoples (speakers of Romance languages) share a common culture and therefore constitute a race, was accepted and proliferated with great alacrity in the early twentieth century by writers such as Rodó, Ugarte, Rufino Blanco Fombona, and

García Calderón. These and other Latin American intellectuals, acutely aware of the significance of the juxtaposition of the centenary celebrations of Latin American independence and economic and political imperialism by the United States throughout the continent, embraced a Pan-Latinist ideology due in part to, as Carlos Alonso points out, "a desire to affirm a spiritual essence shared by all Latin American nations in order to oppose Pan-Americanism" (199). In other words, Pan-Latinism was a way for Latin American intellectuals to "write back" against imperialism.[62] In addition, Pan-Latinism was, as we have already seen, a vehicle for Latin American intellectuals like García Calderón to 'clean up' or 'whiten' the cultural and racial realities of the continent and imagine themselves as an extensive of an imperial, European other.

García Calderón's Pan-Latinist essay received a very powerful endorsement, in the form of a laudatory preface written in December of 1911 by Raymond Poincaré, a French statesman who became the Prime Minister of France the following month. Ernest Flammarion, the founder of what would later become Groupe Flammarion, a large publishing house in France, published *Les démocraties latines de l'Amerique* in Paris a few months later in 1912. In 1913 Poincaré was elected the President of France, a post he held until 1920. Poincaré's role in García Calderón's essay is not limited to the preface. Rather, I consider Poincaré, and other member of the French political elite like him, to be the ideal reader of *Les démocraties latines de l'Amerique*.

While the benefits of Pan-Latinism were clear for Latin American intellectuals, in that they could imagine themselves as part of a prestigious, and highly selective, cultural heritage in order to legitimate their "acceptance on the stage of nations" (Ortega 289), what was the advantage for Europeans to see Latin Americans as an extension of themselves? Why would Western Europe, particularly France, identify with what García Calderón repeatedly refers to as a

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[62] This idea of 'writing back' was popularized byAshcroft, et al., *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice* (2002), as well as, in a Latin American context by Molloy (372).

continent plagued by racial 'inferiorities' and political and economic instability? In other words, how does the Peruvian motivate Europe to recognize itself and its interests in Latin America? As I will show, the Pan-Latinist rhetoric in *Les démocraties latines de l'Amerique* is more complex than just emphasizing the cultural commonalities between Western Europe and Latin America. Rather, it aims to persuade his ideal readers. García Calderón petitions that his European readers, which as we have seen included the soon-to-be President of France, should concern itself with the geopolitical and economic affairs of Latin America because, he argues, that by strengthening its ties with its American kin, Europe can benefit economically from Latin America's strategic geographical location. If Europe does not act, he insists, then other nations that do (the United States, Germany, and Japan) will reap the geographic and economic benefits.

Getting Europe to see itself in an 'inferior' Latin America requires the Peruvian to negotiate several things. First, he has to show that those 'inferiorities' do not exist everywhere in Latin America by highlighting countries that exemplify development and progress. For example, he cites Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Peru, Bolivia, and Uruguay countries where "wealthy peoples" enjoy economic and political stability (*Latin America* 15). As I have already highlighted, he further emphasizes a shared Latin culture by creating a racist scapegoat, blackness, for unrest and instability in the region. Even though recommending European whitening was intended to flatter his French readers, García Calderón also has to locate the 'Latin' parts of Latin America and distinguish them from other areas where *mestizaje* exists (even though he glosses over the racial realities of Bolivia and Peru). Therefore, the aforementioned 'white' and 'developed' countries "must not be confused with the republics of Central America, Haiti, or Paraguay" (*Latin America* 15). It is no coincidence that García Calderón differentiates between economically and

politically stable, more racially homogenous countries of the Southern Cone and other areas of Latin America with political unrest.[63]

Of course, his treatment of Haiti is not naïve. In fact, it participates in an ongoing process of what physician and medical anthropologist Paul Farmer terms the "geography of blame."[64] In *AIDS and Accusation: Haiti and the Geography of Blame* (1992), Farmer, a medical anthropologist, deconstructs the racism and processes of "exotification" that underlie discourses that blame Haitians for 'infecting' the United States with HIV and AIDS (1-7).[65] We see a similar gesture, albeit in a very different context, in *Les démocraties latines de l'Amerique*. García Calderón's recurrent denigration of Haiti, in his words a "black republic [that] demonstrates by its revolutionary history the political incapacity of the negro race" (358), could be read as a compliment to France, whose imperial power in the Americas was truncated by the Haitian Revolution (1791-1804). Acutely aware of the politics of race and revolution, García Calderón, in his attempt to have Europeans see themselves in Latin America, must first distinguish what parts of Latin America are 'Latin', and takes repeated steps to disqualify Haiti and other nations with large populations of blackness like the Dominican Republic or coastal areas of Central America. In this way, his critiques of Haiti are a gesture meant to show solidarity with imperial France. An important maneuver the Peruvian uses to motivate Europeans to see themselves in Latin America is to, first, separate them as much as possible from blacks in Haiti who have a complicated, to say the least, history with imperial France, and,

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[63] The table of contents also highlight this distinction. The chapter dedicated to Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Central America is entitled "Anarchy of the Tropics" and the one concerning Paraguay reads "Perpetual Dictatorship" (*Latin America* 21-22).

[64] See Farmer 4.

[65] In fact, Farmer pushes back against this idea and proposes that the route of infection arrived in Haiti via the U.S. Farmer asserts, "the map of HIV in the New World reflects to an important degree the geography of U.S. colonialism" (260-61). The most economically dependent nations in the region are also those with the highest number of AIDS cases (260-61).

second, give them economic incentives. He accomplishes the latter by emphasizing the precarity of the Latin culture's influence in a rapidly-globalizing world.

4.5 Imperialism, Geopolitical Strategy, and Globalization

In his foreword to *Les démocraties latines de l'Amerique*, the Peruvian writer acknowledges the opportune historical moment from which he writes, that is, in the wake of centenary celebrations of the beginnings of Latin American independence. This occasion offers an opportunity to not only assess Latin America's place in the contemporary world, but especially its place with respect to the United States: "The time has come, it would seem, to study these peoples, their evolution and progress, if we do not want to precipitously accept without discussion that the United States are in the Americas the only focus of civilization and energy" (*Latin America* 16). In the conclusion of *Les démocraties latines de l'Amerique*, however, García Calderón explicates more in-depth the geopolitical crisis: Latin America is the victim of imperialist occupation by the United States and feels itself being eyed as prey by other countries, such as Germany and Japan.

According to García Calderón, Latin Americans interpret the threat from the United States as the most serious: "everywhere the Americans of the North are feared" (*Latin America* 298). Although geography makes contact between Latin America and the United States inevitable, this contact has grown increasingly imperialistic since the Monroe Doctrine in 1823. Drafted not long after Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Ecuador, Peru, and Brazil achieved independence from Spain and Portugal in 1821-1822, the Monroe Doctrine threatened military action against any European country that sought to involve itself in Latin American affairs. Subsequent U.S. presidential administrations converted what was initially a

defensive measure into a justification for expansionism and hemispherical hegemony. To mention one instance, among many, of U.S. intervention in Latin America, when England and Venezuela were engaged in the Guyana border dispute, which continues to this day in Guyanese and Venezuelan politics, President Grover Cleveland's Secretary of State Richard Olney insisted on U.S. intervention in the matter, citing that "today the United States is practically sovereign on this continent and its fiat is law" (cited in Sexton 203).

The United States government, regardless of the administration, broadly interpreted the Monroe Doctrine as signifying complete control and impunity in the Western Hemisphere. García Calderón's critiques of U.S. policy towards Latin America highlight an undeniable history of "incessant territorial expansion" (303): Louisiana (1803), Florida (1819), Texas (1845 and 1850), large areas of Mexico (1848 and 1852), Alaska (1867), Hawaii, Puerto Rico, Philippines, and Guam (1898). Of course, expansion and intervention are mutually reinforcing phenomena. García Calderón reminds his readers of the very recent U.S. interventions in Cuba, Panama, the Dominican Republic, and Central America, which, he argues, have in recent years become more intrusive, aggressive, and nefarious with President Theodore Roosevelt's "big stick" foreign policy (1901-1909).[66] Whereas according to the Monroe Doctrine U.S. intervention was contingent on European encroachment, the Roosevelt Corollary of 1904 stated that the U.S. had the right to intervene in the hemisphere at any moment in order to quell any perceived instability that would facilitate or entice European interest in the region. Of course, Latin Americans, who increasingly saw themselves as the recipients of Roosevelt's "big stick," argued that the developmentalist pretext for intervention, whether political, economical, or moral, was a mask that hid unabashed and "unavoidable" imperialist and expansionist drives of

[66] Political cartoons of the time, in the United States as well as throughout Latin America, portrayed Roosevelt as a giant with a big stick stomping through Latin American countries.

the "Colossus of the North": "Warnings, advice, distrust, invasion of capital, plans of financial hegemony—all these justify the anxiety of the southern peoples" (*Latin America* 305).

Despite the severity of this historical and geopolitical situation, García Calderón's target audience could interpret it in a flattering way, that is, as evidence of the kind of devastation and barbarism that take place in the absence of Western Europeans. This flattery of an imperial past, if it was indeed read as such, is by itself insufficient for convincing a European reading public, or especially French political leaders of the highest order, of why it should concern itself with a seemingly hopeless situation across the ocean. For that reason, García Calderón frames the issue in a way that makes Latin America the center stage for an approaching global conflict, the results of which could very well determine who controls the world economy. In addition, he also suggests that the rich historical and cultural legacy of Latinity is also at stake. However, the incentives of not allowing Latin culture to become obsolete and its nations left behind in the wake of modernity, still had to explain how Europe could possibly challenge the hegemony of a country that by the early twentieth century had risen to become the foremost industrial and military force in the world.

According to García Calderón, the stage for the global conflict is already set. Other nations that have already recognized the strategic importance of Latin America are poised to challenge U.S. hegemony. Specifically, Germany and Japan, two imperialist powerhouses, are vying to position themselves in Latin America, which will provoke a global conflict. From one side of the ocean, large-scale German immigration to South America and Central America has cemented a competing economic imperialism that seeks to rival and replace that of the United

States (*Latin America* 292). From the Pacific, the "Yellow Peril"[67] invades Vancouver, California, Mexico, Peru, and Chile (*Latin America* 323). Territorial and commercial disagreements involving the Philippines and Hawaii also stimulate animosity between the United States and Japan, who emerged as a formidable imperialist power after its victory over the Qing Dynasty of China in the First Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895). García Calderón presents the situation as dire: "We are then face to face with a struggle of races, a clash of irreconcilable interests" (*Latin America* 325). It is clear that the United States is the most tangible threat to Latin America. If Germany replaces the U.S., things will not change much. However, if Japan is victorious in their "invasion" of the Pacific coast from Canada to Chile, then Latin America would lose not only its autonomy, but the intellectual and cultural legacy of Latinity would be put in jeopardy:

> America is thus an essential factor of the future of the Latin nations. The destiny of France, Spain, Portugal, and Italy would be different if the 80 millions of Latin Americans were to lose their racial traditions; if in a century of two America were to pass under the sceptre of the United States, or if the Germans and Anglo-Saxons were to attack and oppress the nucleus of civilization formed by Argentina, Uruguay, and Southern Brazil. (*Latin America* 398)

García Calderón knew his intended readership well. He knew that framing Latinity as under attack from Germany, not to mention the ever convenient alterizations of blackness and Asians, would resonate with the memories of French politicians and readers of the not-so-distant Franco-Prussian War (1870-71). This relatively brief conflict brought about a significant shift of power

[67] "rooted in medieval fears of Genghis Khan and Mongolian invasions of Europe, the yellow peril combines racist terror of alien cultures, sexual anxieties, and the belief that the West will be overpowered and enveloped by the irresistible, dark, occult forces of the East" (Marchetti 2).

in European affairs. Prussia and the North German Confederation joined forces against the French and their victory, coupled with internal social strife in France, brought an abrupt end to the Second French Empire and its leader, Napoleon III. More importantly, it solidified, with the Treaty of Frankfurt in May of 1871, the unification of the German Empire under Wilhelm I. Included in the terms of the treaty were relinquishment of large areas of the Alsace and Lorraine regions of France. Raymond Poincaré was a boy in Lorraine at the time of the Franco-Prussian War and chronicles his resentment towards Germany in various diary entries.[68] Thus, García Calderón, an avid student of history, was acutely aware that framing another bout of imperialism against the Latin 'spirit', especially by Germany, would probably not fall on deaf ears in France.

According to García Calderón, the opening of the Panama Canal in 1914 would be the powder keg capable of igniting the next global conflict. The route to the next important chapter in globalization and modernity, then, would run right through the middle of Latin America. This transformative event, García Calderón rightly predicts, will essentially shrink the world by altering its trade routes, thus "displac[ing] the political axis of the world" (*Latin America* 387) away from the Atlantic Ocean and Europe towards the Pacific and whichever nations dominate it. To put it succinctly, whoever controls the Pacific, controls the future. The Pacific, then, is capable of displacing a Eurocentrist, specifically Latin, interpretation of history. Europe would be decentered along with its cultural legacy.

Latin America's geography and its large population, then, despite its challenges, make significant contributions to an imagined Latin community. Since the conflict will be global in nature, the Latin race will need as many "heirs of the Latin spirit" (*Latin America* 396) as possible. In fact, García Calderón, a writer that in spite of his neospiritualist literary tendencies

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[68] See Keiger 16-17.

that eluded the subject of race, was, as we have seen, obsessed with racialized scientism, conceptualizes the protagonists and antagonists in the approaching global conflict in terms of race (which he defines as "traditions and culture"). Moreover, he insists that other countries around the world are uniting and see themselves as races instead of as nations:

> Flourishing on every hand, we see Pan-Slavism, Pan-Islamism, Pan-Asianism, Pan-Germanism, Pan-Latinism—barbarous words which give an indication as to the struggles of the future. […] Slavs, Saxons, Latins, and Mongols are contending for the possession of the world. It is thus that the drama of history becomes simplified; above the quarrels of precarious nations are rising the profound antagonisms of millennial races. (*Latin America* 396)

Transatlantic Latinity, then, is an inevitable reality of the current geopolitical climate. It is important to note that García Calderón is not the only voice championing the cause of Pan-Latinity. French politicians of the highest offices also lend their support. In addition to Raymond Poincaré's laudatory preface, García Calderón cites the favorable impressions of South America by the former Prime Minister of France (1906-1909), Georges Clemenceau. After concluding his first term as Prime Minister in 1909, Clemenceau traveled to South America in 1910, where he was impressed by the prominence of French culture in Buenos Aires, Montevideo, and Rio de Janeiro: "A new energy, undeniable material progress, and a fertile creative faith announce the advent, in the new continent,…of the exhausted Latin world may renew itself, as in the classic fountain" (*Latin America* 394). For García Calderón's case, there could be no stronger words than those of Clemenceau.

After his travels to South America, Clemenceau reintegrated into politics and became one of the most important historical figures in France. A few years later, during another stint as

Prime Minister from 1917 to 1920, Clemenceau brokered, in conjunction with British Prime Minister David Lloyd George and U.S. President Woodrow Wilson, the Treaty of Versailles, the 1919 peace accord that officially consolidated peace after World War I. Like Poincaré, Clemenceau was staunchly anti-German. In fact, his relentless efforts to disarm and defund Germany during the Paris Peace Conference earned him the nickname *Le Tigre* (Meyer 566).[69] In the treaty, Clemenceau stipulated that Germany not only withdraw all forces and resources from Belgium and occupied parts of France, but also drastically dismantle their weaponry and pay retributions to the allied forces for territorial occupation (including Poincaré's homeland of Lorraine) and resources, both human and material.[70] Clemenceau's demands, and therefore those of France, were to be publically accepted by the Germans in a most symbolic venue. At Clemenceau's request, the Treaty of Versailles was signed in the Hall of Mirrors, the very place where in January 1871 Wilhelm I announced himself as the Emperor of the German Empire (Röhl 174). García Calderón, of course unaware of what would be Clemenceau's foremost place in World War I in the coming years, takes advantage of the *revanchist*[71] attitudes and policies of distinguished figures of the French State by floating the possibility that Germany, who still retained previously-French territories from the Franco-Prussian War, could occupy other 'Latin' lands overseas, thereby placing the proverbial nail in the coffin of the Latin race. *Les démocraties latines de l'Amerique* is thus framed by a prologue by the soon-to-be President of France and closes with the thoughts of a recent Prime Minister in the conclusion. Therefore, the

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[69] The publication of a series of books in 1919 written about his role in World War I testify to the popularity of Clemenceau as a key political figure: *Clemenceau, the Man and His Time* by Henry Mayers Hyndman; *Georges Clemenceau, the Tiger of France* by Georges Lecomte; *France Facing Germany: Speeches and Articles* by Clemenceau himself.

[70] See Articles 231-247 of the Peace Treaty of Versailles.

[71] *Revanchism*: from the French *revanche* ('revenge'). A patriotic term meant to signify a political policy of recovering French territories lost during the Franco-Prussian War (Lowe 60).

Peruvian is not making the cause for Pan-Latinity by himself. Quite the contrary, his essay is in direct contact and dialogue with the highest powers of the French State.

It may be challenging to reconcile a (Latin-)Americanism whose *locus* of enunciation is from within the French government, written in French, and, moreover, criticizes U.S., German, and Japanese imperialism in Latin America while at the same time advocating for French, English, and Italian cultural and economic interventions.[72] The paradox of this "neocolonial pact" (Moraña, et al. 9) suggests that *Les démocraties latines de l'Amerique* is not an anti-imperialist text, if we understand the label as a dialectical 'us' versus 'them' (or 'our autonomy' in the face of 'their imperialism') scenario, but rather the embodiment of variegated forms of colonial domination that persists in modernity. In fact, at various moments in the text García Calderón cites favorable examples of the Latin imperialist spirit, such as Christopher Columbus and French colonization in Africa. The question for the Peruvian is not Latin American sovereignty, but rather whose economic interventions can usher Latin America into globality. In other words, García Calderón seems to reinforce the periphery as such in exchange for "the promised admission of Latin America as the belated guest in the feast of Western civilization" (Moraña, et al. 3). Or, perhaps, as Ramón Grosfoguel suggests, in hopes of the possibility of attaining a semiperipherical status in the world-order system (321). Although García Calderón presents select places in Latin America as part of a world Latin community, he subscribes to what Enrique Dussel has called the "developmental fallacy" (21) that holds that Latin America's autonomy can one day become a reality only by following, which is to say being dependent on, 'developed' European nations. As we have seen, García Calderón promotes Pan-Latinism as a

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[72] "Only the federation of all the Latin republics under the pressure of Europe—that is to say, of England, France, and Italy, who have important markets in America—might save the nations of the Pacific…" (*Latin America* 392).

way of reanimating, and indeed idealizing, the imperial pasts of France and England, which reinforces an Occidentalist geopolitical imaginary mutually reinforced by modernity and coloniality (Mignolo, *Local Histories* 23; "La colonialidad" 58-59).

