

Sub-state nationalisms in Spain during the Moroccan War and the Rif War (1909-1927)

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This article analyses how the Spanish colonial wars in Morocco in the early 20th Century influenced Catalan, Basque and Galician nationalisms at an absolutely key moment in their development. It assesses the aftermath of the Versailles settlement and the new claims of colonial peripheries, which coincided with the Disaster of Annual in 1921, Spain's great defeat in Morocco, which served as a weapon against the State for sub-state nationalisms, and led to the appearance of the Rif Republic, a benchmark in the anti-Spanish fight.

The article examines how the war was used to mobilize people against prevailing Spanish nationalism, the warmongering, colonialist, anti-war and anti-colonial discourses of the nationalisms in question and the positions of the main political parties and leaders. In short, it seeks to measure the impact that this long and important war had on different Spanish national identities during the first decades of the 20th century.

Keywords: Nationalism, colonialism, Hispano-Moroccan Wars, sub-state nationalisms

Introduction

Although Spain did not take part in the major military conflict of the first third of the twentieth Century (i.e. the Great War), it had to maintain a war effort for most of that period. The colonial conflict in Morocco turned particularly violent from 1909 onwards, and the area of Spanish influence in the north of the sultanate would be in an almost constant state of war until 1927. Spanish historiography tends to treat this period as a single conflict¹, often referred to as the Rif War², although outside Spain, the term usually alludes solely to the war that took place between 1921 and 1926 between the Spanish army and the Rif Kabyle people led by Abdelkrim after the Disaster of Annual. This article will focus on this entire series of conflicts, which posed a great challenge for Spain that underwent several setbacks in what was a key episode in twentieth-century Spain. For example, it was one of the triggers for Miguel Primo de Rivera's coup in 1923,³ contributed to the appearance of the military elite that rebelled against the Second Republic in 1936,⁴ and from 1909 onwards was one of the main arguments in the protests of a growing labour movement that used popular discontent for propaganda purposes.⁵

In terms of an analysis of national identities, the war was closely linked to Spanish nationalism.⁶ Patriotism was very intense amidst the military exaltation of a conflict that increased 'nation consumption'.⁷ However, not everything was positive for Spanish nationalism, and both the military disasters and the continuous 'blood tax' made the war unpopular, abating even the most bellicose patriotism. In this context, peripheral nationalisms found a favourable scenario for creating some distance by highlighting the link between the war and Spanish nationalism in order to discredit it. Positions ranged from moderate, which opposed the conflict by expressing an anti-war sentiment, to the most radical (especially in Basque and Catalan nationalism, although

much less in their Galician counterpart). They expressed their support for the Rifian cause in the sense that if the Rifians were enemies of Spain, then that made them allies. Furthermore, there were also sectors of those nationalisms, especially in Catalonia, that viewed this colonialism positively, particularly in terms of economic interests.

Although some publications have analysed how Catalan, Basque, and Galician nationalism interacted concerning the Spanish wars in Morocco,⁸ the three have scarcely been assessed together, and shall therefore be the focus of this article. Through available bibliography and primary sources (especially periodical archive sources), this study will examine how these sub-state nationalisms made use of the war in order to mobilize people against the predominant Spanish nationalism. The warmongering, colonialist, anti-war and anti-colonial discourses of these nationalisms will be analysed, and the positions of the main political parties and leaders discussed. In short, this article seeks to measure the impact that this long and important war had on different Spanish national identities in the first third of the twentieth century.

Morocco and nationalisms in Spain

During the nineteenth century, when the nation was conceived as the social unit par excellence in Europe, there was a rapid process of the creation of national identities and imaginaries that enabled individuals to assert themselves as members of a differentiated community. In this creation of identities and imaginaries, wars have always been crucial, often for increasing social cohesion by consolidating communal ties, as well as to encourage self-identification in contrast to a common enemy.⁹ In the case of sub-state nationalism, this occurs with wars of national liberation, in which the common enemy is precisely the state from which independence is sought. On the other hand, the conflicts in which the

state is involved abroad, such as the colonial war that is the subject of this article, can be employed by sub-state nationalisms in order to discredit the state which they believe is subjugating them, and where they even identify with those who should have been regarded as their enemies.

In the nineteenth century, there was a significant Spanish conflict in Morocco, the Hispano-Moroccan War,¹⁰ which took place in 1859-1860. The way in which this conflict affected identities in Spain was very different to what would occur half a century later. At that time, national unity was the prevailing theme, and where there were alternative identities,¹¹ these were integrated without any apparent contradiction to that of Spain. They even left some references for posterity, such as the famous Catalan Volunteers, a military unit conceived at the local level to fight for the 'great homeland', and which boasted a specifically Catalan discourse and symbols, such as, for example, the *barretina*, or traditional red Catalan cap, but whose Spanishness was beyond all doubt.¹² They also left notable celebrations to remember, such as those that took place throughout the country after the victory at the Battle of Tétouan or the reception in style of the victorious troops in Madrid, both in 1860. However, despite the intensity of patriotic fervour, it was quite ephemeral and had little impact, exposing the disproportion between the nationalist discourse employed by an intellectual elite and the limited capacity and willingness of the liberal state to carry out a 'patriotic' programme.¹³

