The Fatherland and Religion in Spanish Catholicism: From turn-of-the-century decline to the Rif War (c.1898-1923)

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The idea that Spain was fundamentally a Catholic nation at its very core was commonly put forth by Catholics throughout of the nineteenth century and competed with opposing liberal models of the nation (Álvarez Junco 2001, 305-496, 2013; Alonso 2014; Villalonga 2012, 2014). This tension was especially palpable during the so-called Sexenio democrático (1868-1874), when the constitutionally recognized right of religious liberty was seen to threaten the nation's Catholic unity upon which the moderate liberal state had been built (Portillo Valdés 2000; Millán and Romeo 2016, 149-183). Since then, clashes between confessional and secular views were infused with a nationalistic element that remained present in political and religious discourse until the 1930s (Louzao 2013b). This struggle over the identity of the Spanish nation finds analogues in other European countries (e.g. France and Italy) where the culture wars between clerical and anticlerical groups put the identity of the nation (i.e. religious or secular) at the centre of political debate up until the First World War (Clark and Kaiser 2003; Lebovics 1992; Haupt and Langewiesche 2004).

Although the oligarchic liberal regime of the Bourbon Restoration (1875-1923) did constitutionally recognise the right to engage in different types of private worship, it nevertheless maintained the state's religious affiliation. Furthermore, it sought the Church's acquiescence in distancing itself from Carlism and ensuring the stability of the political system. As a result, the importance of the Church increased in terms of ideology, education and social welfare. Despite the integralism of a large part of the clergy, the Spanish Church opted for a possibilist approach to the situation and cozied up to the liberal regime, at once accepting it as the lesser evil while also maintaining a theoretical opposition to liberalism. As a result, the Church constantly advocated for strengthening the confessional character of the Spanish state and society and sought to eliminate tolerance for private worship on the grounds that this sort of religious acceptance would undermine the Catholic unity of the nation that had been established in the Concordat of 1851 (Robles 1988; Callahan 2003, 33-125; Revuelta González 2005; Montero 2008, 2017; Rey Reguillo 2017).

The patriotic dimension of Catholicism in Spain, which could already be seen in the Catholic propaganda of the nineteenth century, was accentuated following the Disaster of 1898 and the loss of the final vestiges of Spain's empire. The present article analyses both the discourse as well as actions and policies through which non-Carlist Catholic movement promoted and normalised the Catholic image of Spain from the end of the nineteenth century until the beginning of the 1920s.[1] The anticlerical fervour of the first decade of the twentieth century served to mobilise Catholics who called for the re-Catholicisation of Spanish society for the benefit of religion and the fatherland. The experience of the First World War led to the greater inclusion of patriotic arguments in philo-German Catholic discourse. Recourse to the fatherland and its identity as

[1] The present study does not analyse the political culture of Basque and Catalan nationalisms, which from the end of the nineteenth century incorporated Catholic and/or conservative elements (Louzao 2013c; Canales Serrano 2006); nor does it explore conservative liberalism, which saw Spain as a Catholic nation, but did not share the antiliberal thesis of the Catholic movement (Martorell 2015).

exclusively Catholic were significantly reinforced during the insecurity unleashed by the crisis of the liberal Restoration from 1917 onwards. Through an examination of various Catholic publications that linked the defence of religion to the wellbeing of the nation, the present paper also analyses the repercussions of the Catalan nationalist movement in 1918-1919 and the Rif War, two events that only augmented the centrality of the fatherland for the Catholic discourse of the period. All these events and debates unfolded in the context of a severe economic crisis and stark social division, in which the prospect of revolution unleashed Catholics and conservatives' worst anxieties about looming social disorder (Romero Salvadó 2002, 2014; Hispán 2017).

Healing the nation through Catholicism: From turn-of-the-century decline to Catholic philo-Germanism during the First World War

In the wake of Germany's victory over France in 1870, the theme of the Western Mediterranean's decline increasingly gained traction in European public discourse. Foreign publications that enjoyed a wide circulation in turn-of-the-century Spain placed the blame for this perceived trend on the influence of Catholicism and religious education, which was said to raise people to become dogmatic and reactionary (Litvak 1980, 1990, 158ff.). While this fuelled a certain liberal-republican interpretation of Spanish history (Fox 1997; Suárez Cortina 2000; Duarte 2005, 2013; Salomón Chéliz 2009, 2010), it also allowed Catholics to cast the debate in religious terms; going beyond the comparison in works like *Las naciones católicas y las protestantes* (1903; Flamerion 190-?), Catholics actually buttressed their arguments in favour of re-Catholicising Spanish society and having the fatherland return to religion as a means of overcoming its perceived decline.

The Catholic view of Spain's history was solidified during the last decades of the nineteenth century in the oeuvre of Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo (Botti 1992; Pellistrandi 2002; Suárez Cortina 2012; Morales Moya 2013; Álvarez Junco 2013). In his interpretation, the Catholic Monarchs had unified Spain politically and religiously after driving the Muslims out of Granada. With the discovery of America, these monarchs were carrying out Spain's providentially sanctioned mission of evangelizing the new world. Under the leadership of the Emperor Charles V and Philip II, Menéndez Pelayo argued, the Spanish monarchy became the bastion of the Catholic faith in opposition to the Protestant Reformation in Europe and the rise of the Ottomans in the Mediterranean.

Following the grandeur of the rule of the Austrians, who had turned Spain into the "the Church's standard-bearer" and the champions of local liberty, the Bourbons ushered in a period of decline during the eighteenth century, a trend that continued throughout the nineteenth century under the influence of liberalism. In addition to quashing municipal freedom, the Bourbons and liberalism introduced various foreign trends and ideas (e.g. encyclopaedism, *regalism*, Freemasonry or revolution), all of which were foreign to the national spirit and led to the further degradation of the nation. Overcoming these trends meant "reaffirming Spain's Catholic character as the nation's unifying principle." This was the only way of recovering the soul of the nation and of continuing with its age-old role as the chosen nation (Juliá 2004, 53-57; Suárez Cortina 2008; Burrieza Sánchez 2019, 75-195). According to Menéndez Pelayo, Catholicism was the purest manifestation of Spanishness and the nation, "a good that was dependent upon and subordinate to religion" (Varela 1999, 54).

This Catholic interpretation of Spain's history seeped into countless educational materials used in primary and secondary education (Boyd 2000). However, it was in the religious writings of the Church hierarchy as well as Catholic press and media, which was increasingly prolific at the height of the society of the masses, where the national-Catholic

vision of Spain as antiliberal, essentialist, historicist and providential really took root (Hibbs-Lissorgues 1995; Ruiz Sánchez 2002; Pellistrandi 2013; Moliner Prada 2016). Following the version of history put forth in the works of Menéndez Pelayo, the Church hierarchy as well as the Catholic publications defended the Catholic unity of the nation as the foundation of the "national Constitution." The separation of Church and State or tolerance towards religious liberty were seen as an attack on the Catholic core of the nation and, as a result, a threat to the fatherland. Anyone who championed these ideas were censured harshly. This was not only true of republicans, socialists and anarchists, but also of those who sought to square liberalism with Catholicism (Suárez Cortina 2008, 2014, 2019).

The colonial fiasco only bolstered the power of the claim that a Catholic reconquest was the necessary basis for the nation's recovery (Botti 1997; Louzao 2013, 75-76), as can be seen in the publications emanating from the Apostolado de la Prensa, a Catholic association of laymen that was created in 1891 that grew to be one of the principle organs dedicated to the mass diffusion of Catholic propaganda up to 1936. Father Fita, a member of the Real Academia de la Historia, praised the Apostolado de la Prensa for its contribution to "the good of religion and the fatherland" (*La Correspondencia de España*, 20 January 1897). A theological-moral critique of the causes of the nation's crisis and possible remedies permeated the pages of the free pamphlets published by the Apostolado de la Prensa (Salomón Chéliz 2018a; *Catálogo de las publicaciones del Apostolado de la Prensa* 1915).