5. Conclusion

Despite García Calderón's attempt to exploit the cultural and geopolitical antagonisms between France and Germany that existed since the Franco-Prussian War, some European readers resisted seeing themselves in Latin America. Even Poincaré admitted that he was unconvinced by the Peruvian's insinuation that a metropolis in the Southern Cone could one day become the center of Latin world: "a Frenchman may be forgiven for refusing to believe that the capital of classic culture will ever pass from Paris to Buenos Aires, as it has passed from Rome to Paris" (14). In fact, much of Poincaré's preface talks about the Peruvian's Pan-Latinist convictions, not Western Europe's support of it. Furthermore, Poincaré, whose platform focused largely on financial and social stability, even if only in appearance (Keiger 344; 49-50), also seemed unpersuaded by the idea that strengthening a transatlantic Pan-Latinist pact could advance France's economy in any significant manner. In this way, García Calderón's project seems doomed from the start. This authoritative eclipse is a manifestation of the European hegemony for which García Calderón actively invokes throughout his essay. This gesture depletes the Peruvian's Pan-Latinist negotiations before the reader has the chance to consider them on their own terms. However, such is the subaltern reality of imperialism. The subaltern voice, even if it does not recognize itself as such, is undermined by the voice of the imperialist authority before it has the chance to speak.

Pan-Latinity is meant to fill a cultural void, that is, the problems of race and unity in Latin America that the Peruvian highlights throughout his essay. This is a Latin Americanism that not only casts itself as ground zero for *the* large-scale geopolitical conflict of the new century (the opening of the Panama Canal), but one that imagines itself primarily through cultural and economic mediations of other nations. In this way, García Calderón and *Les démocraties latines de l'Amerique* deviate from the norm of anti-imperialist literature written in early-twentieth century Latin America. Aside from acknowledging the threat posed by U.S. imperialist incursions in Latin America, García Calderón differs significantly from staunch anti-imperialists like Rodó, Ugarte, or José Vargas Vila, in that the Peruvian forgoes autonomy for European tutelage. He critiques one imperialist gesture while petitioning another. Thus, *Les démocraties latines de l'Amerique* promotes a subaltern globality for Latin America by repeating a pattern of alterization originally carried out during conquest and colonization by which racialized diagnostics and developmentalist ideologies, as Ramón Grosfoguel argues, "concealed European and Euro-American responsibility in the exploitation of these continents. The construction of "pathological" regions in the periphery, as opposed to the "normal" development patterns of the West, justified an even more intense political and economic intervention from imperial powers" (329). With my analysis of *Les démocraties latines de l'Amerique* I am not implying a uniform character of García Calderón's work. As Charles Hale notes, for instance, World War I and various social revolutions throughout the world would soon prompt García Calderón to reconsider a Pan-Latinist ideology grounded in racist and elitist notions of superiority (183). What I have offered here is a snapshot of García Calderón's role in anti-imperialist literature of Latin America at a critical moment of U.S. intervention in the continent. A snapshot, as we have seen, complicated by Pan-Latinist ideology.

My reading of *Les démocraties latines de l'Amerique* problematizes its '*arielista*' association in a number of ways. The foremost disjunction between Rodó and García Calderón resides in the discourse of unity. *Ariel* has been hailed as a rallying cry for continental integrality, but the Peruvian indicates that a Latin American unity is unlikely, which is why he seeks a Pan-Latin identity in Europe. For Ugarte, for example, U.S. imperialism in Latin America required unity by any means necessary, even at the expense of intellectual emancipation and progress. Of course, I recognize that situating works in the literary canon is in a way a necessary, but perpetually reductive, act. However, labeling is a gesture loaded with signification. Calling García Calderón an '*arielista*' insinuates an anti-imperialist character that, as I have argued, the Peruvian's essay inverts. Whereas *Ariel* focuses on cultural autonomy, the Peruvian seems to relegate Latin America to choosing between models. Moreover, the spiritualism that Rodó emphasizes is notably absent in *Les démocraties latines de l'Amerique*. Whereas Rodó proposes metaphysical approaches in order to transcend utilitarianism and materialism, García Calderón's essay relies heavily on positivist diagnostics.[73] While both Rodó and García Calderón imagine themselves as part of a Pan-Latin community, the Peruvian writes at length about *mestizaje* in Latin America. Rodó, on the other hand, eludes dealing with the continent's racial diversity. Furthermore, the connections between race and materialism are forefront in the Peruvian's work. Lastly, *Les démocraties latines de l'Amerique* embraces a global framework, not a dialectical situation like Rodó insinuates. García Calderón assesses Latin America's geopolitical challenges in a globalizing era in which the distance for the flow of capital and culture was going to become smaller with the Panama Canal. This explains why his

[73] For example, Rodó calls for a commitment to persuing "a disinterested ideal of the spirit" (223).

text confronts, even if in misguided ways, racial, geographical, and material realities in Latin America, as opposed to Rodó's spiritualist approach.

Rodríguez Monegal and Oviedo's respective interrogations of the connections between García Calderón and *arielismo*, as well as my own here, suggest that perhaps we should not take for granted the basis upon which the Peruvian is labeled an '*arielista*'. Instead, close readings of his texts reveal a number of significant contradictions with Rodó. I have chosen to read these paradoxes as a result of U.S. imperialism. Let me reiterate that my analysis of the ways in which García Calderón's "nostaliga for the greatness of empire" (Maldonado-Torres 373) and focus on materialism depart form *arielismo* does not seek to cast him as somehow an 'inconsistent' *arielista*. Rather, I submit that these inconsistencies complicate a critical tendency to invariably label García Calderón and his essays as "*arielistas*." Although his early essays, such as *De litteris* (1904) as well as his speech on Latin American intellectual history at the International Congress of Philosophy in Heidelberg, Germany in 1908, certainly coincide with the neospiritualist foundation of *arielismo*, a survey of García Calderón's later essays written at the supposed 'height' of *arielismo* shows that he was ambivalent on a wide variety of salient themes that appeared in *Ariel*, such as the antagonism between materialism and spiritualism and originality and imitation. How can the most '*arielista*' writer in Latin America, after Rodó, of course, differ so vastly from central tenets of *arielismo*? As I have argued, I propose that the answer to this question does not reside solely in García Calderón's texts, but also in the fact that *arielismo* does not signify a coherent program that Latin American writers followed in the early twentieth century. Rather, '*arielismo*' has long been a critical construct, a convenient term to situate complex intellectual essays within a literary or historical framework. Above all, I think the time has come, approximately a century after the pinnacle of '*arielismo*', to not only see the

paradoxes of '*arielista*' writers when read against Rodó's complex standard, but embrace those paradoxes not as deviations from a supposed neospiritualist cultural movement, but as inherent parts of a Latin American postcoloniality.

6. Imperialism, Paradox, and a Latin American 'Third Space'

In different ways, Ugarte and García Calderón's respective essays and *loci* of enunciation underscore that colonialism, neocolonialism, postcolonialism, and imperialism, whether cultural, economic, or geopolitical, are multifaceted phenomena that necessarily induce paradox. A range of postcolonial theorists and writers have described this situation in a variety of ways that center on race, otherness, and subalternity. It is common for those types of meditations to focus on the dualisms of empire (Hardt and Negri 183). For example, Frantz Fanon and W.E.B. DuBois examine the psychology of oppressed subjects in ways that complicate the notion of duality. Fanon's idea of black skin and white masks and DuBois's double consciousness examine the bifurcation of the oppressed black subject and its muddled identitary negotiation that oscillates in a variety of ways between autonomy and appropriation.[74] Homi Bhabha recognizes this paradoxical simultaneity that the colonized subject has to negotiate as a sort of Derridean "in-betweenness" (157). Bhabha, Fanon, and DuBois unsettle identitary dichotomies, which, although in vastly differing circumstances and implications, are useful in shedding light on Ugarte and García Calderón's respective paradoxical engagements I have outlined throughout this chapter.

Bhabha suggests that "all cultural statements and systems are constructed in [a] contradictory and ambivalent space of enunciation," which he calls a "third space" (156). I read

[74] See Fanon 13 and DuBois 5-6.

Bhabha's 'third space' as a kind of a discursive and ideological "contact zone" (Pratt, *Imperial Eyes* 4), a space in which the discursive and ideological contradictions are precipitated by real or perceived U.S. imperialism.[75] Bhabha's 'third space' sees imperialism as a phenomenon that frustrates untenable ideals of cultural originality, purity, and unity (156). Instead, paradoxical appropriations and contradictory hybridizations of identitary discursivities are not betrayals of cultural authenticity and agency, but rather inevitable gestures of necessity in an imperialist situation.

As I have shown, the paradoxes present in Ugarte and García Calderón's respective shifts and engagements may appear more egregious when read against an '*arielista*' backdrop. However, it behooves us to interrogate the stability of the idea of *arielismo* as a coherent cultural signifier. In other words, what happens when we insert *arielismo*, an idealized, utopian discourse, into Bhabha's third space? First, we see the untenability of "the politics of polarity" (Bhabha 157), be they North/South, Ariel/Caliban, or Imperialism/Anti-Imperialism.[76] Ugarte and García Calderón's respective essays demonstrate the complications associated with coherent cultural dichotomies. Furthermore, *arielismo* merits new scrutiny due to what Bhabha calls the mutability of "discursive conditions of enunciation that ensure that the meaning and symbols of culture have no primordial unity or fixity; that even the same signs can be appropriated, translated, rehistoricized, and read anew" (157).

Bhabha's 'third space' normalizes, without celebrating, paradox in imperialist situations, an idea apropos to Ugarte and García Calderón's essays. Bhabha sees this inherent hybridity as a liberating phenomenon that permits us to "emerge as the others to our selves" (157). Above all,

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[75] Other critics have already read Latin American resistance in terms of a third possibility (Molloy 371-372; Zavala 9).

[76] Retamar famously inverts the Ariel/Caliban dichotomy in *Calibán* (1971).

utilizing Bhabha's 'third space' shows the complexity of Latin Americanist discourses in the early twentieth century, whose priorities can shift quickly and without need for justification. In Ugarte and García Calderón, authenticity and veracity are sidelined in hopes of collective resistance and geopolitical autonomy. Moreover, their essays show that Latin Americanism and/or *arielismo* are not dichotomous, but conflictive and rife with paradox. Overall, those paradoxes offer a snapshot of a critical moment in Latin American intellectual and cultural history.

Furthermore, those paradoxes call into question the stability of the notion of *arielismo* at what is supposedly the height of its popularity as articulated by two of its most widely-assumed proponents. My investigations suggest that *Ariel* and *arielismo* did not chart a prescriptive course for other Latin American essayists, despite the much discussed and undeniable influence of Rodó's ideas. New circumstances necessitate negotiating current exigencies with past ideals, or sacrificing the latter altogether or temporarily. Above all, Ugarte and García Calderón's paradoxes in a 'third space' illustrate that *arielismo*, if it ever existed as a movement, ideology, or project, was not coherent, much less immune to the geopolitical processes of empire.

My critical readings of Ugarte and García Calderón within the context of *arielismo* have not been a retrospective attempt to cherry pick contradictions, but rather to underscore the challenges facing Latin American intellectuals who tried to negotiate reason, religion, and resistance in the early twentieth century during a series of imperialist incursions. In 1900, Rodó's *Ariel* advocated an idealistic transcendence of materialism, which, even for the most recognizable '*arielistas*', was an impossible standard a decade later. Latin American essayists like Ugarte and García Calderón had to think practically about uniting Latin Americans against U.S. imperialism, in Ugarte's case, or, in García Calderón's case, advancing a campaign of

geopolitical and economic modernization under the guide of Europe so that Latin American countries, both individually and collectively, can achieve globality (Ortega 299). Perhaps Ugarte and García Calderón illustrate the inevitable de-idealization of *arielismo* when seemingly practical solutions, such as foregoing rational inquiry of religion (Ugarte) and playing the game by the rules established by the winner (García Calderón), are required for tangible geopolitical situations a decade after the publication of *Ariel*.

This is also a chronologically significant moment to revisit Ugarte and García Calderón's texts. 2010 was the centenary of Ugarte's *El porvenir de la América Española* and this year marks one hundred years since the publication of *Les démocraties latines de l'Amérique*. With the crisis of faith and credibility of the Catholic church throughout the world, as well as the culture of poverty arguments that persist in relation to Latin American countries, Ugarte and García Calderón's texts written a century ago continue to form part of contemporary issues. For example, in 2012 U.S. Presidential candidate Mitt Romney used the rhetoric of the culture of poverty when he stated that economic prosperity was a question of culture, and differentiated between Chile and Bolivia, as well as between the United States and Mexico, based on this criterion. Ugarte and García Calderón's respective texts are replete with intricacies that complicate the labels critics have applied to them for the past century. I have taken on only a sample of their texts and more work remains to be done. I hope that my inquiry into *arielismo* and its supposed practitioners will motivate other scholars to approach not only the validity of the term, but also examine its viability in 21st century Latin America.

Chapter V

Fernando Lles, Intertropical Misanthropy, Secular Dissent, and Anti-*Arielismo*

"the strongest man in the world is he who stands most alone"

—Henrik Ibsen, *An Enemy of the People* (1882)

1. Introduction

In Chapter IV I highlighted the ways in which Ugarte and García Calderón's respective views regarding religiosity and materialism are incompatible with normative understandings of *arielismo*. Those discrepancies, I argue, are indicative of a critical trend that frames Latin American essayists and their essays as "*arielistas*." In this chapter, I will challenge the critical tendency to classify Cuban writer Fernando Lles y Berdayes[77] (1883-1949) as an '*arielista*' and consider Rodó's possible influence on his work. First, I will give a brief overview of Lles, his work, and the sociopolitical and personal realities that inform them. Next, I will analyze his essay *La higuera de Timón* (*Timon's Fig Tree*, 1921) and argue that Lles employs overtly positivist and individualist views about religion and society in order to deconstruct Latin American *arielismo*.

2. Fernando Lles y Berdayes

The name Fernando Lles will certainly be unfamiliar to many readers. Lles wrote from Matanzas, Cuba, on the margins of the intellectual centers of Havana and Santiago, and his candid, pessimistic opinions regarding human nature, society, and the impossibility of their

[77] Sometimes, especially in his early writings, his last name has an accent, Llés.

evolution, ensured that he would not be a "popular" writer (Nodarse 7). However, Lles was an important and unique Cuban essayist in the 1920s, corresponding with other Latin American intellectuals (most notably with Álvaro Armando Vasseur in Uruguay) and publishing letters, essays, and poems in newspapers in Cuba, Argentina, Costa Rica, Venezuela, and Spain. He and his brother Francisco (1888-1921) spent five years of their early childhoods in their father's homeland, Asturias, Spain (1889-1894), and returned to Matanzas at the outbreak of the Cuban War of Independence (1895-1898). The Lles brothers began their writing careers by publishing pieces in *El Estudiante* (1908) and edited the newspaper *Alma Latina* in 1910, both in Matanzas. They were also very involved in the intellectual society *Areópago bohemio* (Bohemian Areopagus) in Matanzas between 1910 and 1915 and together they published three volumes of poetry that were well-received.[78]

Fernando Lles turned his attention to writing essays in the 1920s and 1930s. In the 1920s, Lles wrote three ambitious philosophical essays: *La higuera de Timón* (Matanzas, 1921), *La sombra de Heráclito* (*The Shadow of Heraclitus*; Havana, 1923), and *La escudilla de Diógenes: Etopeya del cínico* (*Diogenes's Wooden Bowl: The Cynic's Epic*; Havana, 1924). He then published a series of sociopolitical essays: *El individualismo: Ensayo sobre el instinto y la conciencia* (*Individualism: Essay on Instinct and Conscience*; Matanzas, 1926), *Individualismo, socialismo y comunismo: Los problemas de la conciencia contemporánea* (*Individualism, Socialism, and Communism: Problems about Contemporary Conscience*; Valencia, 1932), *El Individuo, la Sociedad y el Estado* (*The Individual, Society, and the State*; Havana, 1933). When he died he left an unedited volume of essays entitled *Nacismo, fascismo, plutocracia, oligarquía,*

[78] *Crepúsculos* (1909), *Sol de invierno* (1911), *and Limoneros en flor* (1912). The Lles brothers wrote all the poems of these collections but did not specify who wrote which poem. When Francisco died in 1921, they were writing another collection of poetry entitled *A orillas del Pireo.*

marxismo y democracia (*Nazism, Fascism, Plutocracy, Oligarchy, Marxism, and Democracy*) ("Fernando Lles").[79]

3. Lles's Early Anti-Religious Writings

Although his essays were consistent in their emphasis of sociology and politics, Lles's critical views of religion, which were more overt and subversive than those of Manuel González Prada or Pío Baroja, two outspoken Hispanic critics of religion, are undoubtedly the most salient and controversial features of his prose. Lles's critical views of religion were very clear since he first began writing in the publication *El Estudiante* in 1908[80] en Matanzas, Cuba. This publication became a forum for an epistolary exchange between Fernando Lles and fellow *matancero* Medardo Vitier (1886-1960), who had an ambivalent relationship with Lles. While Vitier was revered and wrote about important nationalist figures like José Martí, José de la Luz y Caballero, and Enrique José Varona, Lles ridiculed patriotic sentiments and distanced himself from nationalist projects. Although they were good friends, Lles and Vitier had radically different intellectual perspectives.

Vitier and Lles published a series of letters debating the legitimacy of Christianity in *El Estudiante* in 1910. In his letters, Vitier argues that Christianity is the source all truth, beauty, and morality. According to Vitier, even if Christianity is false, it has benefited the world is so many positive ways that its veracity is irrelevant ("El Cristianismo" 6). In "Abecedario de absurdos" ("Dictionary of Absurdities"), Lles responds to Vitier's claims with an alphabetic list

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[79] He also published two lesser-known works: *La metafísica en el arte* (*Metaphysics in Art*; Matanzas, 1922) and *Conferencias* (Matanzas, 1944).