The general patriotic enthusiasm surrounding the Hispano-Moroccan War of 1859-1860 never occurred with the Moroccan War from 1909 and the Rif War from 1921. In general, since the loss of Cuba in 1898, which dealt a terrible moral blow to Spain, belligerent patriotism decreased notably. There were some celebrations and send-offs with large crowds, but these were less frequent than in previous periods. Episodes such as the occupations of Tétouan (1913) or Chefchaouen

(1920) barely caused celebration, although this was partly because they were occupied due to diplomacy rather than victory on the battlefield. The capture of Gurugú or the citadel of Selouane in 1909 had generated somewhat more enthusiasm, but this pales in comparison with that of half a century earlier, and the sustained duration of hostilities increased the weariness of the population. It might even have prejudiced Spanish nationalism due to the disrepute that the ongoing 'blood tax' paid by the population entailed, but ultimately such disrepute fell primarily on the political class, and the anti-war sentiment may also be a factor that boosted nationalist sentiment.¹⁴

The terrible Disaster of Annual in 1921 reactivated Spanish patriotism in a sense, and was in part linked to a clamour for vengeance, often with aspects of extreme nationalism. However, this was also linked to a greater concern for soldiers and more initiatives to support them. Although this was almost always enveloped in a strongly pro-Spanish discourse, it did not necessarily have to be linked to patriotism, and in fact the normal tendency was that the 'patriotic' mobilization was due to a clear desire to help soldiers with little interest in national exaltation.

The conflict started in 1909 and coincided with a moment in which Spanish nationalism was already fully consolidated, but its Basque, Catalan and Galician equivalents were still in development and in search of points of reference. Nationalisms often construct their idea of the fatherland by imitating other nations which act as models to be emulated, whether due to the success of their independence process or by having a common enemy.¹⁵ The emerging sub-state Spanish nationalisms had above all European reference points like Ireland, and some non-European cases which proved relevant, such as Cuba may have been. Although in Morocco, and also specifically in the Rif, there were struggles for independence with a common enemy such as Spain, these never became one of those points of reference, although as shall be

seen, great attention was paid to their progress and contact would be sought when this was regarded as useful.

Nineteenth-century colonialism and Spanish sub-state identities

The nineteenth century is the most significant epoch for imperialist colonialism, a phenomenon closely linked to the nation-state and the need for international assertion through the domination of other territories. Although in the Spanish case this colonialism was very weak, and liberal Spain had to create its project with an empire in decline following the independence of former colonies in Latin America, colonial territories like Cuba or Morocco played an important role in Spain's national assertion, largely because of the conflicts that took place there. Therefore, the Hispano-Moroccan War became of interest again because it reveals the state of affairs in the mid-nineteenth century and the great change that occurred in just half a century. If its reception by sub-state Spanish identities (which at that time were still regionalist and provincialist, and yet to become nationalist) is examined, the aforementioned unity can be studied in depth by referring to Catalan regionalism.

It is clear that the war gave an impetus to cultural Catalanism, and favoured the recovery of historical points of reference, such as the Almogavars,¹⁶ who would subsequently enjoy a lengthy period of relevance. In 1859-60, they were both Catalan and Spanish reference points, but over time would come to be exclusively Catalan. The most notable Catalan example was the aforementioned Catalan Volunteers,¹⁷ a military unit of almost 500 soldiers who fought in the final battles of the war. They were highly present in subsequent memory and history, in the same manner as General Juan Prim, a Catalan who achieved great

popularity through his participation in the campaign. The return of these troops in 1860 was referred to by the sources of the time as an overwhelming event: triumphal arches, street decorations, music and choirs, theatrical functions, banquets and a long list of festive activities that went on for several days.¹⁸ The impact of the war in Catalonia was such that half a century after the conflict it would once again be highly relevant, and cultural creations, such as the choral composition by Anselm Clavé, *Los nets dels almugàvers* [The Almogavars' Grandchildren], which was heard for years, or the paintings of Mariano Fortuny, such as *La Batalla de Tetuán* [The Battle of Tetouan], which became a visual symbol of the campaign, were still present.

In the Basque case, the memory of the Hispano-Moroccan War would also be retained, although with much less intensity than in Catalonia.¹⁹ There were also the Basque Regiments, but they appeared later, and their impact was lesser. The integration of regional and national features was repeated in them. The love of the homeland, Spain, was not at odds with the charters of local privileges (which were to be defended), and recruitment could serve to demonstrate how well the decentralized system worked. A strong sense of Spanishness characterised the discourse employed in the Basque case, including in historical references, and with less exclusively regional content than in the Catalan case. Finally, the project to create a volunteer unit did not come to fruition in the Galician case; the ardently pro-Spanish discourse was employed, although with particular attention to points of reference regarded as being Galician, such as the kings Alfonso VI and Alfonso VII or the apostle, St. James. Provincialism, precedent of the future Galician nationalism, even depicted Galicia as the most faithful member of the Spanish nation.²⁰ In short, it can be concluded that in all three cases there was a regional identity that was complementary to and interdependent of Spanish identity,²¹ to which it was subordinated and with which it was integrated in perfect symbiosis, without contradictions.