Among the causes that were most frequently cited, we find irreligiosity, immorality and abandonment of the faith, all of which were said to be running rampant throughout the nation. Yes, Spain was sick, but not yet dead, they proclaimed, and could be cured only by the hand of God. The true path forward could be seen in the nation's own history, which, according to these providentialist national-Catholic interpretations, clearly showed the strict correlation between the nation's successes (and failures) and religious unity (or lack thereof). The comparison of the years 1808 and 1898 was taken as especially illustrative: if victory in the War of Independence could be attributed to the uprising of an essentially Catholic nation to ward off French invasion, the defeat of 1898 represented a divine punishment for abandoning the Catholic soul of the nation after a century of liberalism (Álvarez Junco 2001, 390-391; Juliá 2004, 46-57).

The publications of the Apostolado de la Prensa superimposed a sense of national sorrow, which was characteristic of turn-of-the-century regenerationism, upon this historical-theocratic and providentialist portrait of the nation. As a result, the Catholic Spain of the past was ennobled. In a strand of populism, this discourse idealised the good Catholic citizenry whose virtues, which were principally embodied by the peasantry, were offered up as a panacea for the moral degeneration prevalent in liberal society. This discourse called upon the good Catholic folk and therefore the majority of Spaniards who considered themselves Catholics. It only rejected those who had delivered Spain into claws of irreligiosity and immorality, a group that was depicted as a limited cohort of power-hungry and corrupt parvenus that had usurped power or, at the very least, were able to wield influence over politicians to the detriment of religion and the Church. The nation's Catholic majority had to rid itself of this irreligious, self-serving minority. This was the Catholic version of regenerationist critiques of oligarchy and the system of caciquism that contrasted real Spain and the majority of the people to Spanish elite and ruling class (Salomón Chéliz 2018a).

The remedy to the crisis required the reestablishment of a strict Catholic unity in the Constitution and the subjugation of law and customs to the guiding principles of

religion: this was the only way to do away with the immorality that was devouring Spain. Important Church leaders, such as Cardenal Cascajares, signed onto these religious arguments, championing the regeneration of the nation by returning to its Catholic essence (Botti 1997; Andrés Gallego 1971; Montero 1997; Berzal de la Rosa 1998; Cuenca Toribio 2001). The Church hierarchy and the larger non-Carlist Catholic community did not question the liberal regime of the Restoration, even if they had rejected popular sovereignty as the legitimate source of political power. Despite antiliberal sentiment, they advocated for the formation of a Catholic political block so that they could at least exercise sizeable influence over the political process, whether on the local or national level.

The regeneration of the fatherland was equally linked to another key issue: the regeneration of the family according to Christian values. Nineteenth-century Catholic propaganda had tasked women with the essential duty solidifying Catholicism within the family so as to counteract the liberal ideas that pervaded the public square (Mínguez 2016; Romeo 2017); Catholic women continued to embrace this duty well into the following century when they increased their area of operation to include the public square (Blasco Herranz 2002, 2017; Arce 2008; Moral 2012). What was new at the close of the century was the growing attention that Catholic publications paid to the definition of Catholic masculinity: a religious version of the ideal modern male would emerge that was based on a respectable virility that was being progressively defined since the end of the nineteenth century (Aresti et al. 2016; Blasco Herranz 2018). This emerging ideal would be solidified during the first decade of the twentieth century with relation to the conflict between clericalism and anti-clericalism in Spanish society (Núñez Bargueño 2016).

A careful analysis of the publications of Apostolado de la Prensa reveals that the redefinition of religious masculinity did not exclude reference to the nation. The proposed religious regeneration of the fatherland entailed the spreading of a new definition of Catholic masculinity that put forth a version of manhood which, buoyed by a faith in God and a love for the fatherland, was both compatible with piety and also waging war against secularisation and liberalism. This virility could easily be embodied by a proselytising partisan who was dedicated to spreading propaganda and participating in Catholic undertakings in the public sphere or, equally, by a father who was involved in the education of his offspring, without his piety and dedication to his family impinging on his manliness or authority. In either case, men were expected to be involved in public movements in defence of religion and, as a result, the nation. Directed by a small group of leaders, according to the antiliberal, elitist and paternalistic view of politics and society held by these Catholics, they were to work towards the union of Catholics to wage "the Lord's battle and … regenerate Spain …. Because of and for Christ. With the cross and Spanish flag" (*Causas de la catástrofe de España y su remedio* 1899, 60; Salomón Chéliz 2018a and 2018b).

As we can see, reference to the Spanish nation was a key ingredient in a series of arguments proffered by Catholic publications to mobilize Catholics in the public square at the turn of the century. However, due to the influence of Carlism and the clash between integralists and possibilists, securing the political unity of Catholics proved impossible and accordingly led to prioritising action in the social realm. When Leo XIII welcomed Spanish pilgrims in Rome in April 1894, he urged them to promote social Catholicism in favour of "the interests of religion and the fatherland" (Vicent [1893] 1972, 98). The Church hierarchy would go on to employ similar terminology from the end of the century onwards (Andrés Gallego 1975).

These calls from Church leadership and the Catholic media to support the fatherland could come as a surprise, if we remember the harsh criticism of nationalism in the *Syllabus* (1864). That said, the Holy See's stance on the issue had gradually evolved. As Daniele Menozzi has shown, Leo XIII (1873-1903) began to look upon national aspirations positively, as long as nations remained subordinate to ecclesiastical law and recognized Catholicism as a fundamental aspect of the national identity. Later, Pius X (1903-1914) went so far as to proclaim that patriotism was compatible with Catholic doctrine, when understood as "a manifestation of an active and diligent participation in public life to improve the fatherland" according to Catholic principles (Menozzi 2013, 25).

Taking up these views, social Catholicism under the protection of the *Rerum Novarum* (1891) would help instil a political culture in Spain that was fundamentally based on the idea of the nation as Catholic and antiliberal that was compatible with the possibilism of the "lesser evil" in political practice. Different confessional groups that were dedicated to cultic, charitable, social, educational and propagandistic activities made up the Catholic-social associative network, thus contributing to an informal process of nationalisation of Spaniards (Salomón Chéliz 2018a; Ramón Solans 2015).

In the first decade of the twentieth century, this was carried out in a context marked by anticlerical protests and hence called for the mobilisation of Catholics in the public sphere for the sake of interests of religion and the fatherland. The glorious deeds from the nation's past that were made possible by faith as well as other historical references that tied religion to the fatherland were used to spur on this mobilisation. This process relied on a discourse filled with antiliberal elements and references to martyrs in which local and/or regional identities were closely associated with Spain's national identity, though they were given a subordinate position. The clash between Catholicism and secularism and the resulting mobilisation were one of the principle means for nationalising people, since in this conflict two different visions of the nation (one liberal, the other Catholic) gave way to a dispute that was not limited to the realm of politics but also spilled over into other aspects of local and everyday life, providing many different forms of engagement and activism (Louzao 2008, 2013a, 2013b; Salomón Chéliz 2009 and 2010).

One of the most common methods of doing this was through religious ceremonies that were organized to underscore the overwhelmingly Catholic nature of Spaniards; this was a means of marking a clear contrast with the policies of liberal governments to secularise society, even if these policies were not overly ambitious (Cueva Merino 2000). Among the most common devotional practices, those related to the Sacred Heart and the groups dedicated to the Virgin took on notable nationalizing resonances. The number of collectively organized pilgrimages to the holy sites dedicated to the Virgin Mary drastically increased starting in 1900, especially those dedicated to the Virgen del Pilar in Zaragoza, where Church leaders tried to replicate the sorts of pilgrimages to the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes in France (Louzao 2010, 2013a, 2015; Ramón Solans 2012, 2014a, 2014b, 2015). We also must point to role played by masses, collective communion services and romerias, especially those organized for the summer and fall of 1910 against the liberal agenda that sought to limit the growth of the religious orders (the so-called "padlock law" promulgated by José Canalejas). Participants were referred to as the "honoured masses… the true representation of the Fatherland" by the Catholic weekly *El Pilar* (11 October 1910).