[80] The first contributions by Lles in *El Estudiante* date from 1910. However, Lles, in a letter dated April 3, 1921 to Emilio Roig de Leuchsenring, states that he began publishing in *El Estudiante* in 1908 ("Carta").

(A through Q) of the ways in which Christianity is anti-scientific, irrational, and therefore illegitimate. For example, in point F Lles states "[El Cristianismo es absurdo] porque reclama la sumisión al dogma antes que el análisis" '[Christianity is absurd] because it demands submission to dogma before analysis' (6).[81] Also, in point J Lles attacks specific biblical narratives: "Ni su dios hizo el mundo en siete días, ni en siete mil años, ni creó tampoco las cosas y los seres, ni ese dios existió nunca más que en la imaginación enfermiza de los hombres primitivos, primero, y en la mente mentalizada de los convencionales después" 'Its god did not make the world in seven days, nor in seven thousand years, nor did he create things and beings, nor did that god even exist outside the morbid imagination of primitive men, first, and in the brainwashed minds of conventional men after that' (6). Above all, Lles subscribes to positivist narratives: "La Naturaleza se rige por leyes de bronce, unánimes, invariables, eternas. En ninguna de sus manifestaciones se observa ni el más ligero capricho de una inteligencia directiva…" 'Nature is ruled by inflexible, unanimous, invariable, and eternal laws. There is not the slightest whim of a directive intelligence it any of its manifestations' (6). Overall, Lles counters Vitier's fascination with the beauty of Christianity with the "ugly truth" of Monism.

Vitier and Lles's polemic must have caught the attention of more than a few readers of *El Estudiante*. In "Finaliza" ("Wrapping Up"), Vitier announces that both he and Lles have mutually decided to suspend their discussion of Christianity and Monism because, although the exchange has been fruitful, there is little chance that either one will be persuaded by the arguments of the other so each writer will continue to promulgate their views in other venues (6). For some reason, Vitier felt compelled to let readers know that the discussion would proceed no further. Presumably, this was done more for the benefit of those who were scandalized by the

[81] All translations are mine.

exchange, particularly Lles's contribution, than for those who closely followed the discussion with interest. The aforementioned exchanges between Lles and Vitier offer an important contextualization for Fernando Lles's later writings regarding religion, society, and the individual.

4. Neocolonialism, Corruption, and Murder in the 'Pseudo-Republic'

Geopolitical and sociocultural events in Cuba certainly informed Lles's pessimistic tone and message in *La higuera de Timón*. Lles lived in Cuba during a time of frequent U.S. military, political, and economic intervention. After its involvement in the Spanish-Cuban-American War in 1898, the United States codified the Platt Amendment into the 1902 Cuban Constitution, which gave U.S. considerable control over Cuba's domestic and foreign affairs and was not repealed until 1934. The United States occupied Cuba on four occasions during the first two decades of the early Cuban Republic: 1898-1902, 1906-1909, 1912, and 1917-1922. During this time, the United States monopolized the Cuban sugar market, hand picked Cuban politicians, such as Cuba's first President, Tomás Estrada Palma, and intervened in an array of political and economic affairs under the pretext of establishing or maintaining order. Of course, U.S. interest in Cuba was economical and militarily strategic. Although Cuba was no longer a Spanish colony after 1898, intense American economic and political colonialism ensured that it was not exactly an autonomous country. According to Louis Pérez, Jr., although Cuba was transitioning from a Spanish colony into a supposedly independent republic, "the distinction between old and new was difficult to ascertain" (*Cuba* 56). This is why it became popular during the Cuban Revolution of 1959 to refer to early twentieth century Cuba as the "Pseudo-Republic" or "la

república mediatizada" ('the annexed republic'), and some even consider the period between 1898-1934 as the "saddest and most sterile period in Cuban history" (*Enciclopedia* 494).

Widespread corruption and electoral fraud plagued Cuban politics and civil society after U.S. involvement in Cuban affairs in 1898. Beginning in 1904, Cuban elections were marred by fraud and violent voter suppression campaigns, which caused widespread unrest among liberal and conservative political factions on various occasions. Invoking the Platt Amendment, the United States installed political diplomats and military brigades with the objective of stabilizing not only the divisive political arena, but also U.S. economic interests in Cuba. However, Cuban political leaders, particularly liberals, repeatedly requested that the United States oversee their elections.[82]

Although the presidential candidates between 1909-1925 pledged to operate with transparency and integrity, corruption in their administrations was deliberate and rampant. The administrations of José Miguel Gómez (1909-1913), Mario García Menocal (1913-1921), and Alfredo Zayas (1921-1925) were replete nepotism, bribery, and electoral fraud (Díaz-Briquets and Pérez-López 66-68). According to Díaz-Briquets and Jorge Pérez-López, "By 1925 corruption was an integral part of republican Cuba's daily economic and political life" (71). In addition to an environment of national corruption, a sharp decline in the sugar price in 1920, in conjunction with the Fordney-McCumber Tariff Act in 1922 that lowered the price that Cuban sugar growers would receive on the world market, caused widespread hardship for Cubans and lead many to question the existing sociopolitical order (Suchlicki 82). Fernando Lles writes *La higuera de Timón* in this deterministic environment in which electoral fraud undermined

[82] See Pérez, *Intervention*: 104-150.

democratic efforts, geopolitical imperialism controled the economy, and corruption, hypocrisy, and greed disguised themselves in the clothing of transcendental rhetoric and reformative causes.

In addition to this sociopolitical context, it is certain that the death of his brother Francisco informs the pessimism in *La higuera de Timón*. Francisco Lles was murdered on the corner of América and Tello Lamar in Matanzas on January 1, 1921. The trial of Francisco's murderer, Juan Peñate, was well publicized in the Matanzas newspaper *El Mundo* in April 1921. While the facts surrounding this tragic event were murky, as numerous witnesses took the stand in the trial and offered conflicting testimonies, it was possible that it was a completely random occurrence.[83] Fernando writes about the event in a letter to Emilio Roig de Leuchsenring, the literary editor of *El Fígaro*, Havana's preeminent literary magazine, between 1921 and 1929. In that letter, Lles recounts how his brother was shot while trying to stop the gunman from killing Fernando ("Carta"). Sometime after this event, Lles begins writing *La higuera de Timón*, which he dedicates to the memory of his brother.

Francisco's death permeates *La higuera de Timón* in significant ways. Lles describes the fateful day when "por oscuros designios de lo incomprensible la mano criminal de un analfabeto le arrebató la vida…" ' because of the dark designs of the incomprehensible, the criminal hand of an illiterate man tore away his life' ("Carta"). This excerpt reveals a couple of central ideas that Lles emphasizes in his essay. First, Lles's reference to the inexplicable and unknowable reasons for his brother's death, as it seemed to be a random occurrence as they walked in the street, coincides with his objective of refuting the hegemonic nature of religious narratives of spiritual

[83] Some claim Francisco's death was the result of *a political feud ("Francisco Lles").*

transcendence and the existence of an afterlife.[84] Lles challenges these narratives because he considers them fictions that distort the instinctual needs and natural desires of the individual. Moreover, his evident disdain for Francisco's murderer, an "illiterate" man, suggests an unapologetic elitism and also reinforces the notion that even the 'best and brightest' are not immune to a deterministic environment. As I will underscore later in this study, this positivist, pessimistic paradigm structures Lles's central message in *La higuera de Timón*.

5. Critical Reviews of La higuera de Timón

Critical reviews of *La higuera de Timón* varied. While some praised its audacity and erudition, most saw its pessimistic and dispersive implications as dangerous to a tenuous sociopolitical order at that time. In his review of Lles's essay, Diego V. Tejera, Cuban writer, revolutionary, and founder of the first Socialist Party in Cuba in 1899, delights that it is "un libro para elegidos" ("it is a book for the chosen few") and claims that if the essay would have been published earlier, Darío would have included Lles in *Los raros* (230). José de la Luz León, a Cuban diplomat, however, criticizes the unoriginality, pessimism, and condemnatory message of Lles's essay and laments that "ninguna luz nos orienta hacia un puerto de calma, hacia un paraje cualquiera, donde se aquieten los sobresaltos interiores" 'no light guides us towards a calm port, towards any place at all, where our inner fears might be allayed' (410). Luz's criticism soon turns away from the disconcerting implications of Lles's book and focuses on Medardo Vitier's prologue to *La higuera de Timón*. Luz considers Vitier's unmitigated praise unjustified and

[84] On the other hand, however, the idea of "the incomprehensible" suggests a mysterious force that does not respond to reason. This type of incongruence is not uncommon in *La higuera de Timón*.

maintains that Vitier exaggerates when he compares Lles to Martí, Whitman, Varona, Ingenieros, and Rodó.

Furthermore, Vitier even suggests that Lles is superior to those canonical writers in certain ways: "El curso de la plática recuerda el "Ariel" [*sic*]) de Rodó; pero el famoso prosista uruguayo, jamás, ni en sus mejores trozos de "Proteo" ni en "El Camino de Paros" se elevó a tan serena, reflexiva, vital contemplación. Si exceptúo algunos trabajos literarios de José Martí, puedo asegurar que no conozco nada de tanta fuerza y belleza en la prosa contemporánea española" 'The structure of a sermon reminds me of Rodó's *Ariel*; but the famous Uruguayan prose writer never, not even in his best passages of "Proteo" not in "The Way to Paros" rose to such a serene, reflexive, and vital contemplation. With the exception of some literary works by José Martí, I can affirm that I do not know anything with such strength and beauty in contemporary Spanish prose' ("A modo" 5). Much of Luz's review outlines ways in which Vitier should have praised Lles without connecting him to the aforementioned writers and highlights instead Lles's "espíritu perturbado e inquieto, ahondador y mediatitivo, informe, triste" 'perturbed, restless, profound, pensive, shapeless, and sad spirit' (410).

Luz's review, which has more to do with correcting Vitier than with commenting Lles's essay, prompted Vitier to respond. In his response, Vitier states that he had no idea that his praise for Lles's essay would be used as a "prefacio mortificante" 'annoying preface' ("Más" 3). In fact, Vitier acknowledges the accuracy of Luz's estimations: "Yo sé que ese mi prólogo no se ha aceptado como cosa justa. Más de un distinguido escritor ha señalado mi exceso de alabanza, lo apasionado de mi juicio, lo inexacto en mis parangones" 'I know that my prologue is not seen as accurate. More than one distinguished writer has pointed out my excessive praise, my impassioned opinion, and the inexactness of my comparisons' ("Más" 3). Although Vitier

almost apologizes for his exaggerations, he nevertheless insists on the value of Lles's essay, saying "Sigo creyendo que la prosa contemporánea española no tiene un puñado de páginas de más vigor que *La higuera de Timón*" 'I still believe that contemporary Spanish prose does not have a handful of pages with more vigor than *Timon's Fig Tree*' ("Más" 3). Addressing the legitimacy of his comparisons to other prominent Latin American intellectuals, Vitier states that Rodó is superior to Lles in quantity, form, and optimism. However, Vitier believes Lles is superior to Rodó in his ability to transmit his "pensamiento agitado, estremecido por el miraje del dolor universal" 'agitated thought, shaken by the mirage of universal pain' ("Más" 3). In other words, Vitier justifies his praise of *La higuera de Timón* by noting its originality and intensity. The importance of this critical incompatibility is significant because Luz and Vitier articulate two trends that would follow Lles throughout his writing career, which is to say, respectively, unmitigated denunciation and recognition for expressing the anguish and uncertainties of the early twentieth century.

6. *Arielismo* in Cuba and Lles

In literary histories, critics tend to situate Lles in the context of Rodó and *arielismo* (Henríquez Ureña 293; Vitier "A modo" 5; Lazo 213; Remos, *Historia* 457-458; *Proceso* 281-82; Portuondo 59; Carbonell 91). As in other Latin American countries, Rodó's literary persona and writings were well known in Cuba after 1905. Rodó corresponded with writers and literary critics throughout Latin America. For example, Rodó sent a copy of *Ariel* to Cuban philosopher and politician Enrique José Varona with a note that saying "Usted puede ser, en realidad, el Próspero de mi libro. Los discípulos nos agrupamos alrededor de usted para escucharle como los discípulos de Próspero" 'You could be, in reality, the Prospero of my book' ("Carta" 297).

Later, Cuban writer Jesús Castellanos inaugurated the Sociedad de Conferencias in 1910 with a critical analysis of Rodó's *Motivos de Proteo* (1909), which Castellanos calls "la nueva Biblia de la esperanza" 'the new Bible of hope' (9). Moreover, the Cuban press, such as *El Fígaro* and *Cuba Contemporánea*, published Rodó's letters to Cuban writers like Manuel Márquez Sterling (1908), Ramón A. Catalá (1911), and Carlos Velasco (1914). In addition, portions of *Motivos de Proteo* were published in various magazines and newspapers in Havana after 1910. Lastly, newspapers throughout Cuba published reviews and portions of Rodó's work after his death in 1917. Lles was undoubtedly very familiar with Rodó's work because the Cuban participated in numerous literary societies, such as the Ateneo de Matanzas, whose members frequently read and discussed Rodó (Wright 113) and, moreover, contributed to the same Cuban publications, such as *El Fígaro* and *Cuba Contemporánea*, at around the same time.

On the one hand, associating Lles with Rodó is understandable: both essays are roughly the same length (about 100 pages) and divided into 5-6 sections, employ a narrative voice derived from Shakespearean plays (*The Tempest*, 1610-11 and *Timon of Athens*, 1623), interpellate select young subjects, considered to be intellectually superior to others (Portuondo, *El contenido social* 59) through a deceptive "dialogical effect" (Aching 80), have a pedagogical purpose, and contain a vast network of intertextual and intercultural references, many of which derive from Classical sources. In the pages that follow, however, I will demonstrate that despite these apparent congruences *La higuera de Timón* diverges from *Ariel* in important ways that underscore the need for a reading of Lles's essay on its own terms. One of the most obvious similiarities between each essay is the narrative voice. Rodó narrates his text through the voice of an old teacher, Próspero, while Lles employs that of a Greek misanthrope, Timon of Athens. As Ottmar Ette notes, there is a long critical tradition that sees Rodó's words and Próspero's

voice as one in the same (49). A similar phenomenon occurs with Lles and Timón. However, while there is a certain distance between Rodó and Próspero, Lles inserts himself into the narrative voice and the text at various times in *La higuera de Timón* by using portions of his poetry written around 1909-1912, which incorporates a degree of autobiographical intertext to the essay that Rodó's *Ariel* does not contain. With Prospero Rodó creates a rather univocal literary voice that allows him to highlight the salient points of his "lay sermon." Lles, on the other hand, inserts portions of his poetry, including a highly subjective first person in his text, thereby creating a degree of ambiguity between the protagonical voice of Timon and his own voice, an ambiguity that is absent in *Ariel*.

Despite these formal similarities, as Cuban literary historian Juan José Remos y Rubio points out, Rodó's influence on Lles is possibly stylistic, but not philosophical (*Proceso histórico* 282). For example, Rodó's idealistic program stipulates that a select minority of Latin American youth must use their superior spiritual qualities inherited from the Classical world to resist materialist and utilitarian cultural influences. In contrast, Lles offers an antithetical project that sees idealism and spiritualism as hegemonic mechanisms that mask the actual antagonistic relationship between the individual and society. While Rodó's essay envisions Latin American unity, *La higuera de Timón* concentrates on the well-being and integrity of the individual outside the realms of society. Rodó seeks to rise above the confines of positivism, instinct, and the material, yet Lles maintains that they are the only valid sources of truth. Therefore, while Rodó and Lles share the aforementioned formal similarities, their respective philosophies are discordant.

Cuban writer Carlos Loveira avers that the hyperintellectual nature of Lles's work is responsible for reductionist, superficial misreadings of it. Lles's essays require a highly

informed, participatory reader willing to unravel the extensive and often times obscure references that permeate them.[85] In his acceptance speech at the Academia Nacional de Artes y Letras in Havana in 1926, Loveira deconstructs Rodó's influence on Lles and makes a concerted effort to separate the two writers:

> Decir que Lles debe a Rodó su iniciación en el pensamiento y en el arte, no puede [ser] más que opinión formada por somera impresión, cuando no a libro medio abierto. Estos dos autores son antípodas en el fondo y en la forma, en la moral y en el estilo. Entre el vasto, penetrante, complicado y fermental ideario de Lles, y la serenidad espiritual, puramente romántica, que prevalece en el ensayista suramericano, media un abismo. La obra de este último aspira a enderezar por viejos cauces una ideología renovada, que no se cuida de examinar, sino poquísimas veces, la esencia íntima del ser y de la vida. La del otro, acaso tome de pasada esa ideología, pero es sólo para volverla de revés, para presentar al desnudo sus seculares fracasos, su influencia malsana, su falso y ponzoñoso conformismo. (10-11)
>
> To say that Lles owes his philosophical and artistic beginnings to Rodó cannot be more than an opinion formed from a superficial impression, from a book that has been barely opened. These two authors are opposites in depth and form, in morality and style. There is an abyss between the vast, biting, complicated, and provocative ideology of Lles and the purely romantic, spiritual serenity that is prevalent in the Uruguayan essayist. Rodó's work aspires to put in order a renovated ideology through old means that does not carefully examine, except

[85] Despite being roughly the same length, there are hundreds more intertextual and intercultural references in *La higuera de Timón* than in *Ariel*.

> very rarely, the intimate essence of being and life. Lles's work incidentally engages with that ideology, but only to turn it inside out and expose its secular failures, its morbid influence, and its false and poisonous conformity.

While Loveira and Remos agree that Lles's philosophy is antithetical to Rodó's, Loveira disagrees with the idea that Rodó had any stylistic influence on Lles's writings. While Rodó wrote patiently in a highly ornate, polished style, Lles writes spontaneous, disjointed essays (Loveira 12). These incompatible critical opinions regarding the correlation between Rodó and Lles invite not only a reassessment of Lles's essay outside the confines of an "*arielista*" tradition, but establish the need for a close reading of *La higuera de Timón* on its own terms as well as in dialogue with Rodó's *Ariel*. As I will demonstrate throughout this chapter, although there are points of contact between the two essays, *La higuera de Timón* diverges significantly from *Ariel*'s worldview and objective.