Changes took place towards the end of the century, and in the Catalan and Basque cases resulted in a transition from regionalism to nationalism, which in the Galician case did not occur until well into the twentieth century. However, the presence of anti-colonialism was quite scarce. Although the hegemonic current of Catalan historiography has sought to characterise the political and cultural Catalanism of the latter nineteenth century and the nationalism of the early twentieth century as anti-colonialist, authors such as Eloy Martín Corrales or Enric Ucelay have demonstrated that this was not the case.²² The Catalan bourgeoisie, closely linked to the regionalist project, had clearly supported the wars in Cuba and the Philippines. Defeat made them return to the national market, and regionalism was an interesting route by which to seek state and social reform,²³ which contributed to seeing the events of 1898 as a key moment in Catalanist awareness. However, even though there was a change in approach, the *Lliga Regionalista* (Regionalist League) cannot be defined as anti-colonialist, and indeed influential figures such as the politician Enric Prat de la Riba publicly expressed imperialist positions.²⁴ Furthermore, with Galician regionalism, the defence of Cuba's Spanishness was a constant factor, with figures such as the writer Alfredo Brañas decisively supporting the war. The contrast lay in the principal tendency of latent Basque nationalism, that of the PNV and its founder, Sabino Arana, who applauded Cuban independence and regarded the Africans as 'legitimate masters' of the territories colonized by the Europeans, which gave them the right to reconquer them. In this way, the PNV would regard the Spanish occupations in Morocco as unjust. This anti-colonialism is a modern feature in the general traditionalism of Sabino Arana, although it was clearly instrumental in nature,²⁵ and the pejorative use of terms such as *moro* (Moor) demonstrates that it had assumed stereotypes that were common at the time.²⁶

Emerging nationalisms amidst the tensions of a colonial war

Barely a decade after the colonial and imperialist conflict in Cuba, the Spanish army once again had a place to fight for prestige and medals: northern Morocco, declared by the European power as an area of Spanish influence in the Algeciras Conference of 1906. Imperialist aims once again had an objective, and Spanish nationalism not only aligned with the aims of other nationalist movements in the state, but the aforementioned tendency continued within Catalan nationalism in spite of the contradictions this entailed, as it was aware that the only imperialism feasible for Catalonia was through alignment with Spain and its army: an army whose major concerns included Catalanism. However, it is clear that the situation in Catalonia was changing although there were important differences between the bourgeoisie, which accepted the theoretical rationality and practical reason for imperialism, and the clear popular rejection of waging a war that would lengthen over time.

In Catalonia, the war which began in 1909 had an impact which went beyond the sending of troops or ideological aspects, especially due to its role in the Tragic Week in Barcelona in 1909. The origins of that violent series of strikes, disturbances, and fires, which marked Catalan and Spanish society over subsequent years, lay in the dispatch of troops to Morocco, whose send-off led to a riot that triggered everything.²⁷ From that point onwards, the constant state of war in Morocco in the subsequent years made the unpopularity of the war a long-term issue.

It is clear that the war was unpopular amongst the populace, not only due to the increase in social protest, but also due to the high rates of desertion and recruits paying in order to avoid service. In the Catalan case, it was extremely common to avoid the draft by fleeing to France, especially during the period of the First World War,²⁸ whilst in Galicia it

was increasingly common to emigrate to Latin America as an escape route. The absolute lack of enthusiasm with which many were forced to go to war can be ascertained through the soldiers' accounts; if they identified even slightly with centripetal nationalism, it was not difficult for them to affirm such convictions. A good example is the Catalan writer Josep Marí Prous i Vila, who would write in his diary about the enemy: 'In truth, I did not wish to kill anyone, but neither would I like it if they killed me'.²⁹ A clear anti-war spirit which was complemented with a defence of peace and the rights of peoples, and which he shared with another fine writer from the Galicianist camp, Xosé Ramón Fernández-Oxea,³⁰ who also empathized with the Rifians. Although none of their observations went against pro-Spanishness, they reveal how the war succeeded in intensifying a sense of Catalanism or Galicianism, respectively, in tandem with a 'denationalising' of their sense of Spanishness. Although this effect would be negligible in the entirety of the Spanish contingent, it seems relevant for centripetal nationalisms at a decisive point in their political development.

The First World War had a notable impact on sub-state nationalisms. Wilson's Fourteen Points seemed to augur the liberation of smaller nationalities and the end of absolute monarchies and reactionary militarism. In this context, the politician Francesc Macià became the leader of a Catalan nationalism far more radical in tendency than the *Lliga*. After the failed campaign for the Statute of Autonomy in 1918-1919, Catalanist mobilisation focused more on Morocco, viewing the Spanish militarism that held up the monarchy of Alfonso XIII as a cheap copy of the Kaiser's Prussian militarism,³¹ and wishing the same outcome for it.

In this climate of opposition to the war, the first open expressions of solidarity with the enemy appeared. In October 1919, for example, a National Catalan Committee in Barcelona circulated a pamphlet addressed 'To His Excellency El Raisuni' with texts in Arabic and Catalan

under the red flag of Yebala and the separatist *senyera* with the ‘single star’. The signatories celebrated the valiant defence of the ‘Moroccan homeland menaced by Spain’ by Raisuni, and the ‘sons of Catalonia’ sent him a ‘message of support’ which served as a reminder that it was not the first time that the Catalans had protested against the invasion of Morocco, recalling somewhat advantageously what had occurred in 1909. They also condemned the military methods of the Spanish army in Morocco and wished Raisuni good health and courage.³² In spite of being written in Arabic and Catalan, the text’s principal objective was to cause provocation, in an atmosphere of tension and confrontation that was typical in the Catalan capital at the time. Indeed, the appearance of organizations like the *Liga Patriótica Española* [Spanish Patriotic League], formed above all by officials from the Barcelona garrison, and regarded as the possibly first expression of fascism in Spain,³³ was due in some part to this tense situation.