Catholic social associationism also embraced more modern forms of organization, such as the rallies and protests organized in 1906 and 1910 to oppose the government's

liberal secularizing policies (e.g. civil marriage or the "padlock law" [Cueva Merino 1999, 2000]). Such forms of collective action linked the local with the national and led to the increasing appeals to the fatherland within Catholic discourse. In this light we can appreciate the protest against the radical Republican Alejandro Lerroux when he visited Zaragoza at the end of 1909: members of the Caja obrera de la Inmaculada wanted to make known "their love of religion, monarchy and the fatherland" with a protest against Lerroux, whom they blamed for the torching of churches and convents in Barcelona during the Tragic Week of the previous summer (*Heraldo de Aragón*, 6 December 1909).

The Rules of Catholic Social Action in Spain, which were promulgated by Cardenal Aguirre at the outset of 1910, emphasized the importance of distributing propaganda and encouraging Catholic social action to increase Catholics' chances of achieving a social reconquest. Likewise, the Cardenal called for Catholics to unite politically, hailing as "worthy of the Church and Fatherland" whoever ran for office on a platform for reforming laws "in Religion's favour" to benefit the people (Aldea et al. 1987, vol. I, 215-221; Andrés Gallego 1984, 340-343 and 348-350). Despite their meager success at the ballot box, Catholic leagues consistently used appeals to the fatherland in their electoral campaigns throughout the first decade of the twentieth century. The elections held for local assemblies in the spring of 1910 demonstrated the extent to which candidates mutually defined themselves in national terms: at a rally the republicans from Zaragoza, for instance, denied being "the enemies of religion, the family, the army or the fatherland"; thus, they sought to refute the critiques found in Catholic propaganda that accused them of converting the people into "a community of apostates and slaves, anti-patriots and bad Spaniards" (Lucea 2012, XCIV-XCV).

After more than a decade of confrontation over the defence of the religiosity of the state and society against anticlerical actions and secularising proposals, appeals to the fatherland and its identification with Catholicism had become recurrent elements in the discourse of Spanish Catholicism. Beginning with the First World War, however, these appeals intensified significantly. The debate between philo-German and pro-ally factions, which were constantly clashing, began to supplant the debate that had previously been cast in terms of clerical and anticlerical positions. Despite the shifting terms of conversation, this change did not lead to any meaningful shift in the makeup of groups leading these debates (Fuentes Codera 2013 and 2014).

The majority of the hierarchy of the Spanish Church as well as the Catholic press defended philo-German positions, mostly due to their opposition to the secular France of the Third Republic. Between Germanophilia and neutrality, Spanish Catholics only reinforced their claims about the Catholic nation: they rejected the French model of the separation of Church and State and also identified the Germanic values of hierarchy, discipline and order as what was needed in Spain. The country's leading Catholic newspaper, *El Debate*, went so far as to identify neutrality with Spanishness ("Neutrality is a pro-Spanish position," (31 August 1916) against the pro-ally sentiment that claimed that Spanish involvement in the war would improve the country's international standing and help it overcome its decline (Guasch 1986, 233-234). The coupling of neutrality with patriotism was used in electoral campaigns in order to mobilise the Catholic vote against liberal candidates, including in municipal elections for village assemblies (*Hogar y Pueblo*, 18 January 1918; 15 February 1918).

The war and controversy over the country's neutrality shined the spotlight on the nation in such a way that words like fatherland, nation, patriotic/antipatriotic increasingly appeared in Catholic discourse, something that also holds true for social Catholicism (Salomón Chéliz 2020). For example, at the inauguration of the new facilities at the Casa

Social Católica of Valladolid, which was one of the leading social-Catholic associations in the country (November 1915), Catholic workers' groups could be heard calling for the regeneration of the Fatherland (Aldea et al. 1987, vol. I, 357-367 and 373-377). Another revealing example was the name change of the Catholic social publication *Friend of the Poor*, published in Gijón: the newspaper, which in 1913 was seen as a model for other Catholic publications due to its use of popular and accessible language (Aldea et al. 1987, vol. I, 303), was renamed *Religion and Fatherland* starting in January 1917.

Though Spain remained neutral, the war led to the normalisation of the rhetoric of struggle on behalf of the fatherland and the use of a more combative lexicon. Catholics also came to weave patriotism into arguments in favour of their social-political undertakings, especially beginning in the summer of 1917 when the spectre of revolution was spreading through Europe and loomed over Spain.

The use of Fatherland and Religion to save Spain from revolution and socialism.

From its beginnings, social Catholicism was decidedly anti-socialist (Vicent [1893] 1972; López Peláez 1912; Montero 2012). When Cardinal Aguirre laid out the rules governing the federation of Catholic social work in 1912, he stressed that the foundation of the social order was based on "Religion, Family and Property." He went on to disdain as "antisocial and antipatriotic" any undertaking on behalf of workers' rights that did not conform to Catholic social doctrine (Aldea et al. 1987, vol. I, 215-221 and 225-238). Severino Aznar, a leading Catholic social ideologue during the first decades of the twentieth century, shared the belief that spreading social Catholicism and defeating socialism were absolutely necessary for the survival and wellbeing of Catholic Spain. He made this explicit when the crisis of the summer of 1917 appeared to portend the end of the liberal regimen of the Restoration, urging Catholics to social action as the best antidote against revolution (*La Lectura Dominical*, 1 September 1917).

Though the situation in Spain was clearly different from that in Russia, in 1917 revolution seemed a plausible threat (Romero Salvadó 2017). In August, the crisis reached its climax with the general strike organized by socialists in response to the miserable socio-economic situation in which the Spanish population found itself as a consequence of fallout of the First World War (González Calleja 2017). The Catholic Union of Spanish Rail Workers strongly rejected the strike on the grounds that it brought to a screeching halt agricultural production, industry, commerce and the nation's communication systems, which amounted to an "indirect war waged against the Fatherland" (*El Debate*, 7 August 1917). There were scores of similar articles found in the confessional press in which Catholic rail workers were praised for recognising that the strike was not a professional but rather revolutionary undertaking. The Catholic press systematically demonised revolutionary labour organizations as illegal, anarchic and antipatriotic. All the while they lionized the Catholic unions due to their strictly professional and apolitical conduct. These claims of being apolitical were a staple of Catholic discourse and failed to recognise an inherent contradiction: they justified their action in terms of defending the fatherland and political order and hence were in no way apolitical (Salomón Chéliz 2020).

Thanks to the documentation compiled in the archive of the Jesuit Father Nevares, who was a leading advocate of Catholic unionism in collaboration with the Marquis of Comillas (Aldea et al. 1987), we know that the First World War and its socio-political fallout influenced the inclusion of both patriotic arguments into Catholic discourse and also those about order between Catholic unionism, which was the nucleus of Catholic social action that sought to confront socialism and revolution in order to strengthen the

social order for the sake of religion and the fatherland (Castillo 1977; Cuesta 1978; Cuenca 2003). In January 1913 the Catholic Union of Spanish Rail Workers, which was one of the most influential associations in the Catholic labour movement, included no allusions to patriotism in its foundational documents (Aldea et al. 1987, vol. I, 304-306). By the summer of 1917, however, the language of patriotism had become commonplace, even appearing in the manifestos written by the workers' committees over the option of joining or not joining the general strike.