7. Classical Misanthropy and Dissent

Lles certainly shared with Rodó a fascination with Greco-Roman culture. According to Medardo Vitier, "Grecia lo absorbió" 'Greece absorbed him' ("Fernando Lles" 81). In *La higuera de Timón*, Lles revives the voice of the infamous misanthrope Timon, a citizen of Athens who lived during the Peloponnesian War (431 BC-404 BC). It is likely that Lles read about Timon of Athens in Spanish translations of Plato, Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*, Plutarch's *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans* and/or Lucian of Samosata's *Dialogues*. Despite Timon's classical origins, William Shakespeare's play entitled *Timon of Athens* (1623) became one of the most popular vehicles for disseminating the Athenian's misanthropic reputation.[86]

[86] For a detailed discussion of the possible sources of *Timon of Athens*, see Butler, 161-165.

All of the aforementioned writers tell Timon's story in similar ways. Timon is a charitable man who hosts lavish banquets and gives money to his friends in need. When the money runs out, however, no one will help him so he denounces the falsity of fair-weather friends and isolates himself from society in a cave in the woods. Here, Timon finds an underground treasure of gold and decides to invest it in the destruction of the hypocritical city. He divides the treasure between Apenmantus, a cynic intent on attacking the city, and two prostitutes who will spread venereal diseases throughout Athens. When two senators approach Timon in the woods in hopes that he will help save the city from the attack he subsidized, the only solace Timon offers is for Athenians to come hang themselves from a tree he planted outside his cave. They must hurry, however, because Timon plans to cut it down so that his 'friends' will have no recourse but to face the consequences of their falsity.[87]

La higuera de Timón opens with the narrator, "Yo, Timón de Atenas…en estas latitudes del Intertrópico" 'I, Timon of Athens…in these latitudes of the Intertropics' (27), recreating the last scene in Shakespeare's play, that is, encouraging those who wish to commit suicide do so soon before he chops down his fig tree (7). Unlike the teacher Próspero, who in *Ariel* delivers a sermon to a group of students, Timon delivers his message directly to a youth named Antonio: "sólo me dirijo a ti, es decir, a un espíritu de selección, a un caso ajeno a las generalidades, a una excepción de la regla" 'I am only addressing you, that is, a select spirit, a case outside the majority, an exception to the rule' (70). Moreover, a small inscription on the cover of Lles's essay stresses his unapologetic elitism: "Por la sinceridad del futuro y por la dicha de los mejores" 'For the sincerity of the future and for the happiness of the best'. Timon reinforces his

[87] Timon also appears in the works of Seneca, Montaigne, Dickens, Emerson, and Marx. For a detailed discussion of Timon in classical and contemporary literature, see Jowett, 16-22. In addition, *Timon of Athens* has recently experienced a theatrical resurgence, with various productions of the play appearing in New York, London, and Chicago since 1993.

unapologetic faith in an intellectually privileged individual throughout the essay by referring to Antonio as a "reflective spirit," as opposed to a "naïve spirit" (15).

Although the essay seems like an intimate, informal, face-to-face conversation between elder and youth (or teacher and student), Antonio is a passive presence who never speaks. This "dialogical effect" (80), as Gerard Aching calls it, is present in both *Ariel* and *La higuera de Timón*. In Rodó's essay, the students listen silently to the teacher's message. Only one student, the youngest named Enjolrás, speaks briefly at the end of the text after the students have left the classroom. In contrast, Antonio in Lles's essay never utters a word. The title of the essay indicates the one-sided nature of the text: *consejos al pequeño Antonio* (*advice for young Anthony*). The relationship between Timon and Antonio is indicative of Lles's pedagogical message throughout his work, that is, the idea that intelligent Latin American youth must embrace individualism and not participate in sociopolitical arenas because they cannot successfully challenge nor reform the power that religious hegemony exercises over reality on a collective scale. In other words, the development of the self is not a prerequisite for societal reform, but rather a way to avoid participating at all. While Rodó's *Ariel* is a constructive, idealized discourse aimed at the elite who are to be the future leaders of Latin American countries, *La higuera de Timón* transmits an intimate, powerful message of resignation. According to Lles, religion has long used fabricated moral norms and sentimental notions of responsibility to manipulate people to act against their own interests. Lles, then, interrogates the validity of the "moral landscape" (Harris 7) on the grounds of the individual's well being. The only recourse for those select individuals who realize the antagonistic nature of society, i.e., the will to power, egoism, hypocrisy, and farce, is to opt out of society and live an independent life and let their natural instincts guide their actions. In this way, Timon's recommendation of

renunciation goes against Pierre Bourdieu's idea of *interest*, which he defines as "to participate, to admit that the game is worth playing and that the stakes created in and through the fact of playing are worth pursuing" (*Practical* 77).

Timon describes the feeling of alienation that knowledge brings to "reflective spirits" as a sort of nightmare on earth (16). The select few like Antonio sense the contradictory nature of reality, and Timon organizes his program of boldness around a keyword that he uses at strategic moments throughout the essay: *Atrévete* (*Be Daring*). In order to prepare Antonio for his imminent, alienating confrontation, Timon uses examples of his own personal evolution. This guidance, however, blurs the lines between Timon's narrative voice and Lles's poetry, which signals the protean nature of the protagonist/narrative voice. For instance, Timon contrasts the crude, alienating enlightenment he received as an adult with the innocence and idealism of his youth by citing portions of Lles's poetry. Timon states that as a young man, "Mi árbol frondoso, mi higuera maldita no había fructificado aún y por entonces yo no me llamaba Timón, sino Virgilio, y escribía mi Eneida cristiana sobre la blanca cera que habían elaborado bulliciosas abejas del Himeto" 'My leafy tree, my cursed fig tree still had not bore fruit and at that time my name was not Timon, but Virgil, and I wrote my Christian *Aeneid* on the white wax that the bustling bees of Hymettus had produced' (42). This reference to the natural Athenian landscape is metaphorically significant and merits closer analysis.

The bucolic scene of Mount Hymettus (Himeto) contrasts significantly with Timon's use of terms of eco-toxicity throughout *La higuera de Timón*. Roman poet Ovid in *Ars amatoria* (2 AD), as well as Virgil in book IV of his *Georgics* (29 BC), describes the sweet-smelling flowers and abundance of honey on Mount Hymettus: *"Est prope purpureos colles florentis Hymetti / Fons sacer, et viridi cespite mollis humus" '*There was near the purple slopes of Hymettus a

sacred spring, and soft, green-turfed earth*' (Ovid 74)*. Timon describes his age of innocence in Classical, bucolic terms, illustrated through poetry. His poetry accepted and reproduced the sanctity of Christian narratives. If his youthful poetry communicated innocence, comfort, and idealism, his essays written as an adult disseminate angst and pessimism. In this way, the distinction in genre indicates that poetry belongs to an ideological, idealized past, while the essay successfully transmits the crudeness and complexity of modern civilization. In other words, Lles's essay reads like a coming-of-age narrative.

Moreover, it is significant that at various moments of the essay the narrative voice, Timon, uses examples of Lles's poetry written approximately a decade earlier as evidence of the aforementioned transformation. This adds a paradoxical layer between essayist (Lles) and narrator (Timon) that simultaneously distances the former from the latter, while at the same time indicating that they are one and the same. In fact, Lles's narrator assumes a fluid multiplicity of narrative identities in the essay, such as when he informs the reader that when he was a young poet "my name was not Timon, but Virgil" (42). This division between a past self who wrote beautiful poetry and a present self more in touch with the sociopolitical realities of Latin America harkens to Rubén Darío's first poem in *Cantos de vida y esperanza* (*Songs of life and hope*, 1905). In the opening line of the poem, dedicated by the way to Rodó, Darío asserts "Yo soy aquel que ayer no más decía / el verso azul y la canción profana" 'I am the one who only yesterday sang the blue verse and the profane song' (*Poesías completas* 627). The poem goes on to insinuate that the poet, now a bit older, is now going to do something else other than just focus on artistic expression like he did in his youth. Indeed, various poems in *Cantos de vida y esperanza*, such as "Salutación del Optimista" and "A Roosevelt," show a more politically committed poet. Lles, by identifying himself as Timón, by way of Virgil, and his work, first

poetry, then the essay, echoes the type of transformation Darío describes in "Yo soy aquel." On the other hand, these constant identity displacements or transformations bring to mind a process of *devenir*, or incessant becoming, which is how Rodó described the philosophy of his *Motivos de Proteo* (*Motives of Proteus*, 1909). However, Timon severely criticizes those who, by denying philosophy and reason, live in "un *devenir* perpetuo" (49). Perhaps the narrator, by identifying himself in the present tense as "Timon" and calls for a metaphorical suicide, that is, an end point, a coming to terms, or a radical transformation of the self, seeks to solidify a definitive literary persona incapable of being anything other than a cynic in a neocolonial country in the post-World War I era.

The narrator cites an important influence that helped him change his identity from a naïve Virgil to a cynical Timon. At a critical juncture in his early development, Timon read the writings of "un réprobo, un Anticristo, el que con fuerza más inusitada cautivó mis preferencias y mis gustos" ("a damned person, an Anti-Christ, who captivated my preferences and likes with rare force") who inspired Timon to react against "un sistema religioso que ha logrado exacerbar en la conciencia del hombre su natural propensión al dolo y a la perfidia" 'a religious system that has managed to exacerbate in the conscience of man his natural inclination for deceit and treachery' (40). Timon credits this classical figure, Julian II the Apostate (AD 331/2-363), for his transformation from a gullible young person to an enlightened adult. Julian, commonly known as 'the Apostate' for his rejection of Christianity, was the nephew of Constantine, the first emperor welcoming of Christianity in the Roman Empire. Christians were persecuted during the first two centuries of the Roman Empire (Holloway 4).[88] Constantine changed this situation by improving the status of Christianity during his reign. However, Constantine's relationship with

[88] For example, the satirist Lucian opined, much like Lles does, that Christians are "a herd of simpletons, preyed on by swindlers turned prophets and cult leaders" (Holloway 6).

Christianity continues to be a topic of scholarly discussion. Even though in his early reign Constantine worshipped the sun god, Sol Invictus (Drake 116), he subsequently converted to Christianity around the time he issued an official decree for religious liberty in the Edict of Milan (AD 313) (DePalma Digeser 117, 122).[89] Due to this discrepancy, "interpretations of Constantine range from the portrait of a pious Christian who compromised with the elite in exchange for political support to that of a "pagan-Christian" hybrid confused about his new faith, a man who had difficulty relinquishing elements from his pre-Christian past" (DePalma Digeser 140). It is generally accepted that clear, however, that Constantine's advocacy for religious tolerance in conjunction with his personal conversion to Christianity and entrusting powerful, legal positions to Christian clergy paved the way for Christianity to become the official religion of the Roman Empire in the decades following his reign.

After the joint rule of Constantine's two sons, Constantius II and Constans, Constantine's nephew, Julian, became the emperor of the Roman Empire for a brief time (AD 361-3). Unlike Constantine, Julian wrote a substantial body of personal letters and other texts that clearly manifest his anti-Christian agenda (Browning 236). Julian also led a vigorous, caustic campaigns to restore polytheistic paganism to the Roman Empire, but was unsuccessful.[90] After being mortally wounded in a campaign against the Persians, Julian cursed Christ and Christianity, reportedly saying, "Though you have defeated me, Galilean,[91] I renounce you still!" (Bertman 90). While it is evident that Timon reads Julian's final words as "un terrible grito de agonía, pavoroso y lejano" 'a terrible scream of agony, terrifying and distant' (41), the

[89] For a discussion of the complexities associated with Constantine's religious conversion, see Drake, 113-115.
[90] Two noteworthy fictionalizations of Julian the Apostate's fight against Christianity are Norwegian playwright Henrik Ibsen's *Emperor and Galilean* (1873) and American writer Gore Vidal's *Julian* (1964).
[91] Julian uses the term Galilean as a synonym for Christian.

misanthrope also suggests that Julian's campaign to reinstate the waning legitimacy of paganism in the Western civilization was not in vain.

For instance, the chameleon nature of the narrative voice in *La higuera de Timón* suggests that Lles's appropriation of Timon's misanthropy and Julian's dissent signifies the utility of those classical figures and their respective anti-social, anti-religious struggles. In other words, Lles continues the campaign of these standard-bearers by revising the official historical record: "No pienses que ha triunfado Constantino. Triunfó el hijo del Sol, triunfó Juliano, el hierofante coronado" 'Do not think that Constantine has triumphed. The son of the Sun has won, Julian, the crowned hierophant, has triumphed.' (42). In addition to inverting the general interpretation of Julian's fight against Christianity as a failure, this quote reveals another complex association with respect to Constantine. As I previously pointed out, Constantine worshipped the sun god before converting to Christianity (statues frequently depicted Constantine as Helios, the sun god) (DePalma Digeser 140). In Timon's usage, the sun god denotes a pre-Christian, natural instinct that cannot be suppressed, covered up, ignored, or replaced by a fabricated, imposed, organized system of belief. I read Timon's assertion that the sun god won as suggesting that despite centuries of Christian monopolization of Western civilization, the instinct[92] that Constantine originally esteemed and the one that drove Julian's fight still yearns for restitution. The fact that a few people, like Lles himself, still challenge the legitimacy of the transition from paganism to Christianity during the reign of Constantine indicates the endurance of instinct throughout time. Above all, Julian the Apostate is symbolic of rationality and courage, two key components of Lles's de-ideologization project that seeks to

[92] The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines instinct as a "Innate impulse; natural or spontaneous tendency or inclination" ("Instinct"). Since this is a rather loaded term, I will clarify its meaning and importance in the following section.

redeem the individual's instinct in a social environment in which religious hegemony vitiates natural impulses that contradict its sacred narratives and moral codes. For Lles, instinct is the source of individuality, which is an idea popularized by Friedrich Nietzsche, Sigmund Freud, and Ralph Waldo Emerson.

8. Nietzsche, Freud, Emerson and Instinctual Veracity

In addition to Classical depictions of Timon's misanthropy and Julian the Apostate's pagan campaign, Nietzsche's *The Anti-Christ: An Attempt at a Criticism of Christianity* (1888) is the clearest influence on *La higuera de Timón*. Lles was an avid reader of Nietzsche's work (Rodríguez Rivero 114).[93] In his seminal book *Nietzsche en España* (1967), Hispanist Gonzalo Sobejano details the philosopher's notable influence on Spanish writers between 1896 and 1910 (33). Members of the Generation of 98 wrote reviews of Nietzsche's work and praised his individualist stance against conventionalism (Ramiro de Maeztu) as well as his anti-egalitarianism (Pío Baroja) (Sobejano 60-63). Subsequently, between 1900, the year Nietzsche died, and 1904, *La España Moderna* published Spanish translations of Nietzsche's most significant work.[94] Lles certainly read these translations as he had a strong transatlantic connection with Spain, published in *La España Moderna*, and Spanish publications were widely available in Cuba during this time.

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[93] Luis Rodríguez Rivero, a friend of Lles and fellow member of the *Ateneo de Matanzas*, states that Lles's favorite author was Nietzsche, but that he also read works by Proudhon, Bakounine, Kropotkine, Malatesta, Juan Grave, Luisa Mitchel, Ingenieros, Martí, Rodó, Sarmiento, Ribot, France, Duguit, Dewey, Bergson, Renan, Ortega, Unamuno, Marx, Engels, Buchner, Moleschot, Kant, Spengler, and Kelsen (114).

[94] *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (*Así hablaba Zaratustra*), *Beyond Good and Evil* (*Más allá del bien y del mal*), *The Genealogy of Morality* (*La genealogía de la moral*), *The Case of Wagner* (*El caso Wagner*), *Twilight of the Idols* (*El ocaso de los ídolos*), and *The Anti-Christ* (*El Anticristo*) (Sobejano 74-75).

As Medardo Vitier notes, Nietzsche's "destructive teaching" was the most important influence on Lles's nonconformist attitude:

> Pronto afectaron su espíritu la simulación y el convencionalismo de la vida civilizada. No creo que otras fallas y vicios sociales lo desilusionaran tanto como esas dos. Por ella nunca hubiera podido ser un hombre de sociedad… Sentía radical repulsión por lo adventicio y falso; por las concesiones prácticas que suelen hacerse a gentes y a motivos inferiores; por toda forma de brillo fabricado. Y desde luego, le irritaba el ver la utilización de ideas nobles para propósitos mezquinos. Llegó a la conclusión de que la Metafísica, al fomentar el espiritualismo como una de sus zonas, contribuyó, sin advertirlo, a no pocas falsedades en la vida de las creencias y los valores. Lamentó la confusión a ese respecto y la inconsistencia de una cultura donde a sabiendas se aceptan la insinceridad, la tolerancia convencional, el poderío del triunfador injusto… ("Fernando Lles" 77).
>
> The simulation and conventionalism of civilized life affected his spirit early on. I do not think that other social defects and vices disillusioned him as much as those two. For that reason he could have never been a man of society… He felt a radical repulsion for fakery and falsehood; for all practical concessions that are often made for inferior people and inferior causes; for all forms of fake brilliance. And of course it irritated him to see the use of noble ideas for base purposes. He came to the conclusion that by fomenting spiritualism as one of its areas, Metaphysics unknowingly contributed to many falsities in the life of belief and values. He lamented this confusion as well as the inconsistency of a culture

> where people knowingly accept insincerity, conventional tolerance, and the authority of the unjust victor…

Vitier points out that Nietzsche and Lles have similar agendas in their respective essays, that is, to denounce the ways that Christianity denigrates the individual's natural instincts by falsifying reality. For example, in *The Anti-Christ*, Nietzsche laments that:

> When the natural consequences of an action are not 'natural' any more but instead attributed to spectral, superstitious concepts, to 'God', to 'spirit', to the 'soul', as exclusively 'moral' consequences, as reward, punishment, warning, as a lesson, then the presuppositions of knowledge have been destroyed, —*and this is the greatest crime against humanity*.—Once more: sin, this supreme form of human self-desecration, was invented to block science, to block culture, to block every elevation and ennoblement of humanity; the priests *rule* through the invention of sin.— (48)

Lles agrees with Nietzsche's assertion that the hegemony of Christianity has relied on a "hatred of the natural" (Nietzsche 13) that uses religious morality to mask the clerical and institutional hypocrisy that benefits from the codification of those fictitious norms that convince people to sacrifice their personal interests in the name of a transcendental cause. Nietzsche certainly informed a central idea in Lles's work, that is, that even though the modern world tries to abate natural instincts, each person should live according to them (Lles, *La higuera* 102).