In Galician nationalism, as in other aspects, matters proceeded at a slower pace, and it was harder to perceive this kind of empathy with the Moroccans, whether sincere or not. Antón Vilar Ponte, one of the founding fathers of Galician nationalism, made pejorative statements in this regard in 1918: ‘Throughout history, the Arab race hardly had any contact with us. Galicia remained untouched by the African influence’.³⁴ He also demonstrated that he knew very little about Moroccan affairs when referring to the territory as if it were entirely made up of desert and using Arab and Muslim as if they were synonyms. In general, there was little concern for the war amongst the leading figures of Galician nationalism such as Alfonso Castelao or Vicente Risco, although their opposition to it was clear.³⁵

Both Catalan and Basque nationalism referred to Morocco in anti-Spanish and anti-military terms, rather than anti-imperialist. The type of sympathy such as that evoked by El Raisuni was simply that of a ‘good barbarian’, which served as a contrast to the ‘barbaric methods of the

Spanish army'.³⁶ The defence of Morocco often seems more practical than sincere. After 1921 and the Disaster of Annual, the Moroccan who received the greatest sympathy was Abdelkrim. Both he and the Republic of the Rif that he founded began to be acclaimed frequently at events by groups such as *Estat Català* (Macià's party) or *Acció Catalana*.³⁷ In the case of *Euzkadi* (the Basque Country), the *Aberrri-PNV* party, which had split from *Comuni6n Tradicionalista Vasca* [Basque Traditionalist Communion], and was led by Elías Gallástegui 'Gudari', stood out.³⁸ This party defended in no uncertain terms the right of the Rifians to their independence, and even the idea of a 'Quadruple Alliance' of which the Republic of the Rif would be a member together with Euzkadi, Catalonia and Galicia. In the words of Gallástegui: 'A new and brilliant light shall shine on the Triple Alliance from the most distant southern land. Over the Strait of Gibraltar and crossing this Spain that humiliates us [...], the Quadruple Alliance shall be sealed'.³⁹ This idea would also be supported in the most radical sectors of Catalan nationalism. Gudari was very critical of the *moors* who let themselves be bought by Spain and defended those who fought against it, especially Abdelkrim, due to his defence of Moroccan independence: 'Our greeting of admiration, respect and support is sent to and for you, Moorish chief!'⁴⁰

Although less frequent in Galicia, Abdelkrim was also defended by groups such as *Irmandade Nazonalista Galega* [Galician Nationalist Brotherhood], which was firmly opposed to the war.⁴¹ In spite of his vague ideas at the beginning, Ant6n Vilar Ponte ended up exalting the 'civilized' Abdelkrim and his independent and federative Republic, which he regarded as having more opportunities to Europeanise the Rif than the 'monstruo antediluviano del Estado centralista espa6ol' [anti-diluvian monster of the centralist Spanish state], and even recognised that it could be an example for the Iberian peoples of how to attain freedom.⁴² A similar line was taken by the Ourense newspaper, *La Zarpa*, founded by the agrarian reform movement leader, Basilio lvarez. Many

figures from Galician nationalism collaborated with Álvarez, one of the most vehemently anti-war voices in Galicia. He published the articles of Xosé Ramón Fernández-Oxea and came to express a certain anti-colonialism by stating that the Rifian cause was just, that Abdelkrim was the sole hero of the war and that those who deserted the Spanish army deserved to be praised.⁴³ The poet Manuel Antonio, who defended the cause of the Rifian people and their right to self-determination, is an example of decisive anti-colonialism in the Galician case. He even urged his friend Rafael Dieste, another leading figure of Galician nationalism, to support the side of Abdelkrim or to desert.⁴⁴ These calls to refuse to do military service or desert, more habitual in the Catalan and Basque cases, hardly occurred in Galicia, which adds interest to the texts of Manuel Antonio and also make him an all too infrequent exception.

In spite of being more moderate than *Aberri*, the *Comunión Tradicionalista Vasca* also displayed a certain anti-colonialism, to a greater extent than that of the *Lliga in Catalonia*, albeit nuanced. For example, Manuel Aranzadi, one of the leaders of the group, was highly critical of Spanish imperialism, which he regarded as unjust and inhumane, and believed that Morocco should be free. This colonialism was evident and not simply pacifist, as is shown by his similar evaluation of the case of Guinea, for example, in the article 'Africa for the Africans', by Alberto Olabarría, published in *Euzkadi*, the principal mouthpiece of *Comunión Tradicionalista Vasca*.⁴⁵

The Moroccan war acted as a basis around which the nationalist mobilisation in Catalonia and Euzkadi could assemble. However, understanding of the Rifian independence movement was far less, especially in the Catalan case. A defeatism that focused on benefits such as the end of economic expenses and human lives in the war prevailed, especially in relation with forced conscription. Gudari pointed out in *Aberri* that the nationalists should unite to wage 'war on the war' and 'impede decisively that the race and youth endure a bloodbath in this