Sometimes implicitly, sometimes explicitly, Catholic social discourse drew a parallel between the leading role of faith in the accomplishment of the glorious deeds of the past and what needed to be done at the present time to secure the reconquest of society through social initiatives. Catholic unionism was called forth to restore the fatherland and race by participating in the pressing struggle against socialism, which was couched in terms that could take on the martyrological proportions that had become typical of Catholic political culture (Cueva Merino, 1999 and 2000). A telegram from a local of the Gijón chapter of the Catholic union from August 1917 stated that it would continue working: "before giving into the revolutionary temptation, we prefer to die defending the Fatherland. Our flag triumphantly flies over the disastrous socialist house" (*El Debate,* 24 August 1917).

It became normal to use overtly bellicose diction to refer to the union struggle so as to demonise the adversary as the enemy of the fatherland that had to be defeated like an invading army. The proper types of action and behaviour that were supported by the Catholic rail workers from Valladolid, a group that was called "patriotic" in *El Debate*, proposed as the first order of business expelling from the Compañía de Caminos de Hierros del Norte the "anarchists" and "revolutionaries," on the grounds that "a nation's rail system [cannot] be entrusted to those who betray the Fatherland" (21 August 1917). The objectives of the Catholic labour movement thus seemed to veer away from the recognition of workers to give priority to the destruction of socialism, for the salvation of the fatherland and the glory of religion.

The defence of both religion and the nation against socialism would require the participation of the manly Catholic working class, a group that gained a place of certain prominence in Catholic social discourse directed towards working people, especially from 1917 onwards (Salomón Chéliz 2020). The projected image of working Catholics placed a premium on liberty and independence as well as goodness, self-sacrifice, bravery and strength, all seen as attributes of Catholic men whose virility merged with Catholic activism. This imagery drew on the discourse of Catholic social action concerning masculinity that had first appeared in the late nineteenth century, though we can now see new features of the ideal Catholic working man in terms of his ability to remain free and impervious to the pressure from the socialist labour movement. Thus, an example of Catholic social propaganda from Valladolid that supported Catholic rail workers described these Catholic men as free, virile and patriotic, while also stressing the activist and working-class character of its unions, totally separate from the yellow unionism and strike breaking that their rivals desired (*El Debate*, 19 November 1917).

The ubiquity of patriotic expressions in the discourse of the Catholic labour movement attests to the way in which the associations that comprised it functioned as informal builders of a national and Catholic identity, which was, strictly speaking, outside of realm of politics but nevertheless wielded a meaningful influence over the political realm (Quiroga, 2013). This happened in agricultural areas with farmers with small or very small holdings in the northern half of Spain, where we can see the dual process of socialisation along the lines of Religion and Fatherland unfolding in rural communities.

A good example comes from the province of Soria in the spring 1918: in Roa, one of the conferences given in the Catholic Circle after Holy Week was dedicated to the theme of Religion and the Fatherland, "stressing the dangers that Spain found itself in as well as the country's moral resurgence under the influence of the Fatherland and Religion." At the Workers' Circle of Burgo de Osma one could see the national flag flying as well as other banners with the nation's colours during the local celebrations in honour of the patron San José (*Hogar y Pueblo*, 8 March, 5 and 26 April 1918). The local organ of the Diocesan Social Action to which these towns belonged defended Religion and the Fatherland as "holy and a sign" of the political action of Catholics, strongly urging them to vote in favour of unity among right-wing movements and against the liberals (*Hogar y Pueblo*, 15 February and 1 March 1918).

On the national level, the Central Council of Catholic Action, led by the Marquis of Comillas, called for the political unity of Catholics in "defence of Religion and the Fatherland" in November of 1918, with a manifesto teeming with patriotic allusions that was released at the end of the war in anticipation of the new government that was expected to be filled with liberals. The speeches from some of subsequent rallies that were led by the National Catholic Association of Propagandists (ACNdP) championed the notion of establishing authority and social order over the masses in terms of "Religion, Fatherland, Property and Monarchy" (Guasch 1986, 290-293). According to the canon Maximiliano Arboleya, who was recognized as a promoter of Catholic unionism and had been critical of the Marquis of Comillas, there was much talk of revolution and Bolshevism in right-wing circles during the fall of 1918, after a year of increasing social tensions (Arboleya 1918, 1921).

It was principally among rail workers and miners that Catholic unionism made serious inroads between 1917 and 1920 despite the fierce competition with socialist organizers, whom they accused of being motivated by a "materialist and antipatriotic spirit." These were heated and volatile years in which Catholic unionism was not only able to secure its presence among agrarian workers through the foundation of the National Confederation of Agrarian Unions in 1917, but also sought to expand its influence among industrial workers. The National Conference of Catholic Workers, which was held in Madrid in April 1919 in hopes of settling existing disputes over the role of religion and the participation of management in the unions, did not manage to reconcile opposing views. Those who supported free unions left the conference in protest, leading to the acceptance of religion and management in the Catholic unions, the very views that had been defended by the Marquis of Comillas and a large part of the Church hierarchy (Castillo, 1977, 116-217; Benavides Gómez 1978, 289-332). As the rules governing the organisation of industrial workers that were adopted during the conference maintained, the unions would become a crucial part of the corporate organization to which social Catholics aspired so that they could intervene in "the nation's public life," acting as "instruments of social pacification" (Aldea et al. 1987, vol. II, 857).

"Religion, Family and Property" continued to be the pillars of the social order that Catholic unionism championed. Even though they had not yet explicitly added the fatherland to this platform, it nevertheless was already becoming a central element and recurring theme to which leaders of the Catholic labour movement, such as Vicente Madera or Agustín Ruiz, would turn. If in 1913 the manifesto of the Catholic Union of Spanish Rail Workers did not include a single reference to the fatherland, by 1918 the manifesto of the National Union of Miners concluded with a section entitled "Morality and patriotism" in which both of these were identified as key values guiding the union's actions. The same claim also appears at the end of the Programme Manifesto of the

Catholic Workers' Unionisation, which was adopted in 1920 and sought to form a National Union of Catholic Workers that would envelop all existing Catholic unions (Aldea et al. 1987, vol. II, 738-382 and 921-94).

Healthy Catholic regionalism or how to confront non-Spanish nationalist visions

Together with the threat of revolution, another factor helped to reinforce the national Spanish vision held by Catholics beginning with the final stages of the First World War: demands for Catalan nationalism, which had gained more steam thanks to the notion of nationality put forth by Woodrow Wilson for settling territorial disputes in Europe during the war (Fuentes Codera 2014, 186-189; Núñez Seixas 2010).

In the Catholic vision of Spain, defence of regional liberty was completely compatible with the unity of the fatherland. From Balmes to Menéndez Pelayo, the integration of the great and small fatherland was a staple of nineteenth-century Catholicism and remained so in the Catholic political cultures of the twentieth century (Suárez Cortina 2008, 239; Urigüen 1986; Quiroga 2008; Saz 2003). After the disaster of 1898, the solutions offered from the Catholic leadership for overcoming the crisis and healing Spain included respect for regional and local liberty against the centralised liberal state. Proof of the centrality of this concept can be seen in the fact that it is one of the six points of the "minimal programme" for action that was sponsored by Ángel Herrera, leader of the ACNdP and also appeared in *El Debate* in 1913 where there was an attempt to secure the sorely-sought-after political unity of Catholics (Benavides Gómez 1978, 356-357). For its part, the Maurist Party, which was born that same year and which referred to Catholicism as the nation's "social marrow," conceived of Spain "as a collection of historical entities that were originally autonomous" (Tusell 1974, vol. I, 89-90).

Regionalism did not exclusively find support in Catholic circles. Indeed, the idea had acquired a certain importance in Spain during the Restoration mainly due to regenerationism (Morales Muñoz 2006; Archilés 2006). According to Núñez Seixas (2018, 46), the legacy of regenerationism was "crucial for the reinforcement or rise of different types of *regionalisms*, which were conceived of as a specific form of Spanish nationalism whose purpose was not only to respond to the "threat" of the pro-Catalan movement, but also to use the most *healthy* parts (localities and regions) to *regenerate* the Spanish Nation's sick body."