Nietzsche was also the source for Lles's endorsement of animalism, or the idea that animals are superior to humans, to illustrate his unyielding validations of nature and instincts. Nietzsche defines corruption as the result of an animal or person losing "its instincts, when it chooses, when it *prefers* things that harm it" (*Anti-Christ* 6). Nietzsche also challenges human

vanity that views itself as the pinnacle of evolution: "Humans are in no way the crown of creation, all beings occupy the same level of perfection…And even this is saying too much: comparatively speaking, humans are the biggest failures, the sickliest animals who have strayed the most dangerously far from their animals as well!" (*Anti-Christ* 12). Lles's Timon reproduces this notion and exalts the instinctual behaviors of Antonio's dog, Menipo (Menippus).

In *La higuera de Timón*, the juxtaposition of Menippus and his playmate Ciutti reinforces the principle theme of the legitimacy of instinct. According to Timon, Antonio should emulate Menippus because the dog is a model individualist who lives according to his natural impulses. Of course, the names of each dog are symbolic of their qualities that should/not be emulated. Menippus takes his name from a Greek cynical philosopher renown for his intellectual and social nonconformity. On the other hand, Ciutti, a diminutive of the English word 'cute', signifies and sounds pretty, but is in reality intellectually shallow, vain, and a foreign appropriation.[95] In contrast to Ciutti who looks to others before acting, a self-reliant, instinctual canine conscience guides Menippus. In other words, Menippus acts not according to mandate or manipulation, but rather according to his instinct. Menippus evades moral fabrications that rely on notions of responsibility, sentimentality, and guilt that influence human behavior.[96] For these reasons, Timon follows Nietzsche and inverts the homocentric paradigm that tends to project insignificance onto animals and asserts that "el sincero y humilde cuadrúpedo es mucho más

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[95] Or perhaps Lles was thinking about José Zorrilla's *Don Juan Tenorio* (1844), a play in which Marcos Ciutti, Don Juan's servant, exalts the libertine spirit: "No hay prior que se me iguale; tengo cuanto quiero y más. Tiempo libre, bolsa llena, buenas mozas y buen vino" 'I am better off than a prior; I have all I want and more. Free time, a full purse, fine women, and good wine' (Zorrilla 20).

[96] This idea predates Sigmund Freud's argument in *Civilization and its Discontents* (1929) that "the sense of guilt [is] the most important problem in the development of civilization and…the price we pay for our advance in civilization is a loss of happiness through the heightening of the sense of guilt" (81).

respetable y digno de perpetuar su virtud sobre el planeta, que la raza de los hombres" 'the sincere and humble four-legged creature is much more respectable and worthy of perpetuating its virtue on the planet than the human species' (29).

Lles's denunciation of 'civilizing' subjugation of natural instincts is similar to Sigmund Freud's assertions in *Civilization and its Discontents* (1929). Freud argues that civilization requires that individuals relinquish their instincts. The only way to relieve this "cultural frustration" (Freud 44) is to return to what Freud calls "primitive conditions" (33). In this way, Freud, as well as Nietzsche and Lles, challenge the idea that modernity and civilization have positive effects on the well-being of the individual. Moreover, both maintain that individuals should embrace, not deny, original, instinctual dispositions that fulfill his/her basic psychological drives. As Lles's illustration of Menippus and *Ciutti* indicates, natural instincts are not always altruistic. For example, Freud insists that "the inclination to aggression is an original, self-subsisting instinctual disposition…" (Freud 69). Unlike Rodó, who seeks to transcend the instinct through spiritualism or aestheticity the spiritual and the aesthetic, Lles follows Nietzsche's lead, which Freud would later theorize within the field of psychoanalysis, and reframes instinct as a mechanism of personal liberation.

However, the idea of personal emancipation by means of instinct and/or intuition predates Nietzsche and Freud. It was American writer Ralph Waldo Emerson who developed the notion that whatever originates in the individual is good and anything that contradicts this is bad. Emerson was popular in Latin America in the late nineteenth century. Prominent Latin American intellectuals such as Domingo Sarmiento, José Martí, and José Enrique Varona commented and appropriated his work. As José Ballón notes, for Latin American writers, as well as writers from elsewhere, Emerson represented a rejection of the normativity of societal

values (15). As Charles Mitchell observes, Emerson was not concerned with the betterment of society, but rather with the wellbeing of the individual (104). For example, Emerson avers that "Society everywhere is in conspiracy against the manhood of every one of its members" (21). Emerson's essay "Self-Reliance" (1841) perhaps reflects better than any other his commitment to a creed of individuality based on intuition and noncompliance: "Whoso would be a man must be a nonconformist" (22). Although Lles does not explicitly mention Emerson, he would have been familiar with Martí and Varona's writings on the American poet. Moreover, *La higuera de Timón*'s insistence on the individual certainly supports Emerson's recommendations of "Insist on yourself; never imitate" (35) and, above all, "Act singly" (25).

In line with Nietzsche, Freud, and Emerson, Lles asserts that instinct is the only source of truth (*La higuera* 30). Rodó, on the other hand, links instincts with irrationalism and the masses and therefore advocates a spiritualist transcendence of instinct by those select few "destinados a guiar a los demás en los combates por la causa del espíritu" 'desinted to guide others in the fights for the spirit'.[97] In contrast, Lles thinks faith is an inherited, sentimental, hegemonic imposition and seeks to dispel it. Likewise, Lles repeatedly undermines the idea of transcendence: "No aspira a nada que no sea a vivir y a morir naturalmente…" 'Do not aspire to anything more than living and dying naturally' (*La higuera* 15). Timon repeatedly desacralizes Christian symbols and narratives, especially the idea of suicide as sin and the existence of an afterlife . Indeed, Timon's advocacy for Antonio to commit a metaphorical suicide in order to efface the illusion of life after death is one of the most controversial and contradictory metaphors of Lles's essay.[98]

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[97] Rodó's only exception with respect to instinct resides in his belief that faith is an instinct for youth (*Ariel* 151).

[98] See chapter 3 of Pérez, *To Die in Cuba: Suicide and Society*, for a discussion of the prevalence of suicide in Cuba during the "Pseudo-Republic."

9. Ecological Tropes and Metaphorical Suicide

The principal symbol of his text, the fig tree, has discrepant implications according to the people who wish to hang themselves from it. The metaphorical suicide offered by Timon bifurcates into an incongruous dichotomy. In the opening pages of the essay, as in the final scene of Shakespeare's play and in other classical representations, Timon offers the branches of his fig tree to a society that he despises. The crowd's metaphorical suicide is a gesture of aggression, denunciation, and cruelty. Moreover, Timon welcomes the metaphorical suicide of a false society, whose hegemonic and hypocritical *modus operandi* debases nature, as a "reintegración…a la inmutable naturaleza" 'reintegration into unchanging nature' (8). Subsequently, however, Timon reserves a special branch for Antonio's metaphorical suicide: "una rama, frondosa y compasiva, del árbol secular de mi huerto, de la que puedes colgarte muy bonitamente, a sabiendas de que nunca más será turbado tu reposo…" 'a leafy and compassionate branch of the secular tree of my garden, from which you can hang yourself beautifully, knowing full well that your rest will never again be disturbed' (13). In contrast to the condemnatory nature of the crowd's hanging, Antonio's metaphorical suicide is a liberating experience that requires being bold enough to confront the alienating experience of realizing the doomed nature of collective endeavors. Lles's program is indeed emancipatory and reformative, but only on an individual level.

The symbolism of Timon's ill-fated tree conflicts significantly with the ecological tropes used by José Martí and Rodó in their respective culturalist projects. For example, trees in Martí's "Nuestra América" signify Latin American unity and anti-imperialism: "¡los árboles se han de poner en fila, para que no pase el gigante de las siete leguas!" 'Trees must form ranks to block the seven-league giant!' (118). Timon's threat to chop down his tree subverts the strength

and solidarity that Martí's trees signify. However, in *Versos sencillos* (1891), published in the same year as "Nuestra América," Martí inverts the tree imagery of his essay in a paradoxical way. The last verse of the first section of *Versos sencillos* reads "Cuelgo de un árbol marchito / Mi muceta de doctor" 'I hang from a withered tree / my doctor's cape' (181). Here, the tree, as in *La higuera de Timón*, represents a kind of ritual suicide of the reasoning man, very much in the style of Emerson. Although we may read this selection of *Versos sencillos* as an unlikely moment of pessimism from Martí, it is important to keep in mind that Martí's writings are rife with contradictions. However, the end of the aforementioned verse does contain an image of renewal because the indication is that he is going to pursue other avenues, that he is not restricted by an assumed role. The act of renunciation is not pessimistic, as it is in Lles, but rather promising and, I dare say, cheerful, especially when read in the rhythmic flow of *Versos sencillos*.

Although considering the similarities and differences between the writings of Martí and Lles falls outside the purview of this study, it is worth noting that Martí anticipates Lles's criticisms of those whose greed destroys the well-being of their nations. In fact, Martí and Lles use very similar forms of expression to describe this situation. In "Banquete de tiranos" ("The Banquet of Tyrants"), a poem in *Versos libres* (poems written in the 1880s and published posthumously in 1913), Martí juxtaposes two different types of men that represent, respectively, good and evil. On the one hand, there is "una raza vil de hombres tenaces…todos, del pelo al pie, de garra y diente" 'a vile race of tenacious men…all of them, from head to toe, claws and teeth' (145). Those "tyrants" feast on the good men, those who "como flor, que al viento exhalan / En el amor del hombre su perfume" 'like a flower, that the wind exhales, in the love of humanity its perfume' (145).

In *La higuera de Timón*, Lles echoes Martí's cannibalistic dicthotomy of tyrants and their innocent prey: "sobre los cadáveres de las víctimas se cebaban el pico, la garra y el diente de los carniceros triunfantes" (11). In different contexts, Martí in exile in New York working for the liberation of Cuba, and Lles in the neocolonial aftermath of that effort, both writers portray the personal and societal destruction wrought not only by colonialists or imperialists, but those in Cuba who sacrifice the well-being of their country and fellow citizens in exchange for wealth and power. In end of Martí's poem reveals the damaging effects of their greed, a theme and tone that significantly permeates *La higuera de Timón*: "Se parten la nación a dentelladas" 'They sever the nation with their teeth' ("Banquete de tiranos" 146). However, unlike Lles's essay, Martí's poem points to hope and redemption:

> Pero cuando la mano ensangrentada
> Hunden en el manjar, del mártir muerto
> Surge una luz que los aterra, flores
> Grandes como una cruz súbito surgen
> Y huyen, rojo el hocico, y pavoridos
> A sus negras entrañas los tiranos. (146)
> But when they sink the bloody hand
> In the delicacy of the dead martyr
> A light emerges that terrifies them,
> Large flowers arise like a sudden cross
> And the tyrants, with their red snouts, terrified, flee
> To their dark entrails.

The ecological tropes (flowers) that Martí uses to describe the good man suggest innocence, love, and hope. Even when the evil man is consuming the good man, the redemptive light that resides within the good man cannot be extinguished. It is in this respect that Lles diverges from Martí. Although Lles employs similar imagery in order to criticize imperialism and egocentricity, there is seemingly no sliver of idealism in *La higuera de Timón*. Moreover, Lles spends much of his essay denouncing the hegemonic effects of religion, which contrasts significantly with Martí's usually positive use of Christian symbolism, that is, the white cross that resides within the good man, a sort of inherent life force. Lles's departure from Martí's hopeful imagery affords us a snapshot of a frustrated sociopolitical situation in Cuba in a post-Martí context.

In addition to the Martí's ideals of unity and regenerative love unity and idealism, Timon's fig tree also opposes the strong aerial symbolism in Rodó's *Ariel*. Ariel, the winged spirit, represents a spiritualist transcendence of the 'best and brightest' who are responsible for guiding society toward higher, disinterested ideals. The act of hanging oneself from the branches of Timon's fig tree, rooted in the earth, denotes Lles's leitmotif of grounding spiritualist, religious, transcendental, and irrationalist discourses in the empirical reality of the natural world. The rope that restrains the body from ascension reinforces even further the impossibility of escaping natural facts, as the rope is made of natural products and anchored to one, a tree.

Antonio's hanging evinces a desired transformation, a confrontation with the ugly facts of life, a sort of new life in death. In other words, Timon subverts "*arielista*" rhetoric that propagates the idea that youth has eternal, supernatural qualities[99] by encouraging Antonio to embrace the crude reality as soon as possible and shatter the illusion: "Yo postulo, pues, que tu

[99] This is one of the dominant motifs in *Ariel*. For example, Rodó refers to youth as a "fuerza bendita" 'a blessed force' (146).

juventud debe terminar como la de un dios, radiosa y bella como la de un Apolo Pitio[100] que se dispusiera a hundirse en la profunda noche de la nada individual" 'I postulate, then, that your youth should end like that of a god, radiant and beautiful like that of Pythian Apollo, resolved to plunge itself into the deep night of individual nothingness' (77).[101] Timon constantly urges Antonio to welcome the end of youthful gullibility and delusion: "¡Felices aquellos cuya corta vida fué un crepúsculo vespertino, en el ocaso de la mocedad visionaria, generosa y valiente!" 'Happy are those whose short lives were an evening twilight, in the sunset of a visionary, generous, and brave youth' (77). Accepting the individual nature of existence and subverting normativity requires boldness, and Timon admits his admiration for a select group of humanity, that is, a wide variety of scientists, philosophers, inventors, and explorers[102] that he believes embody the courage to embrace the will to power through the intellect and natural instincts. These secular "triumphs" appear to be the only exceptions to Timon's misanthropy.

10. Intertextual Cascades and Lles's Implied Reader

La higuera de Timón is not what Roland Barthes would call a readerly (*lisible*) text, that is, a classical literary text that provides a clear, stable meaning for the reader to consume (4). In order to decipher the hundreds of intertextual references in *La higuera de Timón*, it is necessary for the reader to assume an active, interpretative role in the production of meaning of Lles's

[100] Apollo, son of Zeus.
[101] Note that Lles's essay ends with an evocation of his brother Francisco as emblematic of dying while young: "alma gemela que has alcanzado el olvido…; hermano;… cómo te alejas y te pierdes en el tiempo implacable, en la eternidad borrosa que empieza a transcurrir delante de mis ojos…!" 'twin soul, you have reached oblivion…; brother;…how you grow fainter and lose yourself in implacable time, in the hazy eternity that is beginning to pass before my eyes…!' (105).
[102] Including Pythagoras, Filolao, Eratostenes, Archimedes, Al-Ma'mun, Euclid, Galileo, Copernicus, Lippershey, Paracelsus, Serveto, Bacon, Llull, Columbus, Magellan, Newton, Laplace, Volta, Papin, Peral, Pasteur, Liebermeister, Darwin, Haeckel, Marconi, and Edison.

essay. Iser's notion of an implied reader, developed in *The Implied Reader*, is also useful to consider. For Iser, the meaning of a text varies historically and depends on an active reader (11-12). The reading process, then, is inherently subjective and historically relative: "The fact that completely different readers can be differently affected by the 'reality' of a particular text is ample evidence of the degree to which literary texts transform reading into a creative process that is far above mere perception of what is written. The literary text activates our own faculties, enabling us to recreate the world it presents." (Iser 279). Pierre Bourdieu carries the deferment of textual meaning a step further and locates it in what he calls the "field of cultural production." Whereas Iser incorporates individual reader performativity into the production of textual meaning, Bourdieu emphasizes the role of a larger sociocultural field that confers a particular significance to the text within a particular space in a particular time ("Field" 30-31). In other words, Bourdieu argues that there are actors other than the reader that give the text its 'meaning'. The respective notions of the performative role of the reader in the production of textual meaning offered by Barthes and Iser, as well as Bourdieu's idea that social conditions engender what a text can mean at any given moment, are opportune for considering the reader's challenging task in unraveling *La higuera de Timón*.

Indeed, the most formidable obstacle facing Lles's reader is unraveling his intertextual references. Do those references, mainly classical in nature, signal a casual, one-dimensional connotation, or, alternatively, do they generate a cascading effect, a sort of Derridean deferment that postpones their meaning and complicates their role within the larger text? It is difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain whether or not those references, or which ones, are straightforward analogies or if they lend themselves to multilayered meanings that required Iser's implied reader to fill in the links in the signifying chain. In other words, a contemporary reader of Lles's essays

is uncertain whether or not select references denote a specific, straightforward chain of signification or a less accessible meaning that requires the reader to wade through a plethora of intertextual options. As Bourdieu points out, "It is difficult to conceive of the vast amount of information which is linked to membership of a field and which all contemporaries immediately invest in their reading of works (Bourdieu "Field" 31-32). Furthermore, a current reader cannot "reconstruct these spaces of original possibles which, because they were part of the self-evident givens of the situation, remained unremarked…" (Bourdieu "Field" 31). These comments on the role of the reader figure importantly into an array of protagonists and motifs of the classical world that are central in *La higuera de Timón*.

For instance, Lles's aforementioned reference to Pythian Apollo is indicative of the cascade of intertextual complexity. Timon's request that Antonio's youth end like that of "un dios, radiosa y bella como la de un Apolo Pitio" (77) coincides with my earlier reading of the metaphorical connection between sun worship, paganism, and instinct. Does Pythian Apollo symbolize the courage to embrace instinct, or does he cascade into other pools of conflictive symbology? At first glance, Apollo seems to be an appropriate model for Lles's essay: in Book I of Homer's *Iliad*, Apollo starts the Trojan War by launching arrows of plague against the Greeks, which coincides with Timon's objective in the essay of wishing a plague on a hypocritical society. However, Lles's reference to *Pythian* Apollo is significant and, as I will highlight, suggests a conflictive interaction between Apollo and the interpellated subject of Lles's essay, Antonio.