fatal tragedy for Catalonia, Galicia and Euzkadi'. Also, that 'if the Spanish wish their own territory to be respected, they must start by respecting that of others. Africa for the Africans! Spain for the Spanish! AND EUZKADI FOR THE BASQUES!'⁴⁶ In addition, the clamour for accountability for the Disaster of Annual, which had a notable repercussion in Spain, was vehemently backed by many of the nationalist formations analysed. *Aberri* harshly pointed out that 'the thousands and thousands of Spanish soldiers, and countless numbers of Basques mixed in with them, who fell there in the sun, dry and blackened, are calling for redress'. It was emphasized that they should not stop holding them accountable because it was a Spanish problem: 'the same should be demanded of the Basque race, which has lost thousands of victims on Moroccan soil and does not wish to be Spanish', and which in addition was a territory which had not been obliged to render the 'blood tribute' until 1876.⁴⁷ In the case of Galician nationalism, the Disaster of Annual strengthened vague positions against the war, which now became firmer. Nevertheless, there was a certain heterogeneity and even in progressive publications such as *A Nosa Terra*, positions that almost supported the war could be detected, such as that of Xavier Fraga: 'We were expecting that by adopting all those means and systems that could be employed in the Rif, they would impose the superiority of the civilization and organization of the Spanish state, ensuring decisively and swiftly the domination of an entire area subject to Spanish influence'.⁴⁸ However, these ideas were not shared by other Galicianists, such as Jaime Quintanilla or Antón Vilar Ponte, who had to leave the *El Correo Gallego* newspaper due to his criticisms of the war in Morocco. They were, however, defended in *A Nosa Terra*, which stated that they were being attacked for their nationalist and European ideas.⁴⁹

The dictatorship that ended the war and the road towards the Republic

Primo de Rivera's coup d'état entailed a curbing of the growth of sub-state nationalisms, upon which he waged all-out-war, as their defiance of the Spanish nation had been one of the most decisive factors in mobilizing the military. In fact, the last *Diada* (the National Day of Catalonia), on 11 September 1923, when the Republic of the Rif was cheered and a Spanish flag was destroyed, was particularly symbolic.⁵⁰ The majority of the Madrid press reported the events generally in a shocked and indignant tone. The cries of 'Long live Free Catalonia! Long live the Republic of the Rif!'⁵¹ encapsulated the two greatest concerns of a large part of the Spanish political and military classes: Catalan separatism and the war in Morocco. These had been decisive triggers for Primo de Rivera's coup d'état, which occurred just two days after these events, although its preparation had begun a long time before. Morocco, which due to the war and above all the great defeat of 1921, had been a weak point in the constitutional monarchy of Alfonso XIII, continued to be so during the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera until 1925, when the landing at Alhucemas succeeded in improving the situation for Spain.

In the Catalan case, one of the greatest changes with the dictatorship was the exile of many figures from the most belligerent ranks of nationalism, including Francesc Macià, its most active leader. Therefore, part of the nationalists' activities was undertaken from abroad, especially from France. Amongst other things, as broad an alliance as possible was prepared against the Spanish state, and the Rifians, with their struggle at the decisive point in 1923, became natural allies. This is reflected in *Butlletí de l'Estat Català*, published in Paris, which excoriates the Spanish and praises Abdelkrim and his struggle: it was seen as a model for those Catalans who did not display sufficient virility to rebel against the

occupation. They could not avoid regarding the Rifians as savages, but a political agreement was sought with the Republic of the Rif.⁵²

For Galician nationalism, the greatest blow dealt by the dictatorship was its censorship of the press, which was the principal channel through which anti-war ideas were expressed. This was unlike the situation in Euzkadi and Catalonia, where such ideas had hardly featured in the repertoire of mobilization. Magazines like *Galicia* had to close, and others ignored the war in order to avoid problems. This was not the case with nationalist groups abroad, which during this period expressed their position with greater clarity than groups elsewhere in Spain. For example, the Federation of Galician Societies of Buenos Aires spent years regarding the withdrawal from northern Africa as an important cause, equal in importance to the abolition of chartered tenancies in Galician land ownership.⁵³ During the Primo de Rivera dictatorship, their position became more radical: they declared their hope in a victory for the Rifians in order to cause the fall of the dictator and the ushering in of a Republic.⁵⁴ The *A Fouce* newspaper, in Buenos Aires, was one of the most decisively anti-colonialist publications, and in several articles defended the right of peoples to their independence and freedom, although in truth paid little attention to Morocco.⁵⁵ The only article of this publication which focussed exclusively on Morocco was from July 1930. It was written by Urbano Hermida, a member of the *Sociedade Nazionalista Pondal* [Pondal Nationalist Society] and refers to the protectionist measures applied in Spain to avoid the import of Moroccan wheat: 'Poor Morocco, they are still not brave enough to call you a colony and yet you have to endure the mistakes of the Spanish government'. In an anti-colonialist article that was highly critical of Spanish conduct throughout history, the Rifians are portrayed as brothers, and a sarcastic request made that Spain should at least make Galicia a protectorate like Morocco if the Galicians were not to attain independence.⁵⁶ Due to the ideology of its members, it is probable that *A Fouce* would have supported the

Rifians in the war as had the poet Manuel Antonio, but the magazine was launched when the campaign was in its final stage (the first issue was published in 1926).

At the end of 1924, Macià explored the effective alliance between the Catalan resistance and the Rif rebels, proposing a League of Oppressed Nations with Catalonia, Euzkadi, Galicia, the Philippines, Ireland, the Rif, Egypt and India. Macià shared Catalanism's admiration for the League of Nations, to which he wished to give a revolutionary twist, but the project remained just a theory. More viable was the *Comitè de l'Aliança Lliure* [Free Alliance Committee], which would include *Estat català*, PNV, CNT or PCE,⁵⁷ and which would try to organize an effective resistance, where the full sense of the integration of the Republic of the Rif would be evident, but interest vanished after the landing at Alhucemas. This committee in exile attempted anti-war protests, but this also proved largely unsuccessful. The last use by the nationalists of the war was in Paris in July 1926, at the great parade to which Primo de Rivera and the sultan of Morocco were invited as guests of honour, and to which *Estat Català* contributed boos and had run ins with the police.