The development of Catalan nationalism and the foundation of the Lliga Regionalista in 1901 clearly spurred on regionalist movements (Ucelay-Da Cal 2006, 90-94). As the representative of the interests of the pro-Catalan bourgeoisie, the Lliga put forth some extremely conservative ideological principles (including antiliberal ones) and maintained a positive relationship with the hierarchy of the Catalan Church. This fact helped the Lliga to win the sympathy of Catholic groups both inside and outside of Catalonia that saw the Lliga's conservatism and Catholicism as ways to incorporate it into a larger political block of Catholics that could oppose the liberal regime. On 27 April 1916, *El Debate* still included Cambó as well as Vázquez de Mella and Maura among the politicians who could most eloquently and authoritatively extol regionalist solutions in contrast to liberal and conservative positions.

That very year, however, things began to shift: *El Debate* itself claimed in May that "from the triple Catalan tradition of being religious, monarchist and patriotic" the Lliga only embodied the last element; furthermore, its members had adopted "inadmissible and counterproductive slogans" and attitudes regarding its relationship

with the rest of Spain (26 May 1916).[2] At the time, the Lliga's calls for decentralisation were taking the form of demands for political autonomy.

The political evolution of the Lliga led Catholics ultimately to resent the organization. *El Universo*, which was funded by the Marquis of Comillas, put it this way: "the interests of the Fatherland and especially Religion and the Church must be given preference over regional interests. To champion regional concerns… to the detriment of other interests strikes us as unacceptable" (*El Universo*, 19 August 1917; Faes Díaz 2009, 286). *El Debate*, for its part, recognised that Catalan regionalism did not embody the newspaper's ideals of what regionalism should be (29 January 1917; 22 March 1917), scorned its areligious nature (16 May 1917; 21 September 1917) and criticised the Lliga's shifting discourse and its self-positioning somewhere between the left and the right (30 July 1917; 14 February 1918; 8 August 1919). Furthermore, the publication railed against the Lliga's alliance with "the enemies of regionalism, the leftists" in order to secure Catalan autonomy at the end of 1918 (12, 13, 18 and 26 December 1918). While previously traditionalists, propagandists and Maurists had enjoyed a close relationship with the Catalan regionalist movement, a clear distancing emerged when the Lliga opted to align itself with republicans and leftists in their support for the Statute for Autonomy (Moreno Luzón 2006, 125; Canales Serrano 2006, 92-94; Guasch 1986, 306-314).

The Statute was presented in Parliament at the end of 1918. Both in the streets and the Cortes there was clearly an unfavourable attitude towards the Lliga's aspirations of winning autonomy. The demands made by Catalan nationalists for political autonomy unleashed "the re-emergence of Spanish nationalism," which was spearheaded by various social, political, economic and military groups (Moreno Luzón 2006; 127-131). Catholics were not alone in this regard, but they were notably active, especially the right-wing Maurists who increased the vigour of their attacks against the Catalan nationalists, whom they did not hesitate to call separatists, all the while organizing patriotic protests that called for "the single fatherland" (Goicoechea 1919; Tusell and Avilés 1986, 166-169; González Hernández 1990, 87-89; González Cuevas 2008, 43; Smith 2017).

El Debate and Ángel Herrera, for their parts, snatched the chance to promote Catholic "healthy regionalism." They expressed their strong support for a regionalist campaign in Castilla with rallies in Segovia, Avila and Zamora, among other places. This campaign spawned as a reaction to liberal centralisation and also as a cure based on a regenerationist model. According to its organizers, the goal, on the one hand, was to avoid the sort of imbalance that could give rise to Catalanism in national politics, should the Catalans prove successful in their pro-autonomy undertakings; on the other hand, they sought to regenerate the Castilian soul and achieve parliamentary representation for their region that could then break the caciquist system that had taken it over, on analogy with what Catalanists had accomplished in their own region. The great desire of *El Debate* was to harmonise "the legitimate freedoms of the nation's regions with the greater unity of Spain" (30 January 1919), causing Castille to return to "being an august matron of the people that symbolizes Catholic and Spanish unity" (27 January 1919), on the grounds that religion and spirituality constituted the core of the Castilian spirit according to Herrera (3 December 1918). Despite Catholicism's clear rejection of The Generation of

[2] A few days before in a rally, Cambó claimed, "the new spirit of Europe" was looking after the Catalanist demands and that the Lliga was a party-nation that was representing the interests of all Catalonia (Smith 2017, 482)

1898, traces of these attitudes nevertheless seeped into the notable Castilian centrism of Catholic discourse.

In the rally held in Zamora, it was proposed, on the one hand, that the region's municipal governments summon local assemblies to plan projects in favour of a statute for Castille's autonomy following the Catalanist playbook; on the other hand, Catholic unions were urged to continue to grow their federations, extending their influence to all local communities (*El Debate*, 27 January 1919). It was necessary to draw on Catholic social action to promote the region and fatherland, something that social Catholicism had been working towards for some time by depicting the "modest" social propagandists as "profound reformers of the Constitution, creators of the future Fatherland," in which national unity would go hand in hand with regional autonomy and corporatism (17 December 1915). We do not know the actual scope of these proposals, but beyond the modernisation of farming, which the agrarian Catholic unions offered to the rural part of the northern half of Spain, the defence of local and regional interests that these same groups supported proved to be crucial for granting their movement legitimacy and establishing a relational framework that buoyed rural ultra-right-wing Catholics during the first decades of the twentieth century (Sanz Lafuente 2005; Domínguez y Cabo, 2010; Lucea, 2012, CX).

The regionalist debate also permeated Catholic circles outside of Castille. The Social Youth of Zaragoza, for example, published a manifesto on 6 January 1919 in which they defined themselves as "young, Catholic, and Aragonese" individuals who were driven by "the ideals of Religion, Aragon and the family" and ready to work on behalf of order. In March of 1919 *Social Action* (Zaragoza) included an announcement meant to mobilise the Catholic youth, claiming the following: "We need young, brave and dedicated individuals… who love God, their families and fatherland… Catholic Social Youth and the National Catholic Association of Young Propagandists need these young people to improve society and save Spain. We need them urgently" (Estarán Molinero 2003, 330-332). Likewise, when the Christian Democracy Group presented the basic tenets of their platform in April 1919 at the first conference of free, Catholic workers' unions, they defined themselves as "a tight-knit group of hardworking men who are good Catholics and first-rate patriots" that was bent on offering solutions for social issues from a Catholic perspective (Bueno Madurga 2000, 199-200).

Accordingly, it seems to have been more pressing than ever for Catholic social associations to define themselves in terms of Spanish regional and/or national identity in their manifestos and platforms as well as at their rallies as part of the goal of uniting different right-wing factions and resisting disorder and revolution (Ramón Solans, 2014a, 264). In 1919 Catholics toggled between regionalist and patriotic positions without the former lessening the importance of the latter. To the contrary, regionalist positions were only accepted if they were "healthy," that is, if they worked towards strengthening Spain, the Fatherland. When commemorating its second year in print (25 December 1919), *Hogar y Pueblo* used "Religion, nation and region" as a slogan to rouse readers to action. This provincial confessional newspaper had closely followed the debates in parliament over the Statute, asking itself whether Spain could remain united without religion as the binding agent holding the country together (25 November 1918).

For decades, Catholic publications had been progressively normalizing the "healthy" relationship between love of the small and large fatherland through the publication of pamphlets for doctrinal instruction and countering impiety. These texts connected local and regional historical episodes to religion in order to teach doctrine and to tell morally edifying stories (see, e.g., Bernal and Soriano 1882; Mover 1894). From

the mid-teens, the tactic for spreading healthy regionalism in Catholic publications shifted: it was made more explicit and infused new material into the debate over the effects of the war and the Catalanist challenge. Some of these changes can be appreciated in the speeches of the clerics Ramón Méndez Gaite and Luis García Nieto, that were published in 1918 and 1920, respectively.