Lles does not explicate the significance of the name Antonio in the essay. However, given Lles's affinity for classical figures, it could be a reference to Mark Antony, a Roman politician, military commander, and supporter of Julius Caesar. According to Plutarch, Mark

Antony, to whom he refers to simply as 'Antonius', felt such an affinity with Timon's misanthropy that he built a solitary refuge on the Isle of Pharos and called it the Timoneon (96-98). Timon inspired Mark Antony to isolate himself from hypocritical social interactions and ungrateful friends, and Lles encourages his Antonio to follow the same path. In a similar way, Homer's *Hymn to Apollo* recounts how after Apollo slays the dragon Python, from which his epithet 'Pythian' originates, he builds his temple at Pytho, an infertile stretch of land away from civilization. The fact that Apollo built his temple and Timon his solitary refuge in barren, inaccessible places, inverts the positive/negative dichotomy associated with fertility/infertility in novel ways.[103]

However, the Pythian epithet makes the reader think primarily of the dragon slaying incident outlined in Homer's hymn, which, as we will see, complicates the juxtaposition of Apollo and Antonio. According to David Sánchez,

> the Dragon Slayer myth as foundational for the construction of a new Roman imperial identity. This Greek myth was used at the apex of Roman attempts to reorder the post-republic era after the assassination of Julius Caesar in 44 B.C.E. and the rise of Augustus Caesar subsequent to his defeat of Marc Antony in the battle of Actium in 31 B.C.E. Rome appropriated the earlier Dragon Slayer myth to claim a genealogical relationship between the new emperor and the god Apollo. According to the histories and archaeology of the early principate, Apollo, the prototypical emperor, would establish the Golden Age of Rome. All subsequent emperors would justify their reigns by that model. (13)

[103] See Miller 75-76 for an analysis of Apollo's Pytho.

Sánchez's reading frames Apollo as an appropriated symbol utilized to legitimize a new emperor, Augustus Caesar. More importantly, Apollo came to signify the strength of the Roman Empire, which, according to this myth, was facilitated by Marc Antony's defeat at the battle of Actium. Therefore, Timon recommends that Antonio emulate the figure that symbolizes his own demise, which reinforces one of the key themes in Lles's essay, that is, the necessity for youth to have the courage to accept the world in all its crudeness.

11. Eco-Toxicity, Social Denunciation, and Geopolitical Meltdown

Despite the possible contradictory readings, it is clear that Timon frames Antonio as 'one of the best' who possesses a gladiator-like bravery to stand alone as an individual above 'the herd'. Like Nietzsche's Zarathustra, Lles's Timón appears on a peak and launches into an incisive diatribe against the grotesque social landscape beneath him.[104] There is a clear affinity in the essay to use ecological symbols and metaphors to bolster the value Lles attributes to natural states of being. For instance, Timon is particularly fond of employing terms denoting eco-toxicity to denounce the "estercoleros del fraude y de la mentira" ("manure heaps of fraud and lies") that permeate "nuestra cenagosa democracia" ("our swampy democracy") (33).[105] Timon tells Antonio that the disparity between the idealism of his youth was not sustainable when he realized the toxicity of the world:

> Yo hablé un día a solas, con mi viejo y asustadizo corazón, en estos términos: 'Corazón, tú has subido a la última cima, a tus pies la Tierra hervía como un

[104] Ottmar Ette argues that *Ariel*'s engagement with Nietzsche is complex. On the one hand, Rodó criticizes Nietzsche's anti-Christian assertions, but, one the other, *Ariel* and Nietzsche's writings oscillate in similar ways between literature and philosophy (58).

[105] Cuban writer Carlos Loveira continued the naturalist literary trend that reached its peak at the turn of the twentieth century. For example, Loveira denounces political corruption in his novel *Generales y doctores* (1920).

> pudridero… [Y] el misterio de la vida se abrió para tus ojos…un albañal monstruo, muchos gérmenes, todo fétido, horrible como una pústula gigantesca, y tú en la cúspide, corazón, en pleno ideal, soñando la quimera redentiva de tu grosero cuadro de carnaza' (61).
>
> One day by myself I spoke to my old and easily-frightened heart in this way: 'Heart, you have risen to the highest peak, at your feet the Earth boiled like a rubbish heap… [And] the mystery of life opened up before your eyes…a monstrous sewer, tons of germs, all fetid and horrible like a gigantic pustule, and you at the summit, heart, in full, possessed by an ideal, dreaming the redemptive illusion of this grotesque image of scraps of flesh.

Far from feeling repelled by this portrait of ecocide, Timon plants his metaphorical fig tree there and calls it "Timon's Eden," where "frutos de maleficio envenenan el aire, con el esparcimiento de sus miasmas pestilenciales" 'cursed fruits poison the air with particles of its toxic miasmas' (38). Here we see another way that the essay re-appropriates Apollo and connects him to Timon. Both Apollo and Timon found refuge in corrupted or ecologically barren places. In contrast to the Biblical Garden of Eden, Timón's Eden embraces the downfall of humanity "porque el misántropo sabe que existe un gozo inmenso en el fondo del vaso que contiene las heces de nuestro dolor" 'because the misanthrope knows that there is immense pleasure at the bottom of the glass that contains the feces of our pain' (98). These and other images of environmental toxicity challenge the auspicious symbolism that operates in Rodó's *Ariel*, such as the benevolent space of the classroom and his fascination with spiritualist ideals.

The differing symbolic spaces in *Ariel* and *La higuera de Timón* are also suggestive of their contrasting views on the nature of isolation. For example, Rodó admits a certain degree of

isolationism in his anecdote about the *rey hospitalario* (hospitable king) and his *reino interior* (inner realm) (158-162). Rodó tells the story of the hospitable king who welcomes all to his palace. However, there is one room where no one is allowed to enter, the metaphorical space of his inner realm. Rodó tells his young readers to access this privileged space in order to protect themselves from the demands of society, while keeping active in it. In *La higuera de Timón*, however, Timón embraces pessimism and social hostility and isolates himself away from civilization in a privileged space, but it is a cave. Rodó's space is metaphorical and subjective, while Lles's is anchored in nature, from where Timon wishes a plague on society. In this way, their respective symbolic spaces are indicative of their different views on the social contract.

In contrast to Rodó, who in *Ariel* tells his young audience that they must embrace a "conciencia del deber" 'conscience of duty' (18) because they have a responsibility to renovate Latin American democracies (5), Lles believes that transcendental projects and societal reforms are impossible ideals destined to fail. Furthermore, Timon challenges Antonio to realize that any "sublime responsibilities" stem from a "sentimental pedagogy" that packages "moral products" that Christianity prescribes to maintain its hegemony (20). Therefore, he recommends that Antonio, a select individual like Nietzsche's overman, follow his lead and seek a "solitary refuge" away from the pervasive hypocrisy and falsity of society (74): "En medio de vosotros no es posible vivir, sino a condición de ser uno de tantos. Yo declino el honor de acompañaros y tomo el agrio camino que me lleva a la solitaria cumbre, donde es tan intenso el frío, que hiela el corazón" 'It is impossible to live among you all without being one of the crowd. I decline the honor of accompanying you and instead take the bitter road that leads to the solitary summit where the cold is so intense that it freezes the heart' (103).

While Rodó and Lles embrace the elitist idea of "legitimate inequalities" in society, their views with respect to the altruistic duties of their 'superior' implied readers differ. While Rodó insists on the benevolent treatment of others, Lles contends that all forms of charity are in essence egotistical endeavors. Concretely, Lles asserts that the co-existence of altruism and greed nullifies the former: "Hombres que comerciáis hasta cuando sois caritativos, almas de penumbra que hacéis posible la convivencia del interés más sórdido con la filantropía más declamada, ¿qué hedor de cueva, qué hálito de fabuloso laberinto, qué monstruosa racha de cobardía y de silencio os ha soplado en el corazón?" 'Men who do business even when you are charitable, dark souls who make possible the coexistence of the most sordid self-interest with the most declaimed philanthropy, what stench from that cave, what fumes from a fabulous labyrinth, what monstrous gust of cowardice silence has blown in your heart?' (50). Timon underscores this paradox, possibly derived from Nietzsche's *Beyond Good and Evil*, in order to argue that morality is anti-natural (Nietzsche *Twilight* 174). Therefore, Timon advocates an individualism free of "self-delusion," that is, normative and hegemonic notions of obligation to others and sentimental notions of charity.

For Rodó, Nietzsche's overman is merciless towards the weak and therefore not a model of emulation:

> El anti-igualitarismo de Nietzsche…ha llevado a su poderosa reivindicación de los derechos que él considera implícitos en las superioridades humanas, un abominable, un reaccionario espíritu; puesto que, negando toda fraternidad, toda piedad, pone en el corazón del *superhombre* a quien endiosa un menosprecio satánico para los desheredados y los débiles; legitima en los privilegiados de la voluntad y de la fuerza el ministerio del verdugo; y con lógica resolución llega, en

> último término a afirmar que "la sociedad no existe para sí sino para sus elegidos" (*Ariel* 190-191).
>
> Nietzsche's anti-egalitarianism…has imbued his staunch defense of the rights he believes to be implicit in superior human beings with abominable reactionism. Denying all fraternity, all piety, he places in the heart of his deified superman a satanic scorn for the helpless and the weak. For those favored with will and strength, he legitimizes the measures of the executioner. And as the logical consummation he observes that "society does not exist for itself, but for the select few."[106]

In contrast, Lles, who echoes Nietzsche throughout his essay, clarifies that he despises "la canalla, la plebe analfabeta y sucia, nacida en el error de las religiones…, y dentro de ese populacho, no a los humildes, a los anónimos, a las bestias de carga, sino al fariseo impudente y desvergonzado, canalla y plebeyo por excelencia…" 'the swine, the illiterate and dirty masses born into the error of religions…, and within that multitude, not the humble, anonymous, beasts of burden, but the shameless and insolent hypocrite, scum and plebeian *par excellence*' (33). Timon admits that his individualistic creed is cruel, but maintains that it is indicative of humanity's natural instincts. Timon insists on explaining the crude nature of reality to Antonio so that instead of participating blindly in the false sincerity that pervades society, he will be better equipped to identity hypocrisy and separate himself from it.

Timon's isolation is based on positivism and rationalism: "¡Con cuánto placer no abandonaría yo mi cueva de misántropo, la sombra de mi higuera y mis inquietudes de ultravida, si hacerlo no implicara que debía cerrar los ojos a toda evidencia, a toda realidad, a todo lo que

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[106] My translation borrows largely from Margaret Sayers Peden's translation of *Ariel* (68).

mis pobres sentidos me denuncian!" 'I would happily abandon my misanthropic cave, the shade of my fig tree, and my anxieties about an afterlife, if it would not mean that I had to close my eyes to all evidence, all reality, and to everything that my poor senses reveal to me' (100). According to Timon, faith is no longer sustainable in the modern era once the "voice of the serpent," which is to say knowledge, has been heard (100). Lles's essay is far from comforting and embraces the inherent cruelty of human nature, knowledge, and modernity: "es duro vivir, cuando ya no hay queridos espectros que evocar" 'it is hard to live when there are no more beloved ghosts to evoke' (104).

There are a number of paradoxes surrounding the ideas of resistance and the will to power in Lles's essay. Lles grew up in a neocolonial environment, yet insists that imperialism is a natural drive. Even though he insists that egocentricity is responsible for the perpetual failure of reformative efforts and progress on a collective scale, he resigns himself to this positivist fact and argues that it is an inherent part of a human being. Therefore, even though he deplores that people and institutions use fabricated moral norms as a misleading justification for egocentric objectives, he doubts that this can be reformed. According to Timon, the geopolitical militarization of the modern world is the best evidence for his belief that human nature is egocentric and unchangeable, except for the select few that follow his advice: "Toda la historia [es] una serie no interrumpida de villanías, de horrores, de crímenes, de perfidias, de egoísmo…" 'All history [is] an interrupted series of villainies, horrors, crimes, perfidy, and egoism…' (23). If Christianity purportedly delivers 'good news' (evangel), Timon, like Nietzsche in *The Anti-Christ*, delivers 'bad news', a "dysangel" that differs from Walter Benjamin's image of progress:

> There is a picture by Klee called *Angelus Novus*. It shows an angel who seems about to move away from something he stares at. His eyes are wide, his mouth is

> open, his wings are spread. This is how the angel of history must look. His face is turned toward the past. Where a chain of events appears before *us*, *he* sees only one single catastrophe, which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage and hurls it at his feet. The Angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from Paradise and has got caught in his wings; it is so strong that the angel can no longer close them. This storm drives him irresistibly into the future, to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows to the sky. What we call progress is *this* storm. (Benjamin 392)

For Timon, militarization is the chief cause of the pile of human wreckage, which he insists is not indicative of any type of progress. For Timon, the symbol of modernity is not an angel nor a spirit like Ariel, but rather Pluto, the god of death, who works as an agent of "la plutocracia [que] lucha para medrar e imponer al vencido la condición onerosa de sus leyes draconianas, y las industrias de guerra, que manejan el arma del soborno y de la intriga, admirablemente, depositarias al presente de casi todo el dinero del orbe…" 'the plutocracy, current trustees of almost all the money in the world, [that] fights to prosper and impose on the defeated the burdensome condition of its draconian laws, and war industries that admirably use the weapon of bribery and schemes…' (82). In other words, Timon maintains that the will to power will incessantly motivate individuals and nations to inflict mass casualties and destroy the dreams of reform, renovation, peace, and unity throughout the world.

Timon sees the modern "world of hypocrisy and horror" (78) as "un inmenso

'spoliarium',[107] donde las industrias guerreras dirimen con la razón de la metralla, la razón del derecho que el interés del vencedor debe imponer al vencido" 'an immense 'spoliarium' where war industries settle things with the reason of a machine gun and the right of the victor to impose his will on the defeated' (22-23). For instance, Lles provides a portrait of a bankrupt, chaotic world:

> El desequilibrio que provocó la guerra…que comenzó en 1914, no ha terminado aún ni se sabe cómo acabará. Rusia muere de inanición, en plena apoteosis de marxismo práctico. Francia y Albión se amenazan mutuamente. La India se agita, presa de una interna convulsión, económica en su origen. Egipto enarbola también bandera de rebeldía. Irlanda se emancipa. Las kábilas de Riff, cambian de táctica y asumen la ofensiva. Las patrias rugen y los patriotas ululan. Los presupuestos de guerra consumen las menguadas energías de todas las naciones, y aunque el cañón calla y el gas no envenena el ambiente ni el hombre caza al hombre en su madriguera de topo, la paz no llega y el hambre de las multitudes turba el sueño de los patricios satisfechos que gritan al unísono: '¡Oh la patria, señores!' '¡Viva la patria!' (91)
>
> The imbalance that the war that started in 1914 caused has not yet ended nor does any one know when it will end. Russia is dying from inanition at the culmination of practical Marxism. France and Britain threaten each other. India is unsettled, a prisoner of internal upheaval whose origin is economical. Egypt too hoists a rebel flag. Ireland seeks emancipation. The Kabilas of Riff are changing their tactics and going on the offensive. Nations roar and patriots howl. The cost of war

[107] A subterranean chamber underneath the arena in Roman Carthage "where the dead and dying were dragged to be dispatched, then stripped for burial" (Bomgardner 89).

> consumes the depleted energies of all nations, and even though the canon quiets, the gas is not poisoning the environment, nor is man hunting man in their mole dens, peace does not come and the hunger of the masses disturbs the sleep of the satisfied patricians that shout in unison: 'Oh the fatherland! Long live the fatherland!'

In addition to finding himself immersed in the neocolonial sociopolitical environment after the Cuban War of Independence, Lles wrote *La higuera de Timón* in the aftermath of World War I, whose radical new technologies of destruction forever changed the nature of warfare with the introduction of aviation, poisonous gas, bombs, machine guns, tanks, and flamethrowers (Kaufmann 134). The proliferation of photography documented the war's destruction, which facilitated the drastic psychological effects of a changed world, a 'lost generation' (Sontag 20). Despite the horrendous nature of the First World War, Timon insists that the world has learned nothing and is doomed to repeat similar militarized conflicts: "La bestia triunfal del Egoísmo, enfurecida y dominadora, un carnicero espantosamente horrible, cuya sed de sangre no ha podido saciar el océano desbordado de la última guerra, se apresta a llenar de nuevo, de sombras ensangrentadas, el Hades tenebroso…" 'The triumphant beast of Egoism, infuriated and domineering, a frighteningly horrible butcher whose thirst for blood has yet to be quenched by the overflowing ocean of the last war, is getting ready to fill up dark Hades again with bloody shadows' (78).[108] Plutocrats will assemble armies and employ religious and patriotic rhetoric to convince its troops of the validity of their sacrifice: "¡Viva la patria, señores! ¡Viva!... ¡Viva!... ¡Viva!..." (82). Above all, Timon is critical of those who frame war as a moral, religious

[108] Another Cuban writer, Emilio Bobadilla, chronicled the destructive nature of World War I in a book of sonets entitled *Rojeces de marte* (*Red Stains of War*), which appeared in the same year as Lles's essay (1921).

endeavor when in reality it is a means of obtaining money and power and perpetuating the same inequalities and injustices that led to war in the first place.

Timon is especially critical of the hegemonic power of the United States, which he argues will soon provoke another major catastrophe because "Las diversas naciones del planeta no quieren ser tributarias del coloso del Norte que controla por el momento las actividades y riquezas del globo…" 'The different nations of the planet do not want to be tributaries of the colossus of the North that at the moment controls the activities and wealth of the globe…' (85). Moreover, Timón refutes the idea that the United States desires peace: "Ahora mismo se está representando una de las más estupendas farsas de la historia: las conferencias del desarme universal en Washington" 'Right now one of the greatest farces in history is being performed: the universal disarmament conferences' (96).[109] Timón states that everyone knows the United States is not seriously considering disarming itself, but rather encourages *other* nations to do so. Timón cites this as just another chapter in "la tragicomedia vituperable de la paz armada y del Derecho Internacional entre piratas y raqueros" 'the reprehensible tragicomedy of armed peace and International Law between pirates and thieves' (96-97). Of course, the historical moment from which Lles writes gives his criticisms of the United States an understandable shade of denunciation.