In 1931, the Second Republic put a temporary end to the authoritarian measures of the previous decade and marked the beginning of a new period. Although it was a much more favourable moment than the preceding ones, the anti-colonialism aimed at Morocco was scarce amongst the Spanish Left, including sub-state nationalisms, which demonstrated that the most significant tendency had been against the war, and that with the end of the war, other concerns dissipated. For example, the PNV, which reunified in 1930 through the merger of *Comuni6n Tradicionalista Vasca* and the *Aberrri* group, paid hardly any attention to Morocco,⁵⁸ and this was also the case with the leading nationalist groups in Catalonia and Galicia. The Communist Party of Catalonia was one of the few during that period that regarded the self-determination of Morocco as important, although little effort was put

into the matter.⁵⁹ Furthermore, the progress made by the Republic by sub-state nationalisms in Spain was the envy of Moroccan nationalism, which in 1936 requested the right to have a statute of autonomy similar to that of Catalonia. Abdelkhalek Torres, from the Moroccan nationalist ranks in Tetuán, visited Lluís Companys after his reinstatement as president of the *Generalitat* in February 1936, and the Catalan political forces supported their requests after the start of the Civil War with a delegation sent to discuss the matter with the Largo Caballero government. However, the latter refused to grant autonomy to the Spanish protectorate of Morocco and continued to follow the policy of bribing local leaders. This was of little interest for Torres, who had already been guaranteed this by Franco and the rebels, whose power in the territory was greater. Following the failure of those negotiations, Catalanism could now use all the mythology of the *moros* against the rebels,⁶⁰ who would take on numerous 'African' features in depictions of them produced by the Republicans.

Conclusions

The Moroccan War and the Rif War, which conditioned Spanish domestic policy to such a large degree in the first decades of the twentieth century, also had a significant effect on sub-state nationalisms in Spain. Furthermore, these were at an early stage of development, unlike Spanish nationalism, which was already well-established. Precisely for this reason, the comparison with reactions to the Hispano-Moroccan War of 1859-1860 is very interesting, because it demonstrates how in just half a century there was a change in regional identities (Catalan, Basque and Galician or others) and Spanish national identity, which co-existed in perfect harmony, and the existence of new nationalisms, in this case centripetal and directly opposed to Spanish nationalism.

The differences between the different nationalist sectors in each case have also proved revealing. An anti-war and anti-colonial approach was most present in Basque nationalism, even in the more conservative sectors. On the other hand, in the Catalan case, there was support for imperialism in conservative groupings, above all at the start of the twentieth century. The majority of anti-war and all anti-colonialist positions were to be found in left-wing sectors. Galician nationalism, which did not even exist when the war began in 1909, was slower in all senses, although it has also been shown that there were cases of anti-colonialism and the anti-war position was commonly held.

The most striking positions were those of empathy and those seeking an alliance with the Rifian enemy. The former could be seen in some left-wing or even liberal outlets. However, the latter tendency was practically only found in these sub-state nationalisms because they saw Spain as the enemy and were prepared to fight against it. The examples of *Estat Català* and *Aberri*, as well as its leaders Francesc Macià and Elías Gallástegui, are the best of a tendency that was shared by sectors that were very much the minority, but which were noted for their mobilisations. Therefore, although these ideas had not become strongly established in Spain at that time, or even in Catalonia or Euzkadi, they were conspicuous, and were well known among the most fervently pro-Spanish sectors, which used them as a justification to combat what they regarded as internal enemies of the homeland.

The Disaster of Annual in 1921, which caused the start of the Rif War, was a turning point because it increased the strength of the anti-war position. It also entailed the appearance of an undisputed leader, Abdelkrim, and a political project that became a point of reference for those who believed that in northern Morocco an ally could be found to fight against the Spanish state. The other turning point was the coup d'état in 1923: it notably slowed down the mobilisation and diffusion of ideas in Spain by Catalan, Basque and Galician nationalisms. Even so,

they continued their fight, some from abroad, and most proposals were made during the Primo de Rivera dictatorship for an alliance between nationalisms that would include the Rifians.

However, in spite of the propagandistic use of the Moroccan war, radical Catalan and Basque nationalism never organized jointly in an effective manner with the cause of Abdelkrim. Furthermore, their anti-colonialism must be nuanced, as many prejudices and pejorative stereotypes continued to exist behind a rhetoric of respect and admiration. In this way, the view of the Moroccans as being savages was significantly maintained, although often the Spanish 'civilisers' were regarded as scarcely as civilised as the Moroccans were. The Rifian victories against the Spanish army and the establishment of an independent Rifian state generated fascination amongst radical nationalisms which also sought to 'gain emancipation from the Spanish protectorate',⁶¹ and they tried to approach a point of reference that was as promising as it was short-lived.

Endnotes

¹ For an overview of the conflict, see S. Balfour, *Abrazo mortal: De la guerra colonial a la Guerra Civil en España y Marruecos (1909-1939)* (Barcelona, 2002); M. R. Madariaga, *En el Barranco del Lobo. Las guerras de Marruecos* (Madrid, 2005).