On 5 August 1917, the city government of La Coruña asked Ramón Méndez, who was Alfonso XIII's priest as well as a Catholic writer and member of the Royal Academy of Galicia, to give a civic and religiously inspired speech in order to commemorate the end of the English siege of the city in 1589. While narrating these events from the city's past, the priest was well aware of the nationalist potential of these sorts of occasions (Méndez Gaite 1918, 21). His narration of this heroic episode from the past was replete with "lessons," "especially those concerning Religion and patriotism" (24), and perfectly fit in with the healthy regionalism that had traditionally been cultivated by the Catholic hierarchy. Nevertheless, when he published the pamphlet *Fatherland and Regionalism* in 1918, he included a final section dedicated to "Regionalism." Given that it was published at the same time that the Congress was debating the statute on Catalan autonomy, Méndez Gaite saw it fit to add a section containing his thoughts about healthy regionalism as a mechanism for forcefully combatting any proposal that sought to construct different nations within the State: such "false regionalism," referred to as "a thankless separatist urge," was "a weapon that could be dangerous for the wholeness of our common Fatherland" (57-58).

Beyond lionizing healthy regionalism, the writings of the Franciscan Luis García Nieto in *Fatherland and Religion* went a step further when he sanctified the Fatherland, identifying it with the Virgin. From the "mother Fatherland" used by writers like Méndez Gaite, García Nieto wrote of the "Mother Fatherland," equating the nation to the Virgin Mary; indeed, he likewise identified the love of the fatherland with veneration of the Virgin in her various religious pronouncements.

Speaking before the young people gathered at the Conferences of the Artistic Youth of Huelva, the monk and librarian from the Monastery of Rábida described himself as an "errant knight" who was obliged to destroy whosoever "desired to tread upon the unstained honour of the respectable and beloved lady of his thoughts, the Mother Fatherland." This declaration, which was shocking coming from the mouth of such a devout man, is understandable when we recall the equation that he established with the virgin: "That the Fatherland, gentlemen, is the Mother of the Word, laying her virginal feet on the Pillar of Zaragoza, the thousand-year-old stone and bastion of our faith" (García Nieto 1920, 11).

In line with this idea of the Fatherland as Mother, the "august Matron" who was nevertheless weary, the same author put forth other arguments based on the mother-son relationship. This led him to brand anyone who disrespected or sought to destroy the Mother as a "parricide" and "unnaturalised." Against such threats, García Nieto proposed "strengthening the love for the Mother Fatherland with the most robust affirmation of the intense love for the small fatherland, the protector… of true patriotism." Furthermore, he adds, "the Fatherland is the fraternal embrace of the regions that comprise the national territory" (García Nieto 1920, 14-15).

These declarations of Catholic regionalism are clearly sacralised by the author who defines the temple or shrine dedicated to the Virgin Patroness as the place par excellence for the love of the small fatherland (1920, 18-20). From the healthy regionalism and the double regional-national identity advocated for in pronouncements

about the virgin (Ramón Solans 2015, 448), García Nieto moved beyond the idea of healthy regionalism to take up the notion of the sacred region, which was embodied by local and regional worship of the Virgin (especially in her main sites of worship), which he called the "Reliquary of the province." Ultimately, this healthy and sacralised regionalism contained a clearly defined gender roles. Evoking healthy regionalism through the epic journey found throughout the glorious deeds enshrined in national and local history, the author sought to "awaken" in the young men who listened to him "the healthiest patriotism" that would spur them to action. For young women, who were destined to become mothers, García Nieto gave them the mission of instilling healthy regionalism in their offspring, teaching them prayers to the local Virgin (1920, 23-24).

Catholic regionalism was spurred on especially by Catalan nationalism and developed alongside it in an ambivalent way, like other anti-Catalanist political positions (Duarte, 2010). On the one hand, the regionalist campaign put forth in *El Debate* sought to emulate some aspects of Catalanism in order to foster regionalism as a means of mobilising people against caciquism and the centralised liberal oligarchy. On the other hand, Catalanism served as a negative foil in so far as was a "fanatical," separatist and antipatriotic declaration that turned regionalism into "something that was above the notions of Religion and Fatherland." This clashed with the idea of healthy Catholic regionalism that was fundamentally pro-Spanish (*El Debate*, 24-7-1923). The regenerationist aspects that were critical of the Restoration were present at a certain moment, though in the end they vanished: Catholic regionalism would help reinforce the monarchy as the guarantor of order against growing social disorder and political instability. The fact that regionalist aspirations would remain subservient to Religion and the Fatherland implied that regenerationist ideas progressively lost influence in step with the increasing sacralisation of the Fatherland. Thus, in the healthy regionalism that was championed in the pages of *El Debate* in the middle of 1923, we find the slogan "Religion, Fatherland, Monarchy," which, like its traditionalist antecedent, was not referring to a liberal or parliamentary monarchy (*El Debate*, 24-7-1923; Guasch, 1986, 365-369; Cueva Merino, 2003; Callahan, 2003, 95).

Catholicism and Colonialism during the Rif War: Towards the sacralisation and the praetorianisation of the Catholic nation.

If there was a single event that decisively cemented to the sacralisation of the Fatherland in Spanish Catholic discourse, it was the Rif War, a conflict that presaged Catholicism's identification of the armed forces as both the protector of national independence against external threats and also the securer of unity against internal division (Boyd 1990). Many of the years examined in this paper fall within the limits of this war (1909-1927), in which Spain sought to reinforce its colonial control over the region in North Africa. While this conflict was punctuated with some notable victories, it was also scarred by disastrous defeats in which many men lost their lives (Balfour 1999, 2002; Laporte 2003, 2006).

The war's impact on Spanish society was at times quite notable: while moments with little military activity were characterised by a disinterest, apathy or even a lack of awareness, there were other periods filled with protests or national pride over the defence of the nation's wounded honour (Bachoud 1988; La Porte 2001; Balfour 2002; Martín Corrales 2002; Madariaga 2005; Gajate 2012; Iglesias Amorín 2019). The Rif War became a major factor in the politicalisation and nationalisation of the Spanish populace. The conflict was used by leftist workers to bolster arguments against military intervention; yet in spite of the war's various crises, it was nevertheless a powerful means for promoting nationalist sentiment through the expression of solidarity with veterans and the wounded, the commemoration of the dead, praise of the nation's heroes and the return

and rescue of prisoners of war (Balfour 2001, 88; Ramiro de la Mata 2001). Among the Catholic social movement, traditionalists and Maurists, the conflict was crucial for forging the image of the military as the protector of order and the institution that kept the nation afloat in so far as it safeguarded Religion and Monarchy (Rey Reguillo and González Calleja 1995).

Within the Catholic press we can find a range of different reasons for supporting the war in Morocco: the socio-economic benefits that it brought the nation (*El Debate*, 22 August 1910; 27 August 1917), historic and geographic needs as well as a lifeline for the country's future (Gajate 2012, 128) or even revenge in the face of previous defeat. The main reason for supporting the war effort, however, was explained in terms of the civilising role that Spain, as a Catholic nation, could and should play among the infidel North Africans (*El Debate*, 30 November 1912; 24 November 1913). This evangelising mission, which was couched in terms of being a continuation of the Reconquest, was the sole justification seen as legitimate in certain turn-of-the-century Catholic circles, according to which economic, administrative and scientific concerns were perceived of as liberal or Masonic. *La Lectura dominical*, for instance, which had looked upon Spain's civilising role in Morocco with a distant irony at the end of the nineteenth century, changed its tune after the First World War: the conflict was now explained as crucial to the country's interest in remaining truly independent, vigilant of its borders and looking out for its position in the international order (14 January 1894; 21 June 1919; 30 August 1919).