12. Nature, Imperialism, and Classical Reckoning in the Modern World

At this point, I would like to return briefly to Timon's aforementioned illustration of the relationship between Antonio's dog Menippus and his playmate Ciutti. While Timon's

[109] U.S. President Warren G. Harding convened the first disarmament conference in history, the Washington Naval Conference, also known as the Washington Disarmament Conference, in Washington on November 12, 1921.

denunciation of imperialism is patent, his analysis of the two dogs complicates his anti-imperialist position. For example, Timon validates his elitist worldview by pointing out that Menippus runs over and subjugates Ciutti. Moreover, Ciutti enjoys being dominated: "Con alta conciencia de su brío y su poder, Menipo sabe que su diminuto camarada halla vivísimo goce en juguetear de ese modo…" 'Fully aware of his determination and power, Menippus knows that his tiny pal finds extreme enjoyment in playing in that way…' (29). If, as Timon states very clearly, both dogs live their lives according to natural instincts and that Menippus should be emulated for this, then would this not also suggest that Antonio reproduce the trampling of others as a natural act?

The play between Menippus and Ciutti contains conflicting messages; it symbolizes an unapologetic elitism and validates imperialism as a natural state of affairs in which conqueror and the conquered willingly assume their respective roles. If we take into account the anti-imperialist sentiments expressed previously by Lles, a Cuban writing during one of the many heights of U.S. colonialism in Cuba, it seems like a difficult circle to square. Born in 1883, Lles was a teenager when the United States began its sustained intrusion of Cuban political and economic affairs. Moreover, Lles published his first writings during a time of U.S. military presence in the island. By the time Lles wrote and published *La higuera de Timón* in 1921, U.S. marines had occupied parts of Cuba for several years. Of course, the sharp decline in sugar prices in 1920-1921 affected Cuban farmers and American corporations in disparate ways. According to Timon, social inequalities and the will to power by the most able, far from deserving apologies or remedies, are natural facts. Timon is not bothered by the fact that the world is cruel by nature. Rather, he laments that this fundamental maxim is covered up, perverted, and presented as something transcendental and moral. Timon repeatedly advocates

sincerity in a modern world plagued by ideology, toxicity, and hypocrisy. This is why Lles resuscitates a cast of Greco-Roman figures whom history has framed as antiheroes, such as Timon the misanthrope, Julian the Apostate, Menippus the cynic, and in later essays philosophers Heraclitus and Diogenes, and recasts them as heroes.

In other words, Lles inverts the 'negative' attributes of this cast of cynics in order to reframe them as symbols of the sincerity and courage that the contemporary world has lost. While, like Rodó's *Ariel*, there is certainly an implicit call for regeneration, Lles's body of work, as Juan José Remos y Rubio observes, communicates a profound doubt that it can happen (Historia 457). In addition, transporting classical antiheroes into the post-World War I era brings on devastating consequences: "A todos los puntos cardinales alzará el réprobo su grito de angustia,…[y] despertará, no sólo a la Esfinge, sino también al Tiempo, dormido en un letargo monstruoso de complicidad, de silencio y de cobardía" 'the damned one will project his scream of agony to the four corners,…[and] it will wake up not only the Sphinx, but also Time, asleep in a monstrous lethargy of complicity, silence, and cowardice' (44). Like other classical references throughout Lles's essay, the Sphinx has complex implications. As opposed to Rodó's Ariel who serves as a symbol of a spiritual aestheticism for Latin American youth, the Sphinx has a reputation for inflicting plagues and devouring young men who cannot solve her impossible riddles (Fontenrose 309). Whereas Rodó tells his youth that they can decipher the Sphinx's enigmas and effect progress (*Ariel* 150), Timon summons the Sphinx as a beast of destruction, a symbol of the apocalyptic post-war period.

13. Misogyny and Male Instinctual Desire

In addition to the Sphinx as a symbol of reckoning, I also read its appearance in *La higuera de Timón* as one of a series of misogynist motifs that informs Lles's project. Although Rodó repeatedly emphasizes the importance of virility (142), he uses Ariel, an androgynous spirit, as the most visible emblem of his project. In contrast, Timon repeatedly portrays women as destructive to male autonomy. For example, Timon advises Antonio to resist a normative code of sexuality that suppresses his instinctual desires:

> Vence el 'totem' del rubor de 'Helena', fuerte en su debilidad, que juega con las ansias de tu obligada abstinencia sexual, como con un leoncillo prisionero. Desármala, hiriéndola en el talón vulnerable de su coquetería y de su petulancia hereditarias, tan ventajosamente opuestas a su pudor provechoso de Diana irascible contra el atolondrado Acteón. Triunfa de tus vanos escrúpulos que son el arma terrible de ese producto amorfo que se llama la señorita de nuestros días; triunfa y ampárala tan generosamente como tú sepas hacerlo, pero sin que esa generosidad exija a tu instinto poligámico, fidelidades monogámicas de palomo, eternos sacrificios en aras de un hipócrita e insostenible deber sentimental. (68)
>
> Defeat the 'totem' of Helen's blush, strong in its weakness, that plays with the anxieties of your forced sexual abstinence, as if with an imprisoned lion cub. Disarm her, striking her in the vulnerable heel of her flirtatiousness and hereditary opinionated nature, so advantageously opposed to her beneficial chastity of irascible Diana against bewildered Actaeon.[110] Triumph over your vain scruples that are the terrible weapon of that amorphous product that is our time calls a young lady; triumph and protect her as generously as you know how, but

[110] In Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, a young hunter named Actaeon spies on Diana bathing and is subsequently transformed into a deer and killed by his friends.

> without that generosity demanding that you relinquish your polygamist instinct to monogamist loyalties of a pigeon, eternal sacrifices on the altar of a hypocritical and untenable sentimental duty.

Just as the Sphinx is a female symbol of reckoning for the modern world, here, instinctual male desire is fighting off threats that women pose to its autonomy and polygamist inclinations. Timon tries to desacralize revered symbols of female beauty (Helen of Troy's red cheeks) that subjugate and infantilize male desire (the imprisoned lion cub). In addition, Timon interprets Actaeon's punishment from Diana as unmerited, as the hunter was only following his natural instincts to gaze at a naked woman.

At other moments of the essay, however, feminine sexual allure functions as a tool to criticize modern-day imperialism. Referring to imperialists, Timon ponders, "¿Qué poderosa Lysistrata puede poner en paz a semejantes energúmenos? Nada que no sea satisfacer su insaciable apetito de imperialismo y de oro, ha de causar desvelos a tan insignes varones" 'What Lysistrata can pacify these kinds of lunatics? Nothing that does not satisfy their insatiable appetite for imperialism and gold causes these distinguished men to lose sleep' (91-92). The reference to Aristophanes's anti-war comedy, *Lysistrata* (431 BC), the protagonist by the same name plans to put an end to the Pelopennesian War between Spartans and Athenians by having women withhold sex from their husbands. In Aristophanes' play, Lysistrata's plan works and effects peace. However, Timon emasculates modern day imperialists by suggesting that their obsession with power and materialism has fractured their natural connection with instinctual sexual desire. Moreover, Timon describes them as decadents, "Hombres de nervios rotos, de calenturientas sienes, de imaginación sobrexcitada, de cristiano e impracticable sentido moral…" 'Men of broken nerves, feverish temples, overexcited imaginations, Christian and impractical

moral sense…' (92). While both Rodó and Lles privilege the notion of virility, only Lles seems to go beyond the metaphorical uses of sexuality and advocates a freeranging sexuality removed from the constraints and traps that he associates with women. For Timon, women are both the scapegoat of forced, sentimentalized sexual norms and vehicles to criticize the war-mongering nature of modern imperialists.

14. Lles and *Arielismo* in Post-World War I Cuba

One of my principle objectives in this article has been to read Lles's *La higuera de Timón* outside the eclipsing presence of Rodó's *Ariel*. Since few critics have commented Lles's work since his death in 1949, I conceptualize my approach here as a first step in what I hope will be a larger critical reappraisal of the Cuban essayist and his texts. With this in mind, it has been necessary to first intervene in a critical discourse inclined to read early twentieth century essays with *arielista* glasses on and, subsequently, underscore the significant ways in which Lles's first essay differs from Rodó's *Ariel*. Only then, I believe, can Lles's texts be read on more autonomous terms.

With respect to Rodó and Lles, the narrative voices and spaces of their respective texts are indicative of their contrasting geopolitical realities. For instance, Rodó's Prospero is an old teacher speaking in the comfort of his classroom. Rodó, a politician, writes from a small, sovereign, wealthy country in the Southern Hemisphere with no American military presence. Conversely, Timon has no recourse but to isolate himself in a cave outside of civil society. Moreover, Lles writes from a "pseudo-republic," a neocolonial country whose economy and politics are controlled to a large extent by the United States. Moreover, due to the fact that Lles was revered as an authoritative intellectual figure in Matanzas, political parties courted his

endorsement. However, Lles was skeptical of politicians and refused to lend his support to either side (Nodarse 93).

For Rodó, Latin America's strength resides in its spiritual Latin legacy inherited from the Classical world. Lles, on the other hand, is skeptical of this sentimental legacy and uses Greco-Roman figures not to idealize a Classical past like Rodó and other *modernistas*, but to denounce the modern world by showing how little human nature has changed since antiquity. In other words, Lles selects Greco-Roman protagonists who are misanthropic and cynical, which clearly subverts Rodó's idealistic rhetoric surrounding personal and social transcendence at the turn of the twentieth century. Furthermore, Timon's crude, practical advice derived from personal experience differs from Prospero's prophetic, lofty discourse. Although Timon's revisionist interpretation of Julian's anti-Christian campaign appears to be a source of optimism, his defeatist perspective indicates that nothing can be done to counteract the falsity in *modern day*.

Rodó's Latin Americanist project, which he began writing in 1898 after U.S. involvement in the Spanish-Cuban-American War, envisioned idealism, beauty, spiritualism, and responsibility as a way for Latin Americans to unify, progress, and resist as one group at the turn of a new century. Lles, on the other hand, paints a crude and more historical picture, anchored in recent events of the World War I era and recommends a metaphorical suicide that pessimistically accepts the deterministic and grotesque nature of existence. For Lles, the continuation of widespread militarization after World War I is indicative of the inherent violence and egotism of human nature, which precludes the possibility of striving for rather sentimenalized ideals like Rodó recommended two decades earlier. José Miguel Oviedo calls this loss of idealism after World War I the closing of the *arielista* cycle of optimism (63). While it is reductive to assert that only "*arielista*" essays are optimistic, or attempt to locate the end of an inherently vague

"*arielista*" literary and cultural movement in Latin America, some critics identify Lles with *arielismo* in the early 1920s. '*Arielismo*', then, becomes an all-inclusive term for the introspective, pedagogical, and vaguely optimistic work of Rodó, and as such it glosses over or totally erases radically different worldviews and readings of Latin America in the aftermath of 1898.

In other words, the tangible geopolitical and sociocultural obstacles that surrounded Lles in 1921 precluded him from thinking optimistically about reforms, destiny, and ideals. I have proposed that despite their formal similarities, such as length, division, narrative voice, false dialogical character, and classical references, reading Lles's *La higuera de Timón* through the lense of Rodó's *Ariel* is limiting, reductive, and counterproductive because their respective philosophies are antithetical. In fact, I read Lles's *La higuera de Timón* as a sort of dismantling of *arielismo*. Timon outlines his personal evolution from an idealistic young person to a misanthrope and suggests that Antonio follow the same path because the quicker one realizes the futility of optimistic, reformative pursuits, the better off s/he will be. Although both Lles and Rodó hold exclusivist views surrounding elite individuals, the latter makes them morally responsible for carrying out a continental, culturalist movement while Lles believes they have no obligation to participate in collective endeavors. Moreover, Lles's advocacy of nature and instinct deviate from Rodó's neospiritualist essay.

Fernando Lles is not the only Cuban writer in the 1920s to whom Rodó's idealistic message seemed out of touch with the political, social, and economic realities of a neocolonial country in the post-World War I era. In 1928, an eighteen-year-old Cuban communist writer

named José Antonio Foncueva[111] (1910-1930) insists that José Ingenieros, not Rodó, is the new ideological leader for Latin American youth. According to Foncueva, "El *Ariel* de Rodó es un mensaje incompleto, amorfo, demasiado idealista, mezcla de romanticismo afrancesado y de estéril quijotismo hispánico. Carece de sentido en la realidad" 'Rodó's *Ariel* is an incomplete, shapeless, and overly idealistic message that mixes Frenchified romanticism with sterile Hispanic Quixotism' (19). Like Lles, Foncueva argues that Rodó's optimistic message of transcending a mediocre reality is insufficient in an era of widespread imperialist destruction and economic exploitation: "Rodó ha pasado. Es ahora el símbolo de una época. […] Lo mejor de su lección es lo que le faltó decir" 'Rodó has passed. He is now the symbol of an epoch. […] The best part of his lesson is that which he did not say' (Foncueva 19). Both Lles and Foncueva indicate that the material sociopolitical realities of post World War I Cuba necessitate different ideological frameworks such as anarchism and communism, the latter of which became increasingly popular in Cuba in the mid-1920s. Rodó's lofty, idealistic message of Latin American unity was insufficient in a neocolonial Cuba rife with hypocrisy, corruption, and frustrated nationalist projects aimed at sovereignty. Moreover, Lles and Foncueva react against the dictates of Prospero's "voz magistral" ("magisterial voice") (*Ariel* 140) and consider, reject, and identify their own guides on their own terms.

[111] See Cuban scholar Ricardo Luis Hernández Otero's excellent edition of *Escritos de José Antonio Foncueva* (La Habana: Editorial Letras Cubanas, 1985). I thank the author for introducing me to the writings of Foncueva at the Instituto de Literatura y Lingüística in Havana.

Chapter VI

Conclusion

As I have shown, the variegated influence of Rodó and *Ariel* in Latin American impacted literary, political, cultural, and sociological arenas of Latin America. The exact nature of that influence, however, seems perpetually impossible to locate and articulate. How, then, can we today, approximately a century after the pinnacle of an *arielista* movement/style/sensibility, come to terms with what is meant by '*arielismo*'? There are several approaches I have taken to attempt to answer this question. First, I analyze *arielismo* as a pedagogical and philosophical project. Second, as an elitist political discourse. Third, as anti-imperialism. Fourth, as cultural autonomy. Lastly, as an aesthetic. My research on *arielismo* indicates that these categories I have just mentioned do not present *arielismo* as a coherent program that Latin American writers followed. However, by examining some of the most commonly mentioned core members of the '*arielistas*', rather than imagining what it *arielismo* is based solely on Rodó's *Ariel*, enriches and complicates our understanding of what *arielismo* embodies. One of its principal components is paradox.

1. *Arielismo* as a Pedagogical and Philosophical Project

If read as a pedagogical or philosophical program, *arielismo* implies a synthesis of reason and metaphysics, an equilibrium of positivism and spiritualism. However, as we have seen, for Carlos Vaz Ferreira, a contemporary of Rodó, reason is the standard against which all things are judged. In other words, metaphysical and intangible notions such as the spirit are seen with hesitancy and suspicion by Vaz Ferreira. Both Uruguayans, however, are willing to rework the

idea of instinct to fit their respective agendas. Vaz Ferreira leaves open the possibility that if reason alone is insufficient, an "empirical instinct" may compliment it. Vaz Ferreira's recognition of the instinct may appear to be at odds with *arielismo*'s emphasis on a spiritualist transcendence of instinct. As I pointed out in Chapter 2, however, Rodó's ideas about instinct are nuanced. For example, while Rodó associates instinct with irrationality, utilitarianism, and materialism, in *Ariel* he does advocate a *spiritualist* instinct that connects Latin Americans to their Classical genealogy. For Rodó, there are different types of instinct; a dangerous instinct that manifests itself in the imitative tendencies of the masses and an ideal instinct that permits a select minority of the "legitimate human superiorities" to transcend mediocre influences. In contrast to the intangibility of Rodó's spiritualist instinct, Vaz Ferreira stipulates that any instinctual utility must derive from an empirical, that is, non-spiritual, experience or intuition. By insisting on a positivist understanding of instinct, Vaz Ferreira distances himself from the spiritualist foundation of *arielismo*.

We must also take into consideration the bifurcating nature and origin of the textual mediums of each Uruguayan essayist. For example, Rodó's *Ariel* is a literary text, while Vaz Ferreira's essays derive from in-class experience at the University of Montevideo. In this respect, the question of the authority of the "voice of the master," as Roberto González Echevarría calls it, takes on special significance. Vaz Ferreira had much more credibility on this front, but much less commercial success. His essays did not enjoy a wide readership outside of Uruguay and Argentina, and still do not today. Vaz Ferreira's essays, which are literally edited lecture notes, lack the aesthetic character that made *Ariel* such a cultural phenomenon. In addition, the ways in which the magisterial voice in each essayist's work charts two different courses. While in *Ariel* the students are expected to passively consume the master's lesson about

moral obligations with respect to reforming Latin American societies, Vaz Ferreira, without the mediation of a narrative voice, tells his students to avoid all types of directors of conscience. The clear paradox, of course, resides in the fact that Vaz Ferreira, in his position as a university professor, does function as the voice of the master and charts a course, or protocol, for his students to follow. The difference here between Rodó and Vaz Ferreira can be seen in the latter's insistence that his students cultivate, through arduous labor, an intellectual independence based on reason in order to not be swayed by hegemonic notions of duty rooted in religiously-based moral norms. In this respect, Vaz Ferreira teaches dissent while Rodó teaches responsibility. Whereas Rodó framed his fictionalized classroom as a serene and harmonious space, Vaz Ferreira's lessons from tangible classroom settings underscore the alienation that comes with exposure to complex ideas. Balance can be achieved, but it must be first and foremost rational, and, moreover, it is anything but stabilizing.