² The term refers to the Rif as the entire northern area of Morocco and was a geographical reference common at that time. However, it does not cohere with administrative names, as the Rif would be just one of the regions of the Spanish protectorate established in Morocco in 1912, and the war also affected others such as Yebala and Lucus.

³ For the relationship between the conflict and the dictatorship, see S. Sueiro, *España en el Mediterráneo. Primo de Rivera y la «Cuestión Marroquí», 1923-1930* (Madrid, 1992).

⁴ For Spanish military interest in Africa, see S. Balfour & P. La Porte, 'Spanish Military Cultures and the Moroccan Wars, 1909-36', in: *European History Quarterly*, 30 (2000), 307-332. A. Iglesias Amorín, 'La cultura africanista en el Ejército español (1893-1975)', in: *Pasado y Memoria*, 15, 99-122.

⁵ A subject examined in the now classic study: A. Bachoud. *Los españoles ante las campañas de Marruecos* (Madrid, 1988).

⁶ See A. Iglesias Amorín, 'The Hispano-Moroccan Wars and the (de)nationalization of the Spanish People', in *European History Quarterly* 50/2, 290-310.

⁷ For a definition of the concept of 'nation consumption' see A. Quiroga, 'La nacionalización en España, una propuesta teórica' in *Ayer* 90/2013 (2), 31 and ff.

⁸ One of the most significant is E. Ucelay, 'Els enemics dels meus enemics. Les simpaties del nacionalisme català pels «moros»: 1900-1936', in: *L'Avenc. Dossier: El colonialisme espanyol i l'Àfrica* 28 (1980), 29-40; S. De Pablo, '¡Grita Libertad! El nacionalismo vasco y la lucha por la independencia de las naciones africanas', in: *Memoria y Civilización* 15 (2012); D. Pereira, *Galegos nas guerras do Rif. Paisaxe bélica e imaxinario anticolonial (1860-1927)* (A Coruña, 2016).

⁹ X. M. Núñez Seixas, *¡Fuera el invasor!: Nacionalismos y movilización bélica durante la guerra civil española (1936-1939)* (Madrid, 2006), 11.

¹⁰ Known in Spain as the "African War", a name regarded by historiography as pompous, and which demonstrated that at that time, Spain showed little interest in Africa beyond Morocco.

¹¹ Under the form of regionalism, as nationalism did not emerge until the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth Century.

¹² See A. García Balañà, 'Patria, plebe y política en la España isabelina: la guerra de África en Cataluña (1859-1860)', in E. Martín Corrales (ed.), *Marruecos y el colonialismo español [1859-1912]* (Barcelona, 2002), 27 and ff.

¹³ See X. M. Núñez Seixas (ed.), *La construcción de la identidad nacional en Europa y España (siglos XIX y XX)*, monograph of the journal *Ayer*, no. 64 (2006).

- ¹⁴ See Iglesias Amorín, 'The Hispano-Moroccan Wars'.
- ¹⁵ X. M. Núñez Seixas, 'Irlanda', in: S. De Pablo, De la Granja, J. L., Mees, L., et al. (eds.), *Diccionario ilustrado de simbolos del nacionalismo vasco* (Madrid, 2012), 547.
- ¹⁶ Troops of the crown of Aragón, famous for their role in the medieval conquests by that kingdom in the Mediterranean.
- ¹⁷ García Balañà, 'Patria, plebe y política...', 27 and ff.
- ¹⁸ R. Olivar, *El caballero Prim (vida íntima, amorosa y militar)* (Barcelona, 1952), 221.
- ¹⁹ Concerning this patriotism displayed, see A. Cajal Valaero, 'La Guerra de África (1859-1860) y las expresiones patrióticas en el País Vasco', in M. Esteban de Vega & M^a D. de Calle Velasco (eds.), *Procesos de nacionalización en la España contemporánea* (Salamanca, 2010).
- ²⁰ J. Beramendi & S. Taboada, 'Guerras y nacionalización en la Galicia del siglo XIX', in: Esteban & Velasco, *Procesos de nacionalización*, 226.
- ²¹ The words used to describe the Basque case by F. Molina Aparicio, *La tierra del martirio español. El País Vasco y España en el siglo del nacionalismo* (Madrid, 2005), 44.
- ²² E. Martín Corrales, 'La Conferencia de Algeciras en la prensa catalana: entre el pragmatismo económico de *La Vanguardia* y el imperialismo orsiano de *La Veu de Catalunya*' in: E. Martín Corrales & J. A. González Alcantud (eds.), *La Conferencia de Algeciras en 1906: un banquete colonial* (Barcelona, 2007), 220. See also E. Ucelay-Da Cal, *El imperialismo catalán. Prat de la Riba, Cambó, D'Ors y la conquista moral de España* (Barcelona, 2003).
- ²³ Ucelay, 'Els enemics dels meus enemics', 31.
- ²⁴ E. Prat de la Riba. *La nacionalitat catalana* (Barcelona, 1934), 103-104.
- ²⁵ Pablo, '¡Grita Libertad!', 270.
- ²⁶ For example, he referred to Spanish immigrants in *Euzkadi* as 'nuestros moros' ['our Moors']: S. Arana, 'nuestros moros', in *Bizcaitarra*, 17/2/1897.
- ²⁷ See J. Connelly, *La Semana Trágica* (Barcelona, 2009).
- ²⁸ Ucelay, 'Els enemics dels meus enemics', 33.