Parts of the Catholic press valued the evangelising mission that the Franciscans had been carrying out for centuries (*La Lectura dominical*, 24 May 1919; *Revista católica de las cuestiones sociales*, April 1921, 40, 235-236; López, 1920). However, despite Catholic arguments in favour of Spain's ability to civilise Morocco, the Franciscan missions had not managed to turn their schools and hospitals into compelling models for the broader indigenous population. According to Castillo Larriba (2014), this failure exposed the limitations of the religious order's ability to evangelise the Moroccans. In the first decades of the twentieth century, the Franciscans seemed much more concerned with maintaining the influence and privileges that they had and that was being threatened by competition coming from French religious orders, which the Third Republic had clearly integrated into the colonisation of the French protectorate, despite the government being secular. More than serving as an arm of the civilising mission, the Franciscans ended up policing Spanish emigrants who came to the protectorate and protecting them from the influence of revolutionary doctrines. But unlike those who were actually undertaking evangelising work in Africa, Franciscans back in Spain adopted a "martial language that was used to imbue their pronouncements with the idea of a crusade" (Castillo Larriba 2014, 643).

The arguments published in the Catholic publications in favour of securing Spain's foothold in Morocco seem to have been designed to consolidate the vision of Spain as Catholic, instead of defending the special role of the Church or regular clergy in the colonisation of the protectorate. Put slightly differently, confessional discourse was not so much used to establish the importance of the Church in the state's colonial undertakings, but rather to construct and spread a type of patriotism that was based in a close connection between the interests of the Fatherland and Religion. In response to the estrangement and apathy that many Spaniards felt towards to war in Morocco, *El Debate* claimed that the expansion that was taking place in the protectorate in the beginning of the 1920s was starting to sway people opinions. Accordingly, the decision "to carry out the African mission" that was outlined in international treaties was progressively taking

root: Morocco was no longer an adventure but had become "a duty and overseas objective. Indeed, an overseas objective! Something that we have not had since 1898" (15 October 1920).

In this patriotic discourse, the role of the army was central. *El Debate*'s praise of soldiers for supporting the fatherland through their efforts markedly contrasted with the criticism of Spanish policy and diplomacy in the area. In short, military and colonial action in Morocco became an argument for reclaiming patriotism, critiquing liberal governments and praising the army's efforts which entailed sacrifice, hard work and suffering in a hostile environment (29 December 1911; 24 May 1914; 9 April 1915; 15 October 1920).

The Catholic movement played a central role in the informal construction and socialization of a national Catholic vision of Spain that was closely linked to the army. Since the First World War, the military had been the subject of several conferences in the circles of Catholic social action. In these contexts, the youth were also urged to "always be ready to defend our beloved fatherland, even if it means shedding our own blood," just as earlier generations of Spaniards "who were so willing to shed their blood for the fatherland" (*La Colonia* [Madrid] December 1916, summarising the presentation "On the organization and glorious deeds of the Spanish Army"). Despite the supposedly apolitical nature of Catholic-agrarian associationism, it played a key role in defending the monarchy and military through the support shown for the military campaigns in Africa, as Domínguez and Cabo have demonstrated for Galicia (2010, 238). When these campaigns were reinstated after the First World War, *La Lectura dominical* (18 October 1919) backed the initiative of the widowed Marchioness of Peñaplata who urged women to serve as war-time sponsors for soldiers fighting in Morocco, by writing them letters, giving them advice and protecting them. According to the same paper, this project helped establish tighter links between the army and civilian population, consoled soldiers and was an excellent way to be charitable and build connections between social classes, not to mention raising the profile of "these great national undertakings in the war."

When the Day of the Race was officially inaugurated in 1919, it was celebrated in the middle of the war, thus leading Catholic groups to include events related to the military conflict in their celebratory activities. At the Jesuit-run Marian Congregation of Luises in Burgo de Osma (Soria), they staged *El Cabo Noval*,[3] a dramatic episode from the War of Melilla that included a chorus made up of soldiers (*Hogar y Pueblo*, 14 October 1920). The following year, this same Marian congregation of young men prepared an official programme that combined content about America and Morocco: they included a rendition of Chapi's "Suspiro del moro," a recitation of the poems "La Fiesta de la Raza" and "Oye, Patria" (the latter by Verdi) as well as a performance of "The song of the Soldier" that had recently been composed by the conductor Serrano in 1917. At this time, there was already word of the tragic defeat at Annual, because of which the Catholic social weekly paper of the Dioceses endorsed the proposal to make donations through the Virgen del Carmen in order to buy scapulars for the soldiers. The intention

[3] For this soldier, whose death in the War of Melilla in September of 1909 became a symbol of Spanish patriotism, see http://dbe.rah.es/biografias/7020/luis-noval-ferrao [retrieved on 1 June 2020]. The previous year, the celebration of the Day of the Race in Burgo de Osma centred on the figure of Columbus, the discovery of America and the Virgen del Pilar (*Hogar y Pueblo*, 17 October 1919).

was to "give hope and comfort to those beloved men that fight in Africa for the honour of the Fatherland" (*Hogar y Pueblo*, 19 October 1921). As both a comfort and incitement, in the next issue the paper published the poem "Granada" (26 October 1921) as a commemoration for the capturing of the city and "the end of Muslim domination over the nation that has the following motto on its flag: Independence, Fatherland, Religion!!"

Actions such as these reveal the nationalist fervour that coursed through Spanish society in the wake of the disasters at Annual and Monte Arruit in July and August of 1921 (La Porte 2006). According to the analysis in *El Debate*, the setback in Morocco did not so much damper spirits, but rather "had holily lifted feelings of love for the Fatherland," turning the war in Morocco into a "question of national dignity" that the government ought to resolve immediately and thoroughly (22 and 27 July 1921), all the while recommending caution so as to avoid yet another disaster (Guasch 1986, 369-374; Gajate 2013, 125). From this setback, Spain could rise again and be respected by all or, alternatively, could definitively fall. In this situation and under the leadership of the government presided over by Maura, *El Debate* called on "all to assist in rebuilding the nation" involving all citizens since "Citizenship is the greatest flower of patriotism" (31 November 1921). Just like all outlets used the propaganda or counterpropaganda of the war, Catholics also stirred public opinion after the tragedy at Annual to help maximize Spaniard's political awareness (Gajate 2019).

Like other institutions, the Church supported the feeling of national cohesion and unity in the wake of disaster. This was nothing new. Religious symbolism had been put to use from the outset of the war to bolster the military campaign: the victory at Monte Gurugú (1909), for example, was attributed to the intervention of the Virgen del Pilar (Ramón Solans 2014, 473). Church leadership included prayers for victory at the end of religious services, performed masses for the fallen soldiers, supported institutional enlistment for the reservists, gave blessings and called upon congregants to help the nation's soldiers economically. Even several archbishops, like the one of Salamanca, described the conflict in 1909 as a religious war (Gajate 2012, 192, 225, 226, 228).

Throughout the war, Bishops organised collections to help meet the needs of those who had been wounded or given their lives for the sake of the fatherland, much as the Bishop of Tortosa did at the beginning of 1914 (*La Cruz*: *diario católico*, 2 January 1914). In the middle of August 1921 before news of the disaster at Annual was known publicly, Cardenal Soldevila published an extremely patriotic pastoral that urged on the soldiers who were going to the front and organised on their behalf a collection effort among those faithful to the archbishopric of Zaragoza, himself giving 1,000 pesetas. Not long after, he joined the fundraising begun by the general captain of the military region, which was also supported by local groups, to help buy the airplane "Zaragoza" (*El Debate*, 18 and 24 August 1921). This was similar to an initiative that took place in Salamanca and to which Church leaders of that dioceses also contributed (Gajate 2012, 353-355).