Lastly, the issue of Latin Americanism calls attention to the disparities between Rodó and Vaz Ferreira. While *Ariel* has been read largely through a geopolitical lense that bifurcates into series of related dialectics (Ariel/Caliban, Latin America/United States, etc.), this element is notably absent in Vaz Ferreira's work. A university professor and philosopher, Vaz Ferreira steered clear of political and cultural affairs that fell outside the purvey of the university or philosophical speculation. However, as we have seen, this has not precluded his inclusion into the group of *arielistas.*

2. *Arielismo* as an Elitist Political Discourse

The essays I explore in this study are not in direct dialogue with Rodó's *Ariel*. They were written a decade or more after the Uruguayan's essay. Torres's essay *Ídola fori* seems to be the

exception. The Colombian's essay is a valuable document in the intellectual history of Latin America for many reasons. Foremost among them is his concern for balance, which causes him to constantly deconstruct and reconstruct disparate perspectives to the point that everything is synthesized equally (which reflects Rodó's balanced approach in *Ariel*). However, there is one facet of *Ídola fori*, which happens to be the centerpiece of his essay, that shows a resistance to a primordial component of *arielismo*, that is, the Colombian's abnegation of elitist political structures. This contradiction, however, is not entirely overt. First, Torres reproduces Rodó's elitism in no uncertain terms, but subsequently criticizes the hero worship and aristocratic superstitions that limit democratic participation. Torres, a writer, journalist, and a politician, witnessed how absolutism resulted in bitter, hyper-partisan environments like the one that facilitated decades of civil wars, which ended in economic recessions, frustrated modernization, and the secession of Panama. In his critique of Torres's hesitant endorsement, and subsequent denial, of 'natural' social hierarchies, Rodó does not take into account the geopolitical circumstances of Colombia. Torres operates in a completely different atmosphere from Rodó: the Uruguayan writes from a small, wealthy country on the verge of an expansive social democracy, while Torres finds himself in the economic and cultural aftermaths of a civil war. In other words, Rodó's spiritualism was too vague and simplistic for the post-war necessities of Colombia, which required utilitarian and practical pursuits, such as reconciling political extremisms and opening up the venues of democracy to the masses (even if on uncomfortable terms). Rodó overlooks the plethora of geopolitical realities that inform cultural production in Colombia in the post-war period. Civil wars, a contentious political system, and the secession of Panama with the intervention of the United States, necessitate a different reading of Torres's essay outside a strictly *arielista* paradigm.

3. *Arielismo* as Anti-Imperialism

Like many Latin American essayists of the early twentieth century, Ugarte was dexterous. His essays mixed, to varying degrees at different moments, anti-imperialism, socialism, and *arielismo*. But there are similarities between Rodó and Ugarte. Both advocated unity, resistance, culture, and educational reform, while at the same time acknowledging the ways in which the United States had a leg up on Latin America, in terms of the quality and nature of the educational system and their ability to forge a homogenous imagined community. However, Ugarte was skeptical about Rodó's naïve optimism. In *Ariel* Próspero tells his students that they will be the precursors of a cultural and spiritual renovation that will come to fruition at a later time. In contrast, Ugarte emphasized the immediacy of reformative efforts. In this way, Ugarte grounded the spiritualist insistences of *arielismo* in concrete realities. Moreover, Ugarte evidently struggled much more with the question of religion than Rodó did, which, as I have argued, reveals the complexity of Ugarte's emancipatory project.

In his early essays, Ugarte wrote frequently about how a traditionalist, totalitarian mentality of oppressed or threatened peoples facilitates imperialism. Therefore, geopolitical emancipation must be preceded by an examination of consciousness. Superstition, imitation, memorization, dogma, religion, and foreign cultural and political models must be scrutinized and rejected in order to cultivate a critical autonomy capable of personal and collective modernization. His insistence on modernization, as I have shown, coexists with an uncomfortable accommodation of tradition, or the past. According to Ugarte, new historical circumstances and challenges necessitate acceptance of new facts, reform, and action. Heredity and atavism must give way to renovation via an interrogation and overcoming of ideology. Religion receives the brunt of his criticism. Ugarte argues that humans created religion out of

psychological uncertainty. For that reason, the influence of contemporary religious hegemony is antithetical to what should be the progressive aims of politics and education in Latin America. However, in a later essay, *El porvenir de la América Española* (1910), Ugarte changes his views on religion in a significant way. Due to the threat of imperialist incursion from the United States, Ugarte insists that Catholicism serves an essential unifying function for Latin Americans to achieve material modernization and geopolitical sovereignty. Ugarte's ambivalent views surrounding religion pose it as both an obstacle for national solidarity and progress *and* the key to achieving them. Religion, specifically Catholicism, in spite of its negative ramifications on the individual's mind, as well as politics and education, can facilitate a common worldview around which Latin Americans unite. Therefore, their respective nations can more effectively stave off U.S. imperialism and consolidate greater sovereignty. Although Ugarte admits that religion is a human creation, is void of veracity, and outlines the history of abuses in its name, it is also, paradoxically, the best arrow Latin America has in its quiver. Ugarte's oscillating views on the role of religion in Latin America illustrate the paradoxical nature of intellectual projects aimed at emancipation and autonomy during an active campaign of U.S. imperialism. Religious hegemony, although intellectually regressive, is capable of mobilizing people around a common cause. Religion is an uncomfortable accommodation in Ugarte's anti-imperialist project. Even in *El porvenir de la América Española* it wears various masks. It is simultaneously socially advantageous, yet personally and politically harmful. It is at the same time a vehicle for resistance and a negative influence to be resisted.

4. *Arielismo* as a Call for Cultural Autonomy

There is virtual consensus that Francisco García Calderón is an '*arielista*'. His early essays and speeches, such as *De litteris* (1904) and his speech at International Congress of Philosophy in Heidelberg, Germany in 1908, certainly echo the humanistic, neospiritualist philosophy that Rodó outlines in *Ariel*. However, his essays written after 1910 that deal with Latin American civilization reveal perspectives that complicate his connection with the cultural autonomy outlined in *Ariel*. For example, his sociobiological analysis of race, more a product of the nineteenth century than the twentieth, has little to do with the spiritual transcendence, which eludes commentary on racial minorities, that Rodó advocates. Moreover, García Calderón is fascinated not with the aesthetic and moral dimensions of distant Greco-Roman civilizations that Rodó connected to Latin America, but rather with modern Europe. Although Rodó also looked to Europe and the Classical World in order to trace Latin America's cultural and spiritual genealogy, the Uruguayan did so as a rhetorical maneuver. In contrast, the Peruvian is speaking directly to and from within the modern French State, and requesting direct intervention from it. In this way, García Calderón appeals to a cultural identity that is decentered or geographically displaced away from Latin America.

If *Ariel* is read as an anti-imperialist essay, then García Calderón's Pan-Latinist petitions for European intervention signal not cultural autonomy, but relegate the continent to emulating foreign tendencies. Although he proposes that Latin America is important for its strategic geographical position as it relates to modernized trade routes (the Panama Canal), García Calderón embraces an imagined Pan-Latin community as a way for Latin America to achieve globality, broadly defined as reaching a point of economic development so as to be competitive on the stage of nations, not on its own terms, but rather with help of political tutelage, economic intervention, and racial Europization by the continent's original colonizers (Western Europe).

Moreover, it is difficult to read the Peruvian's essay as an anti-imperialist discourse because he views European colonialism in Africa in a favorable way and also recognizes large parts of Latin America as the periphery, with the exceptions of the Southern Cone, in the hopes that greater European involvement in Latin America will generate the political, economic, racial, cultural, and moral developments needed to not only withstand U.S. imperialism, but emerge as a competitive entity on the global market.

5. *Arielismo* as a Formal Aesthetic

If we accept that Lles is an '*arielista*', then *arielismo* appears to signify a way of organizing or structuring a work, in short, a formal aesthetic. This aesthetic, however, seems removed from, if not completely unconcerned with, *Ariel*'s message. In other words, instead of reading *arielismo* as a confluence of themes or an ideological program, seeing Lles as an '*arielista*' suggests that while there exist formal similarities between his essay and *Ariel*, the content, objectives, and perspectives of each text are antithetical. For example, both essays are about the same length and divided into an equal number of sections, are organized around a large number of intertextual references derived primarily from the Classical world, and have a pedagogical purpose carried out by a narrative voice of experience and authority that interpellates young people. If judged solely by the standard of these cursory, formal aspects, *arielismo* would imply an aesthetic, a way of constructing and organizing a text that, by the way, does not take into account the actual writing style. While Rodó writes in an ornate, polished style, Lles's writing style is spontaneous and disjointed.

Due to this incongruity between form and substance, my exploration of Lles has focused on the content of his essay, the historical, geopolitical, sociocultural, and personal contexts

surrounding its publication, as well as on the ways in which formal aspects of Lles's essay, despite the apparent affinity with *Ariel*, such as the narrative voice and intertextual references, actually serve to dismantle the content of *arielismo*. *La higuera de Timón* is a product of a troubled man in a frustrating place and time. The deterministic feeling of resignation strongly permeates Lles's essay, as it was written in an environment of political corruption and nepotism, electoral fraud, economic decline, a fractured civil society further divided by frequent U.S. occupation. Moreover, the agony evidenced throughout the essay also stems from the murder of his brother, whom Lles saw as one of the 'best and brightest' in Cuban society, smart, artistic, kind, but snatched away by one of the illiterate masses while walking down the street. In Lles's opinion, this event demonstrates that there is no escape from that deterministic environment. For these reasons, *La higuera de Timón* reads like a sort of coming-to-terms with the crude truth that there is no hope for reform on earth and no repose in the afterlife.

Rodó and Lles's respective uses of Classical intertextuality are indicative of their differing perspectives and projects. For Rodó, Greco-Roman civilization symbolized serenity, harmony, idealism, and social duty and moral responsibility of youth. In contrast, Lles appropriates Classical civilizations in order to promote a philosophy of agony, pessimism, doubt, misanthropy, and individualism that rejects moral norms as hegemonic maneuvers that benefit specific interests. In addition, Rodó talks about youth as it if it has eternal, divine characteristics, whereas Lles prepares young people for the moment when they are confronted with the harsh reality that contradicts everything they have been taught (such as the various components of *arielista* ideology). In fact, Lles's program is one of nonconformity and dissent, which is manifested by the complexity of the narrative voice. *La higuera de Timón* is a coming-of-age narrative in which narrator, Timon of Athens, wears various masks: at times he is Timon, at

others he is Virgil, and sometimes he is Lles himself. This proteic narrative voice is represented through an evolution in literary genres: poetry represents naïve youth acting according to prescriptive norms, while the essay represents adulthood, cynicism, resignation, and steering clear of the falsehood inherent in society and instead looking after one's own interests. Therefore, whereas *Ariel* is constructive and affirmative, *La higuera de Timón* dismantles and proposes a sort of negative cleansing illustrated through metaphors of death, toxicity, and war. While both essayists recognize the need for reform and regeneration, only Lles doubts that they can be achieved.

A comparison of Rodó and Lles must take into consideration their respective chronologies. Rodó published *Ariel* in 1900, twenty-one years before Lles published *La higuera de Timón*. Each essay is a product of a specific and time and place. Lles expresses the reality of not only a neocolonial Cuba, but a post-World War I world of disorder, revolution, and large-scale military conflicts fueled by the desire of a few to make money or gain territory, and supported by unquestioning citizens who buy into sentimental notions of patriotism, duty, and morality. Lles accepts the idea that the world is cruel by nature, but laments that this fundamental maxim is camouflaged, perverted, and packaged as something transcendental and moral. He advocates, then, sincerity in a modern world plagued by ideology, toxicity, and hypocrisy. Instead of seeking to rise above the confines of positivism, instinct, and the material like Rodó does in *Ariel*, Lles maintains that they are the only reliable sources of truth. This explains Lles's hostility toward religious belief: he sees idealism and spiritualism as hegemonic mechanisms that mask the actual antagonism that permeates the individual's relationship to society. In this way, Lles could not be more antithetical to Rodó's spiritualist project aimed at transcendence.

6. *Arielismo*: An Enduring Paradigm of Elusivity

While my investigation identifies and deconstructs a range of paradoxes, the reader may have noticed that my very approach engages in a sort of paradoxical resituating of some of the so-called '*arielistas*' within the referent of Rodó and *arielismo*. To be sure, my approach bifurcates into two antagonistic, but related goals. On the one hand, the selection of texts and essayists stems from their respective associations, no matter how tangential, with Rodó, *Ariel*, and *arielismo*. It has therefore been necessary to read their texts within this critical tradition because this gesture (a) sets up a comparative structure that makes clear the coincidences and disjunctions between their essays and Rodó's, and (b) at that point allows for the essays to be read on their own merits and faults outside the domineering, canonical presence of the Uruguayan.

Arielismo is a paradigm that incessantly constructs, deconstructs, and reconstructs itself anew. There may very well have been an *arielista* movement in Latin America. A close reading of '*arielista*' essays, however, suggests that if there was, it was never referenced as such by the very writers that reportedly formed its nucleus. Instead, *arielismo* appears to be a retrospective critical construct based on variegated and isolated interpretations of *Ariel* which critics identified in other essayists of the early twentieth century. Despite the brevity of the text, *Ariel* showcases an impressive complexity, which in conjunction with its ability to gloss numerous themes, made it easy to locate the presence of the text, most times on very vague terms, in the essays of other Latin American writers. Throughout much of the twentieth century, *arielismo* was seemingly everywhere, but at the same time nowhere. This is evident in the virtual void of attempts to define *arielismo*, even by the very critics that speak about it as if the term signifies something that everyone knows. In this sense, '*arielismo*' appears condemned to a Derridean in-

betweenness whose meaning is deferred in the chain of signification. Our interpretations of '*arielismo*' are necessarily relative to our respective cultural baggage and our selective focal points.

It is important to recognize that *Ariel* is a product of another century that evinces divisive implications with respect to gender, class, and race. Rodó's worldview is a very selective one. We should not ignore those elements and view *arielismo*, since one of its foundational components is spiritualism, as an entirely benevolent enterprise. *Arielismo* connotes elitism and sexism. Its manifestations are exclusively male, as no writers labeled '*arielistas*' are female. Moreover, the *arielistas* tend to criticize, or completely overlook, issues of race, and most, like the ones I examine in this study, are light-skinned Hispanics. The confluence of these factors are no coincidence. *Arielismo*, with exceptions, largely corresponds to a very specific class and their interests. On the other hand, however, diverse readers of *Ariel* find inspiration in its pages, connect on some level with its idealism for the future, its call for continental unity, its advocacy for youth, and its redemption of humanistic, aesthetic, and charitable facets of existence. While it is easy to identify critiques of *Ariel*, it has been very difficult to locate with any degree of specificity its positive influences on Latin American culture. The term '*arielismo*' seems to indicate something favorable, while '*arielista*' may be positive or negative.

As I have argued, *arielismo* cannot be comprehended on a set number of criteria, due largely to the fact that relative little consensus exists as to what is meant by the term. *Arielismo* connotes intellectual practices communicated exclusively through the medium of essay, which is a genre that accommodates disparate views even within the limits of a single text. Just as the term is imprecise, so to is the genre that delivers its message. Moreover, Rodó's fictionalized structure and elaborate writing style in *Ariel* cannot be used as standards against which the

arielistas are judged because those writers for the most part did not reproduce those elements in their own works.

Should we throw out the labels '*arielismo*' and '*arielista*' since they are rife with ambiguity, contradiction, and offensive insinuations? Should the terms be revaluated since they do not meet the impossible standard reproducing or glossing the same themes in the same ways as Rodó's essay written in 1900, the interpretations of which, by the way, continue to spark debate and ambiguity. Instead of fomenting further hostility around those labels, as they have been read in negative ways at various moments and in numerous circles, my investigation of *arielismo* acknowledges that, to put it in linguistic terms, the relationship between the sign and the signifier, if not completely arbitrary, is largely nebulous.

The critical traditional surrounding *arielismo* tends to rely on selective readings, portions, or perceived topics of *Ariel* in order to demolish, appropriate, or rework Rodó's influence on Latin American literature, culture, and politics. The enduring influence and importance of *arielismo* is extra-textual, existing outside the strictly literary realm, and pervades academic, anthropological, sociological, and geopolitical arenas throughout much of the twentieth century. Those discourses surrounding Rodó and *arielismo*, however, for the most part are removed from *Ariel*. Due to this imprecision and recurrent semantic shifts, which has given the essay many masks that it originally did not adorn in the early twentieth century, I have chosen to examine *arielismo* in a selection of its most assumed proponents, scrutinizing each essayist and essay individually, reading each essay on its own terms outside the shadow of Rodó and *Ariel*, in order to consider how/if they practice *arielismo*. I have chosen to interrogate and trace the contours of *arielismo* by reading not only *Ariel*, but some of the most '*arielista*' essays at the height of *arielismo*. This has been a valuable approach aimed at redeeming the work of essayists whose

place in Latin American literary and historical canons has been obfuscated and in some cases erroneously attributed characteristics they do not possess by critics associating them with Rodó, *Ariel*, and the '*arielista*' label. However, as my research suggests, *arielismo* may be best understood as this ubiquitous, but ill-defined presence in the Latin American psyche.

Since its inception, *Ariel* has had a clear affiliation with Latin American university students. Aside from a geopolitical interpretation of *Ariel* and *arielismo* that centers primarily on the Ariel/Caliban dialectic, *arielismo*'s influence on youth activism in Latin America must not be understated. *Ariel* was a sort of banner at the *Congresos de Estudiantes Latinoamericanos* throughout Latin America between 1908 and 1914. Furthermore, *arielista* imagery and language permeated the *Manifiesto de Córdoba de 1918*, the founding document of student activism in the university reform in Argentina. If we fast forward to a century later and examine the role of *arielismo* in the Chilean Student Movement, which began in 2006 and continues into 2013, we have to squint to find its presence. However, it remains a referent within that context. But, at the same time, some of the students of the Chilean Student Movement have called themselves "neoarielistxs" as a sort of joke, but a joke nonetheless connected, albeit tangentially, to a flexible framework or way of thinking about student activism that originated over a century ago. Ultimately, *arielismo*, at this moment in time, seems to be a thing of the past with little relevance in the present. However, my investigation demonstrates that the content of *arielismo* has a long history of constant and contradictory shifts, critiques, and reappropriations. A brief essay written in 1900 in the far global south defined a way of viewing Latin American cultural identity, geopolitics, aesthetics, and spirituality, and it should not surprise us if new historical circumstances spawn a resurgence of *arielismo* in a very different form in the future.

Since little consensus exists as to what *Ariel* says, *arielismo* as a program, aesthetic, perspective, or theme is likewise highly imagined and evolutive, and most certainly removed from Rodó's essay. Far from a coherent program that Latin American writers followed in the early twentieth century, I argue that '*arielismo*' has long been a critical construct with vague contours—a convenient term to situate complex intellectual essays within a literary or historical framework. By demonstrating the tangled and contradictory ways in which the aforementioned writers engage with Rodó and '*arielismo*', I challenge the critical alacrity to categorize them as '*arielistas*'. Moreover, I offer new readings of their work in order to enrich our perspectives of not only their sometimes obscure place in the literary canon, but also of the polyphony of anti-imperialist thought during a period of serious challenges to Latin American sovereignty. In a broader context, this project examines the tensions between reason and faith and the politics of agency and dependency in globalization processes a century ago as well as today.

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