²⁹ J. M. Prous i Vila, *Cuatro gotas de sangre* (Barcelona, 2011), 42. Enric Ucelay tells the anecdote of a group of Catalan peasants sent to Morocco in 1922 who agreed not to shoot anyone because the Rifians were peasants just like them: Ucelay, 'Els enemics dels meus enemics', 33.

³⁰ Ben-Cho-Shey, *Crónicas de Marruecos* (Barcelona, 2005).

³¹ Ucelay, 'Els enemics dels meus enemics', 36.

³² Ibid.

³³ X. Casals i Meseguer, 'Auge y declive del 'partido militar' de Barcelona (1898-1936)', in: *Iberic@l. Revue d'études ibériques et ibéro-américaines* 4 (2013), 176.

³⁴ A. Vilar Ponte, 'A visita do rei moro', in: *A Nosa Terra*, 30/7/1918, 3.

³⁵ A. Iglesias Amorín, 'El nacionalismo gallego y la independencia de Marruecos', in: E. Martín Corrales & J. Pich Mitjana (eds.), *España frente a la independencia de Marruecos* (Bellaterra, 2017), 305.

³⁶ Ucelay, 'Els enemics dels meus enemics', 36.

³⁷ Madariaga. *En el Barranco del Lobo*, 200; S. G. Payne. *Los militares y la política en la España Contemporánea* (Paris, 1968), 161.

³⁸ The *Aberrri* group recovered the traditional name of *Partido Nacionalista Vasco* [Basque Nationalist Party], which had been abandoned by the mainstream (which opted for a moderate strategy seeking first political autonomy and not direct independence). The CNV also opposed the war in Morocco, although with less forcefulness than the sector which in 1921 would found the *Partido Nacionalista Vasco*. See A. Ugalde Zubiri. *La Acción Exterior del Nacionalismo Vasco (1890-1939): Historia, Pensamiento y Relaciones Internacionales* (Bilbao, 1996), 286-287.

³⁹ Gudari, 'Triple Alianza', in: *Aberrri*, 15/7/1923, 1.

⁴⁰ Ugalde Zubiri, *La Acción Exterior del Nacionalismo Vasco*, 303. The project of Abdelkrim was actually not Moroccan but specifically Rifian, although Gallástegui did not allude to this.

⁴¹ As confirmed by Dionisio Pereira for the branches of Santiago, Ourense, A Coruña, Viveiro or Muxía: Pereira, *Galegos nas guerras do Rif*, 61.

⁴² Pereira, *Galegos nas guerras do Rif*, 63.

⁴³ See, for example, *La Zarpa*, 28/7/1922, 1.

⁴⁴ Manoel Antonio to Rafael Dieste, undated letter, October 1921. Quoted in Pereira, *Galegos nas guerras do Rif*, 43.

⁴⁵ Ugalde Zubiri, *La Acción Exterior del Nacionalismo Vasco*, 347.

⁴⁶ Gudari, 'La primera preocupación de la triple alianza', in: *Aberri*, 31/7/1923, 1; 'La aventura española de Marruecos va a reanudarse trágicamente', in: *Aberri*, 24/7/1923, p. 1.

⁴⁷ Gudari, 'El proceso de Berenguer. El País Vasco debe exigir responsabilidades', in: *Aberri*, 27/6/1923, 1.

⁴⁸ X. Fraga, 'O pesadelo de Marrocos: hai que rectificar os procedementos', in: *A Nosa Terra*, 1/9/1923, 1.

⁴⁹ 'Um xornal que quere a escravitude da Terra', in: *A Nosa Terra*, 15/12/1921, 4.

⁵⁰ J. L. Vila-San Juan, *La vida cotidiana en España durante la dictadura de Primo de Rivera* (Barcelona, 1984), 15.

⁵¹ As reported in many newspapers. See for example 'Banquete de separatistas', in: *La Voz*, 11/9/1923, 1. 'Gritos antiespañoles, cargas, heridos y detenciones', in: *El Sol*, 12/9/1921, 1.

⁵² See for example 'Al Marroc ataquen. L'exemple al Marroc', in: *Butlletí de l'Estat Català*, 3 (August 1924), 3; 'Com parlen els patriotes i com actúen', in: *Butlletí de l'Estat Català*, 5 (1 October 1924), 2; 'L'abandó del Marroc', in: *Butlletí de l'Estat Català*, 5 (1 October 1924), 3.

⁵³ Agrarian contracts that were medieval in origin and whose duration was lengthy and often perpetual. They were a burden for the Galician peasantry until they were finally abolished in 1926.

⁵⁴ X. M. Núñez Seixas, *Emigrantes, caciques e indianos* (Vigo, 1998), 296; 301.

⁵⁵ The most numerous references alluded to Irish nationalism; references to cases such as those of India, China or Egypt were also habitual.

⁵⁶ U. Hermida, 'Irmáns do Rif', in: *A Fouce*, 16 (1/6/1930), 4.

⁵⁷ CNT: *Confederación Nacional del Trabajo* [National Confederation of Labour], a trade union organization whose ideology was anarchist; PCE: Communist Party of Spain.

⁵⁸ In 1934 the occupation of Ifni was scrutinized, making the matter relevant again, but this was an exceptional case.

⁵⁹ Ucelay, 'Els enemics dels meus enemics', 39

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 40

⁶¹ 'La triple alianza de la península', in: *Aberrí*, 28/7/1923, 1.