When news of the defeat spread, many Bishops published patriotic pastorals that were not only read in local parishes but were also (to varying degrees) published in the press, and not only in the confessional press. On 29 August, the conservative daily *La Correspondencia de España* began running a column called "The Bishops and the war," which they continued to run through mid-October and in which these pastorals were summarised. Even the liberal *Heraldo de Madrid* ran a full version of that written by the Primatial Cardenal of Toledo. Besides accusing "Spain's eternal enemy" of treachery and bad faith, the Cardenal blamed the disaster on the sins and offenses that had been committed, the corruption of customs and the ways of modern society. To appease God and expiate for these offenses, he called upon all parishioners to urge their fellow

Catholics to pray after Sunday mass for as long as the conflict lasted. (*Heraldo de Madrid*, 8 September 1921).

These pastorals tended to explain the defeat as a divine punishment that required "pacifying the wrath of God with suffering and penitence" so as to finally achieve victory, as the Bishop of Oviedo put it. (*La Correspondencia de España*, 29 August 1921). There was no shortage of allusions to the great moments of the Reconquest, since confessional discourse understood the colonial undertaking as a continuation of the previous conflict: this showed the providential destiny that Spain had to fight against the Muslim infidels, picking up the legacy of Isabel of Castille, Cardenal Cisneros and Emperor Charles V (Balfour 2001, 90). All these pastorals exhorted readers to pray for victory, to ask for divine protections for the Spanish armed forces and to protect those who had fought "defending the great ideals of Religion and the Fatherland" through organized collections that the clergy of each dioceses should also join by giving a day's earnings.

Among the prayers and litanies that the Bishops proposed, the Rosary stood out. As the Bishop of Sigüenza put it, "with the trust and love that every Spaniard ought to place in the Immaculate Virgin, the Patroness of the Spains and of the Infantry, who could possibly doubt our victory?" (*La Correspondencia de España*, 7/10/1921). The Archbishop of Burgos equally eulogised his faith in the Virgin Mary's protection, recalling the favours and victories that she had granted to "the Christian armies of the nations that honour her by privately and publicly reciting the Rosary." By so linking the destiny of the army and nation to religion, the Archbishop was fully aware of the sacralisation of the fatherland that this entailed. Not only did he explain this, but he even thought he was fulfilling his "sacred duty," which was parallel to his priestly duty, to "confirm… the love of the Fatherland, elevating it, sanctifying it with the seal of religion, defending it with… altars and offering it so as to make it all the more divine before the august arms of the Cross (*La Correspondencia de España*, 22 September 1921).

As we have seen above, the sacralisation of the fatherland was fundamentally carried out through the figure of the Virgin Mary: either identifying her with the Fatherland, as García Nieto did in his regionalist writings, or by hailing her as "Mother of God and Mother of Spain," as Luis Urbano, the preacher of Alfonso XIII, declared in a speech given in the Royal Theatre of Madrid in October 1921 (1930, 11-13 and 19).

It has been over twenty years since Yuval Davis (1997) shed light on the role of gender in the representations of the nation through the use of feminine symbols, showing that these systems of symbols are found across distinct European political cultures since the French Revolution. Catholicism took up this female representation of the fatherland through a connection and patronage of the Virgin Mary. This process, which began in the nineteenth century (Ramón Solans 2019), would develop into and culminate with the sacralisation of the image of the nation as intricately tied to the Virgin Mary: from the patroness of Spain to being the nation's Mother or even equated with Spain itself. The Rif War sheds light on this process of the sacralization of the Fatherland in Catholic discourse in parallel to the lionisation of the army as the leader that must impose this on the infidel enemy.

Conclusion

By the outset of the 1920s, the leaders of the Spanish Catholic Church had spent three decades progressively developing social Catholicism in the interests of religion and the fatherland. In this period, religious, cultic, charitable, educational and propagandistic groups, along with the press and publishers that held together different strands of the Catholic social movements, helped to promote and normalise in Spain a political culture

that was defined at its root by the Catholic identification of the nation and by antiliberal theory that was compatible in practice with the possibilism of the "lesser evil." Driven by the desire to re-Christianise the nation, these groups employed a discourse of Catholic action that sought to re-establish the Catholic union of the nation, an undertaking that they did not believe the liberal regime of the Restoration would carry out.

Over these decades, Catholicism played a central role in the construction and socialisation of the Spanish nation and demonstrated its ability to adapt itself to modern notions of the nation state, without the ecumenical character of Catholicism harming the national implication of hierarchy and of Catholic Spanish associationism (Louzao 2013a; Ramón Solans 2014). The colonial disaster of 1898 only intensified the discourse of Catholic reconquest as the key for healing the fatherland. What had to be done was return to the Catholic core of the fatherland if there was any chance of overcoming the difficulties into which it had fallen. Through the aughts, confessional activism sought to impose its notion of the Catholic nation over secular visions of the nation that liberals and republicans championed to build a more integrative Spain that would meet the needs of the new society of the masses that was forming in Spain at the outset of the twentieth century.

During the First World War, debates over the country's neutrality only intensified the larger conflict over the nation's identity, especially after the Russian Revolution of 1917 and the crisis of the Restoration from the summer of the same year. Catholic discourse began to use the notion of the fatherland in a more sustained and aggressive manner. In order to solve the social question and the national crisis in which the country found itself, Spain had to undergo the Catholic reconquest of the working class and to defeat socialism and revolution: only in this way was it believed to be possible to save Catholic Spain. Confessional unionism promoted patriotism as a tool for winning over agrarian and industrial workers to their side, involving them in the process of securing Spain as a Catholic nation and championing order over socialism, which was constantly villainised as the antipatriotic enemy of religion.

Together with the crisis of 1917 and the threat of revolution, Catalan nationalism and the Rif War became the primary challenges that aggravated the crisis faced by the Restoration in the interwar period. As a response to Catalan nationalism, the Catholic movement stood by the idea of the nation's Catholic identity, proposing that healthy Catholic regionalism was the bedrock of patriotism. The regenerationist hopes that cropped up in national Catholic discourse at certain moments was overshadowed by the sacralisation of the Fatherland, a process that was aided by identifying different regions with the respective cults of the Virgin. However, it was the Rif War that became the main way for the Church hierarchy as well as the Catholic press and associations put forth the sacralisation of the Fatherland; this conflict allowed Catholic intellectuals to lionise the army, depicting it as the protector of the nation, while also villainising the liberal politicians of the Restoration.

Both women and men had roles to play in the construction of the Catholic nation, in accordance with the predominant notions about gender in the Catholic world. Women were tasked with the all-important duty of instilling faith in their offspring, not only as a religious belief but also as the primary source of Spanish patriotism. This view of gender, which stressed the role that mothers had to play in the private realm of the family, was nevertheless drawn on by Catholic women to broaden their role in the public sphere, incorporating the Fatherland as a central element of their identity and political action, at least from the end of the First World War (Blasco Herranz 2003). On the other hand, the confessional redefinition of masculinity was closely linked to the idea of the nation. The

turn-of-the-century view of the active Catholic (whether a young man or father) who, being at once pious and virile, was meant to defend religion in the public square against the secularising threat of liberalism was updated so as to include the notion of the working-class Catholic man who fought against socialism during the crisis of 1917. The echoes of the World War and the experience of the conflict in Morocco worked towards heroizing the image of the soldier who fought because of his inspirational patriotism, which had to be understood not only in terms of his love for the small and great Fatherland, but above all else in his love for religion. The sacralisation of representations of the Fatherland during the Rif War would be mapped onto the image of the soldier who fought for the Mother Fatherland, which was closely associated with the Virgin Mary, in opposition to infidel Morocco.

The support that the Spanish Church would later show for the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera would only reinforce the process of sacralising the Fatherland, which had been spearheaded by Spanish national Catholicism in the early 1920s and resembled the trajectory of other European Catholic political cultures from the interwar period (Botti 2013, 137).

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